The mentoring needs of final year student teachers during their first teaching practicum

by

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MAGISTER EDUCATIONIS

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at the

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Supervisor: Dr A du Plessis

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I Mpho Princess Mthembu (student number 18109081) hereby declare that this is my original work, and that I have not previously submitted this work to the University of Pretoria or any other tertiary institution. I declare that all the resources used in the dissertation titled: *The final year mentoring needs of student teachers during their first teaching practicum*, are in the reference list. I hereby submit this dissertation for the partial completion of the degree Magister Educationis in Learning Support, Guidance and Counselling at the University of Pretoria.

Mpho Princess Mthembu

December 2019

Ethical Clearance Certificate

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CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE	CLEARANCE NUMBER: **UP 16/11/03 du Plessis 18-001**
DEGREE AND PROJECT	M.Ed The mentoring needs of final year student teachers during their first teaching practicum
INVESTIGATOR	Ms Mpho Princess Mthembu
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- Compliance with approved research protocol,
- No significant changes,
- Informed consent/assent,
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- Registered title, and
- Data storage requirements.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this degree to my late mother, Patricia Memme Mthembu. Losing you has been one of the greatest pains that I have ever experienced in my life. I miss you, and I will always love you.

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I wish to express my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the following people, without whom I would never have been able to achieve this milestone in my life:

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ABSTRACT

THE MENTORING NEEDS OF FINAL YEAR STUDENT TEACHERS DURING THEIR FIRST TEACHING PRACTICUM

Supervisor: Dr A du Plessis

Department: Educational Psychology

Degree: MEd (Learning Support Guidance and Counselling)

Student-teachers at the University of Pretoria are in desperate need of mentoring during their teaching practicum period. This is an essential need as they only get the opportunity to start their teaching practicum when they are in their final year of study. This study forms a part of a larger study that comes from a research project called the Peer Enhanced Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SOTL). The aim of this project is to develop a mentoring intervention programme which will be used to develop student teachers into teachers. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to identify, explore and understand what the mentoring needs of final year student-teachers in the year 2016 and 2017 at the University of Pretoria were during their first teaching practicum. This study aims to do such, because the participants of this study had a late exposure to teaching practice, and as such when they started their teaching practicum, they experienced feelings of being uncertain, scared, and anxious.

The research methodology that this study will utilize is the qualitative research approach using single case study design. Inductive thematic analysis will then be used to analyse the data gathered for this study. The student-teachers in this study were 2016 and 2017 fourth year B. Ed students (n=433) that were studying at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus), in the year 2016 (170), and 2017 (263). The theoretical framework that guided this study is Hudson's five-factor model of mentoring. The findings of the study revealed that student-teachers at the University of Pretoria need to be mentored, specifically by their mentor lecturers as they embark on their teaching practicum.

Key words: case study design; University of Pretoria; support, knowledge, practice.

Editors proof of language editing

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that the thesis titled "The Final Year Mentoring Needs of Student-Teachers during their First Teaching Practicum " by Mpho Princess Mthembu has been proof read and edited by me for language usage.

I verify that it is ready for publication and / or public viewing in respect of language and style.

Please note that no view is expressed in respect of the subject specific technical contents of the document or changes made after the date of this letter.

Kind regards

Anna M de Wet

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List of abbreviations

CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
FIRE	Fourth Year Initiative in Research in Education
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NRF	National Research Foundation

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CHAPTER 1
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE TO THE STUDY

Teaching practice is seen as the core of teacher training in higher education globally and is pivotal to the development of student-teachers, as well as preparing them for the teaching profession (Du Plessis & Marais, 2013). For the majority of student-teachers, exposure to teaching practice is “the crux of their preparation for the teaching profession” (Menter, 1989:461), providing them with excellent opportunities to gain experience in the real-life world of teaching and classroom practices. On the other hand, for the mentor teacher and mentor lecturer, teaching practice comprise opportunities to walk alongside the unexperienced student-teacher, assisting them in the development of their professional identity (Mohono-Mahlatsi & Van Tonder, 2006). Thus, teaching practice should be a pleasant and beneficial event in the training of teachers. However, this seems not always to be the case. The majority of student-teachers experience teaching practice as a daunting task, leaving them with negative first time teaching experiences which, among other, lack proper mentoring especially from the lecturers side and this, in itself, may impact negatively on their perception of the teaching profession (Koross, 2016; Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009) even causing them to leave the profession.

At the University of Pretoria our fourth-year student-teachers (2016-2017 cohorts), who have never been exposed to teaching in schools before, are in desperate need of proper mentoring provided by their lecturers. In recent times, our fourth-year student-teachers were only granted the opportunity to be exposed to teaching practice once they were in their final year of study, leaving them with more or less 20 weeks of exposure to first time teaching in schools. The implication thereof was that the majority of our final year student-teachers experienced high levels of anxiety, despair and a feeling of being lost the first time that they set foot in a school. Furthermore, they specifically needed assistance from their mentor lecturers who needed to assist with the development of their professional

identity, soft skills and skills related to content and teaching. The assistance they required or longed for was in fact that of a lecturer in a mentoring role.

Despite the fact that mentoring appears to be an important foundation of teacher education globally (Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Hobson; Scott, Gentry & Phillips, 2014; Knippelmeyer & Torraco, 2007; Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006; Walkington, 2005) and is acknowledged as "pivotal to the development of student-teachers" (Du Plessis, 2013), many student-teachers perceive their mentor lecturers as critical evaluators of classroom practices rather than advisers with whom they can build good relationships (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez & Tomlinson, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). It appears that mentor lecturers may often neglect the holistic development of student-teachers and mainly focus on classroom practices and assessment of the student-teachers work during teaching practice (Walkington, 2005).

According to literature, when beginning teachers thrive and survive their first year of teaching it is often due to the quality of mentoring that they were exposed to during their teaching practicum period. This further supports the fact that student-teachers need to be mentored during their teaching practicum. It is thus a necessity that student-teachers are effectively mentored especially during their teaching practicum in their final year of study because, at this stage, they need to develop their professional teaching identity (Aderibigbe, 2013; Hudson, 2007; Kaasila & Lauriala, 2010; Leshem, 2012). Du Plessis, Marais, Van Schalkwyk and Weeks (2010: 328) are of the opinion that "if as research indicates practice teaching is the most single powerful intervention in teacher's professional preparation, then mentoring is the single most powerful process of such intervention." According to Filella, Lara et al., (2008), and Heirdsfield, Walker, Walsh and Wilss (2008), the aim of mentoring is to support, introduce and socialise student-teachers conducting their teaching practicum into the profession of teaching.

Mentoring helps establish the norms, attitudes, beliefs and standards of student-teachers during their teaching practice period (Bartell, 2005). According to Martinez (2004), mentoring should be structured in such a way that it aims to meet the needs of student-teachers during their teaching practice. Athaneses and Achinstein (2003) state that it is of the utmost importance that mentors have knowledge of the mentoring needs of student-

teachers. Mentor lecturers can maximise the effectiveness of their mentoring during teaching practice for the student-teacher. Student-teachers are different, and as such, they require to be mentored in different ways according to their specific needs (Heeralal, 2014).

The current study forms part of a broader, interdisciplinary research project known as the Peer Enhanced Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). The project aimed to focus on the design, implementation and evaluation of a mentorship intervention specifically focused to assist student-teachers with their development as teachers. It furthermore guided mentor lecturers to support student-teachers holistically. The rationale for this investigation was twofold. At first, existing literature acknowledges mentorship as a basis for student-teacher support (Knippelmeyer & Torraco, 2007; Scott et al., 2014); however, there seems to be limited South African research on how mentor lecturers (or university supervisors) can support student-teachers other than to assess them and provide them with feedback on their lessons presented.

Secondly, the investigation was based on the preliminary findings of an NRF funded research project, FIRE, or Fourth Year Initiative in Research in Education (2015-2017). This project focused on the teacher identity development of student-teachers. Preliminary findings from the FIRE project indicated that, although students consider mentor lecturers to be important role-players in shaping their teacher identities, the contributions of these lecturers frequently seem to fall short of students' mentoring needs, especially owing to their perceived primary focus on classroom practice and criticism rather than the students' holistic development (Fraser et al., 2016).

The following figure indicates the various phases of the SoTL project:

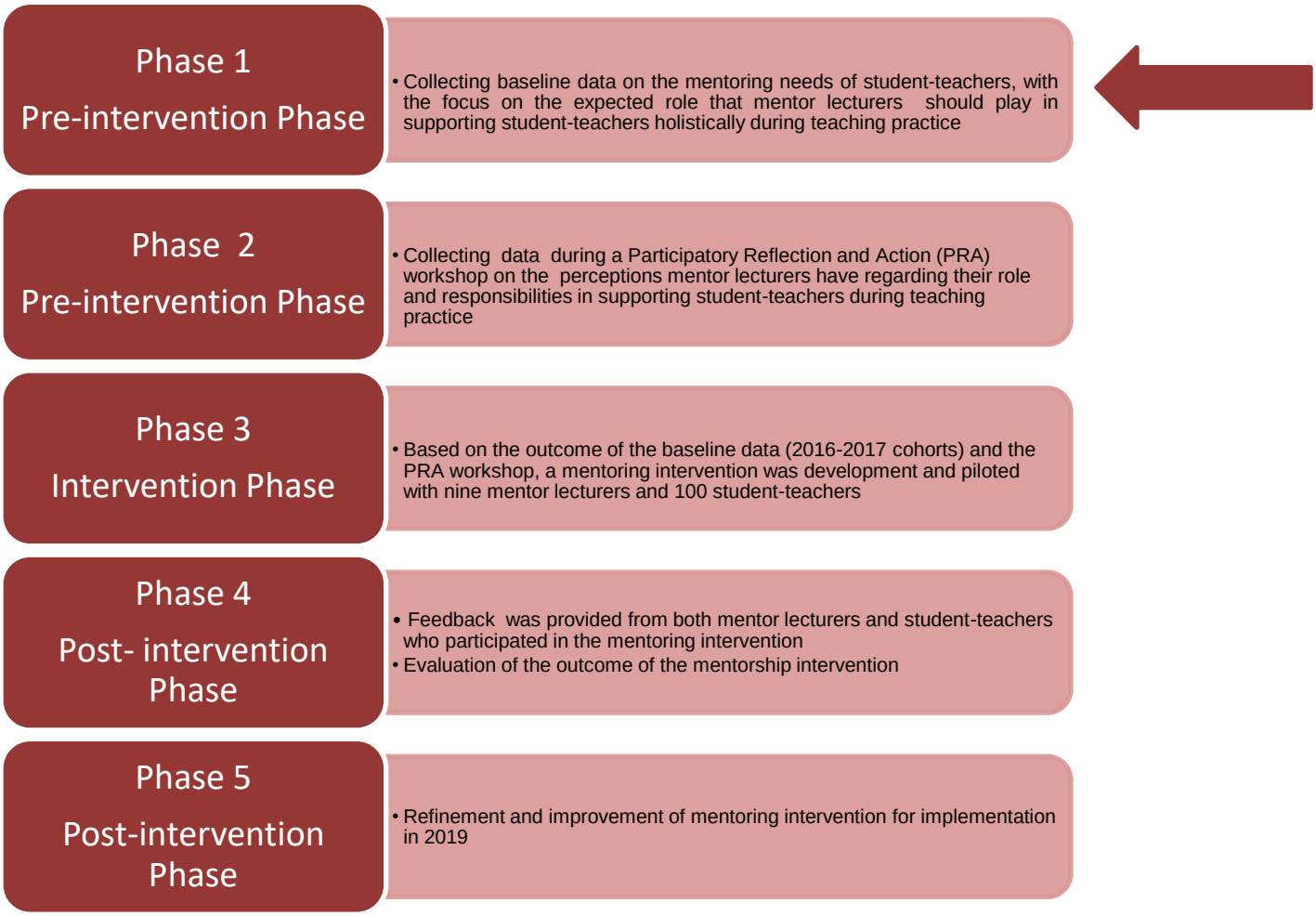


Figure 1-1: Phases of the SoTL project to enhance the mentoring practices of mentor lecturers

This descriptive case study that formed part of Phase 1, as indicated above, explored ways in which mentor lecturers can support student-teachers holistically during the teaching practice period. I strongly support the view of Korthagen (2006), who emphasises the importance of a nurturing relationship between a mentor (mentor lecturers in this case) and a mentee (student-teacher), being professional at all times and providing the student-teacher with critical feedback. An effective mentor is required to fulfil the following roles: motivator, teacher, role model, supporter, counsellor, advisor, demonstrator, guide, change agent, companion and coach. Therefore, the rationale for this study was to explore and describe the mentoring needs of student-teachers during their first teaching practice, especially from their mentor lecturers.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this descriptive case study is to explore and describe the mentoring needs of student-teachers in the 2016 and 2017 cohort at the University of Pretoria during their first exposure to teaching practice in their final year of study. The descriptive case study emanated from a baseline study. This study wanted to identify the mentoring needs of student-teachers at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus), especially mentoring from their lecturers during their first teaching practice in their final year of study, so that once these needs are identified they can be used as a guiding method by future mentors from the university, to effectively mentor student-teachers during their teaching practicum. By identifying the mentoring needs of student-teachers, this study aimed to achieve awareness of what it is that student-teachers needed from their mentor lecturers during their teaching practicum, so that in the future the process of mentoring could be centred on these needs, and also so that a mentoring intervention programme could be implemented that will meet the needs of student-teachers at the University of Pretoria.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study was guided by the following primary research question:

What are the mentoring needs of final year student-teachers during their first teaching practicum?

In addition to the primary question, I investigated the following secondary questions:

The secondary research questions were:

Why do student-teachers need mentoring, especially from their mentor lecturers during their first teaching practice?

What kind of mentoring do student-teachers need, especially from their mentor lecturers during teaching practice?

How may the findings and recommendations of the envisaged study inform the possible development of a mentoring intervention for lecturers to support student-teachers during their first teaching practice?

1.4 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

In the following section, I clarify the key concepts of this study:

1.4.1 Student-teachers

A student-teacher is a student who is studying towards becoming a teacher and as a part of their training goes on to practice teaching in schools through the method of them being mentored or supervised by an experienced teacher and lecturer during their teaching practice. These are Bachelor of Education students who are practising teaching in schools as a part of their curriculum requirement for their B. Ed degree (Mkhasibe, 2014). The student-teachers in this study were 2016 and 2017 fourth year B. Ed students (n=433) that were studying at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus). These student-teachers only started their teaching practice in their fourth year of study, and they were completing the PR0400 module, which is a Teaching Practice Module.

1.4.2 Mentoring needs

These refer to the needs that an individual that is being mentored has in the mentoring relationship between the person and his/her mentor. These needs are focused on the mentees development and the transferring of knowledge from the mentor to the mentee within the field (career) in which the mentoring is being conducted (Kajs, Alaniz, Willman, Maier, Brott, & Gomez, 2001; Maynard, 2000).

With reference to this study, the mentoring needs refer to the needs of the student-teachers that this study is based on which are the needs that they had concerning their mentors during their teaching practicum with their mentor lecturer. In the context of this study, the mentoring needs of student-teachers are the need for a safe and nurturing mentoring environment, being given feedback on their teaching activities during their teaching practice time with their mentor lecturer to discuss their experiences of the teaching practicum. These student-teachers also want someone that they can confide in, someone that will be there to guide them and help them in their development of a professional teaching identity.

1.4.3 Mentor lecturer

A definition by Caffarella (1992), states that a mentor is a qualified teacher who works with a new teacher/beginning teacher to promote the professional and personal development of that individual. Another definition by Hawkey (1997), defines the concept of a “mentor” by using the words “supervisor” and “teacher” in one sentence. While Bennetts (2002:1) states that a mentor is a person who "achieves a one-to-one developmental relationship with a learner and one whom the learner identifies as having enabled personal growth to take place". With reference to this study, a mentor lecturer refers to an individual that has been selected by a university to oversee the work of a student-teacher and to also stand in as a representative of the university during the period of the teaching practicum in schools (Steadman & Brown, 2011). The mentor lecturers of this study were lecturers at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus) that had been selected by the teaching practice office to mentor the student-teachers that were doing their final year of study.

1.4.4 Teaching Practicum

This is a form of Work-Integrated Learning (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011) which is of a specific period/time whereby student-teachers work in a school so as to receive training that will enable them to apply the theory that they have learnt in the classroom on teaching into practice in the schools (Kiggundu & Nayimuli, 2009). Nwanekezi, Okoli, and Mezieobi, (2011), further explain this concept by stating that it is the first official apprentice that student-teachers are involved in during their training as a teacher, which is about giving them teaching experience. It is stated that there are three things which represent the entire scope of teaching practice. These are the practising of teacher skills, the experiences that the students in the school go through, and the practicality of the course of teaching as opposed to the theoretical aspects thereof. The student-teachers of this study started their teaching practice in the final year of their B. Ed studies.

1.5 WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

Working assumptions are defined as untested beliefs that a researcher has about his/her research. These are those thoughts, and conclusions that a researcher believes to be true, which they hold towards their study as they begin with it (Simon, 2011). Based on my initial literature review, I conducted this study on the background of the following working assumptions:

> If the mentoring needs of student-teachers are not met during their teaching practice, then student-teachers will not be ready to assume their roles as beginning teachers once they are certified as teachers.
>
> Although the mentoring needs of student-teachers may differ, they are all important to take into consideration as they affect the professional development of a teaching identity for the student-teacher.
>
> Student-teachers may need mentoring that can assist them in the development of their soft skills such as conflict handling, communication, and problem-solving skills, as well as a way in which they can use the mentoring as a reflective practice whereby they can reflect on their teaching practice experiences.

1.6 UNDERLYING THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The theoretical framework that this study utilised was Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring (Hudson & Hudson, 2010). This model allows for the association of attributes and practices while providing a theoretical framework for gathering data on the mentoring of teachers and teaching-related matters. This model also draws a picture focusing on effective mentoring during teaching practice for student-teachers. The five-factors are (i) personal attributes which refer to those qualities of mentors being supportive, attentive, and the ability of the mentor to instil confidence in their mentees (student-teacher) (Hudson, 2004); (ii) system requirements focus on curriculum-specific tasks, as well as the aims and policies of the education system. This factor focuses more on classroom management; (iii) pedagogical knowledge focuses on the articulation of the best teaching

practices. Pedagogical knowledge is knowledge that includes, but is not limited to, understanding the teaching curriculum and the strategies for teaching (Smith, 2000); (iv) modelling which is about the mentoring lecture modelling some teaching practices for the student-teacher. Such teaching practices could be those such as lesson plans and classroom management to name a few (Hudson, 2012); (v) lastly, there is the factor of feedback which aims at the mentor giving the student-teacher feedback about their teaching practice. Feedback can either be in an oral or written method.

I chose this theoretical framework for this study because it is grounded by five key factors that are essential for effective mentoring to take place. Each of these factors has mentoring roles that can guide mentor lecturers to mentor student-teachers during their teaching practice, in doing so it can help develop effective teaching practices for the student-teacher as well as a teaching identity (Hudson, Skamp, & Brooks, 2005). This mentoring model also moves away from a general perspective of mentoring to a specific one. This is because it provides a context for mentoring, which is focused on specific aspects of mentoring (Hudson, 2004).

This model will guide my study as it discusses factors that if implemented by mentor lecturers in a mentoring program during teaching practice will be able to fulfil the perceived mentoring needs of the student-teachers on which this study is based. The student-teachers perceived mentoring needs being: the need for a safe and nurturing environment, the development of soft skills, discipline and classroom management, receiving constructive feedback, and the need for content knowledge (Du Plessis, Ferreira, De Jager & Fraser,2017), and I am of the opinion that Hudson's five-factor model (as discussed above) can address these mentoring needs.

1.7 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVES

The following sections provide an introduction to the epistemological and methodological choices that have been made to support the intended research and reasons for my choices.

1.7.1 Epistemological paradigm: Interpretivism

The epistemology that this study will use is called interpretivism. This perspective in qualitative research sees the world as something that has been socially constructed and interpreted by people as they interact in the world (Maxwell, 2006; McMillan & Schumacher, 2018). Interpretivism states that the only way in which we can understand the world in which people live is through investigating the people that live in the context we are interested in researching and how these people view their individual experiences. What this therefore means is that there is no objective meaning to reality, but that reality is subjective as the people experiencing it have their own individual understanding and interpretation of their own realities (Henning, Van Rensburg, & Smit, 2004; Creswell, 2016). Therefore, researchers using this philosophical paradigm aim to understand the individual meanings that people have of their lives, from their own perspectives without trying to influence these experiences with the researchers' perspectives (Maree, 2016).

1.7.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative approach

The methodological approach that this study will follow is known as the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research methodology is a methodology that is descriptive and focuses on rich details. It focuses on understanding how people under research in a study make sense of their lives (Atieno, 2009). Qualitative researchers study situations in the context in which they occur. They do so, to understand or interpret the situation in terms of how the people experiencing it, and in that specific context make meaning of the phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). With reference to this study, by using the qualitative methodological paradigm, I aim to interpret the experiences of the student-teachers as they express their mentoring needs during their first teaching practicum in their final year of study (Merriam, 2009). I want to understand what their mentoring needs are in the context of their first teaching practicum as they are located in different schools to conduct their teaching practice.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the following sections I summarise the research design I used for the study, as well as my decisions regarding the choice of a representative sample to represent the population of interest, the data collection methods to be utilised, the approach to data analysis and data interpretation. A more detailed discussion will follow in Chapter 3.

1.8.1 Research design: Descriptive case study design

A case study design is a qualitative research design method that aims to understand a phenomenon as it occurs in its context, using a variety of data sources to investigate this phenomenon (Yin, 2011). This means that when conducting research, the researcher can use a lot of sources that offer the potential to gather different perspectives of the topic being researched (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2013; Simons, 2009). According to Yin (2011), a case study design can be used in cases whereby the researcher has no influence and cannot manipulate the topic under investigation, and it is for this reason that the case study design is an appropriate research design to use for this research, because it was the needs of the student-teachers that this research was based on, and there was no way that I as the co-researcher of this study could have influenced what it was that the student-teachers of this study needed from their mentor lecturers. There are different kinds of case study designs, each of which are selected based on the purpose of the study that is being conducted.

A full discussion of this research design is in Chapter 3.

1.9 METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES

1.9.1 Selection of participants and research site

Purposive sampling was used in conducting this study. This is because this sampling method fit the objective of the research directly (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The student-teachers were purposefully selected because they were final year student-

teachers, and they had never been exposed to teaching practice in their undergraduate program. The research site for this study was convenient because of a Reflection week.

The study was a baseline study, and the participants for both phases of my study (2016 and 2017) were student-teachers at the University of Pretoria that were studying towards their B. Ed, who were in their final year of study (4th year). A total number of 433 students participated in this research in the year 2016 (170), and 2017 (263). These participants were completing their second teaching practice period in the second semester (July-September).

These students were assessed in the second semester since they were block B students. In the first semester, they were not assessed. The students had to be available for data collection sessions after they had completed their teaching practice period. The research was conducted in the Normaal Saal hall at The University of Pretoria, Groenkloof campus. These participants were selected using the purposive sampling technique.

1.9.2 Data collection and documentation

1.9.2.1 Semi-structured, open-ended questionnaire

The data collection method this study used was a semi-structured qualitative questionnaire with open-ended questions. These questionnaires were firstly piloted on a few student-teachers before they were distributed for the use of gathering data for this study. There are a few factors that need to be considered when a researcher chooses to use questionnaires as their data collection method. Such factors include the following:

- Whether or not the questionnaire should be a self-completed one. Questionnaires are flexible in the sense that they can be completed face-to-face, via the telephone or be completed by the individual. The questionnaires administered by this study were given to participants in one setting (The Normaal Saal hall at the University of Pretoria), for them to complete the questionnaire (Mathers, Fox & Hunn, 2007).

- The literacy level of the participants that will be completing the questionnaires should also be taken into consideration when designing the questionnaire. The participants of this research were fourth-year student-teachers at the University of Pretoria that were conducting their first teaching practice in their final year of study. Therefore, their literacy levels were on a level where they could comprehend and complete a questionnaire.

This study chose to structure its questions in an open-ended way because open-ended questions allow for the participants of the questionnaire to answer and interpret the questions in their own way according to their own understanding. What this means is that the questions will be answered in a way that the participant understands them and therefore there is no one structured and restrictive way of answering such questions (Mathers et al., 2007).

1.9.2.2 Reflective researcher journal

In this study, I utilised a reflective researcher journal. A reflective researcher journal is a journal where a researcher that is conducting qualitative research writes down the thoughts, ideas and feelings about the study which he/she is conducting (Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas & Caricativo, 2017). A reflective journal allows a researcher of a study to keep a journal of the contributions that they have made to the study, especially about how the participants of a study construct meaning of the topic that is under investigation (Ackerly & True, 2010).

1.9.3 Data analysis

The data of this study was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) step by step thematic analysis. I have utilised the 2016 and 2017 data for this analysis. The data was analysed inductively through the use of Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis steps. Inductive thematic analysis refers to the idea that the themes identified by the researcher of a study strongly relate to the data collected for the study. Therefore, the themes selected are selected based on the data that has been collected (Javadi & Zarea,

2016). Inductive thematic analysis is a data analysis method that is used for identifying themes and patterns within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Inductive thematic analysis organises the data into rich detail and further helps the researcher to interpret the data set better as it is now grouped into themes and patterns that focus on the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). When a researcher uses thematic analysis, he/she selects the themes from the data that they are working with based on his/her judgement as to what aspects of the research the themes identified speak to in terms of the topic being researched. A theme, therefore, is something that captures important information that can contribute to answering the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis uses six steps to analyse data. These steps are:

Phase 1	Familiarize yourself with the data.
Phase 2	Generate initial codes.
Phase 3	Search for themes.
Phase 4	Reviewing themes.
Phase 5	Defining and naming themes.
Phase 6	Interpreting and reporting.

Figure 1.1: Braun and Clarke's (2006) six steps of conducting thematic analysis.

1.10 QUALITY CRITERIA

The quality criteria used for this research are for qualitative studies which were established by Lincoln & Guba (1985). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), five quality measures need to be conducted in research to ensure that a study is trustworthy. The quality criteria are as follows:

Credibility: This refers to how credible the researcher of a study reports the perspectives/opinions expressed by the participants of his/her study. Therefore, with credibility, the researcher must ensure that how they portray the viewpoints of the participants corresponds to how those participants view the topic of the research (Martens, 2005). I ensured credibility for this research by directly quoting the responses of the participants of my research. This will show that I have in no way misinterpreted the perspectives of the participants but that I have used their direct words derived from the questionnaires that they completed. Credibility for this study will also be ensured by submitting this study to an external marker who will then assess this study.

Transferability: This refers to the researcher giving a thick description of the research and providing this information in such a way that the person reading the research report can confirm whether the research applies to her current context and situation. Transferability also refers to how generalizable the findings of the data of the study are to other populations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This study used the case study design and aims to study a case without generalising its findings to other populations. Therefore, this

research does not aim to ensure transferability for this study to other populations outside of the sample of the student-teachers at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus).

Dependability: This refers to how appropriate the process of inquiry for the study is. For the dependability of the study to be strong, a researcher needs to monitor how the data was captured and then transcribed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Hoepfl, 1997; Tobin & Begley, 2004). This research was conducted for three consecutive years (2016-2018) as a means of establishing the stability of the findings of the research. By getting access to the 2016 and 2017 data, I was able to establish how the data was captured, and I then had to transcribe the 2017 data with careful attention to detail. I did not transcribe the 2016 data myself, but my supervisor had it transcribed and ensured that the transcription was up to standard. Therefore, in this way, I was able to monitor the dependability of the data of this study.

Confirmability: This refers to ensuring that the findings of the research are based on the data presented and not on the researchers own bias and judgment (Mertens, 2005). For confirmability to be established on a research/study, an external examiner needs to be involved in assessing the procedure that the research followed (Schwandt & Halpern, 1988; Tobin & Begley, 2004). Confirmability of this study was confirmed by my supervisor who supervised me throughout this research process, and it will also be confirmed by an external examiner who will assess the procedure that this research followed

Authenticity: This refers to the degree in which the different points of views in the data are fairly represented so that no one view is represented in a way that dominates or overpowers the other (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Authenticity, according to Polit and Beck (2012) also refers to how well the researcher truly shows the emotions and feelings of the participants of his/her study. The questions which were asked to the participants of this study through the questionnaire that they completed allowed the participants to express themselves fully, and there was no way that I, as the co-researcher, could've influenced how the participants expressed themselves. Therefore, the data gathered for this study through the questionnaires was a true representation of the feelings and emotions of the participants, and therefore signifies the authenticity of this study.

1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Project ethical clearance was already established for this study. The ethical clearance for this project is UP 16/11/03. Consent forms were issued to participants which were required to read it and sign it if they agreed to the terms and conditions of the questionnaire. The participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity in terms of the information that they provided, which would be kept confidential and used by the researcher only. They were also assured that they would be exposed to no harm due to their participation in this research. Participants were not coerced into participating in this research. They offered their own voluntary participation in this research.

1.12 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The role that I played in this research is that I came in as co-researcher on secondary data because this was an already existing project. Although I did not collect the data myself, I analysed the 2017 data by myself. I was given the transcribed 2016 data, and I had to analyse it using inductive thematic analysis. I was also given the 2017 hard copies of the questionnaires that the participants of this study had to complete. I had to type this data from the hardcopies to a Microsoft word document. After transcribing the data, I then analysed it using inductive thematic analysis.

1.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is that it is a baseline study which focuses on the mentoring needs of the student-teachers at the University of Pretoria in their fourth year during their first teaching practice. Through the identification of the needs of these student-teachers, this research findings will be used to contribute to the mentoring intervention that the university aims to implement on the mentoring needs of their student-teachers during their teaching practice. There is also a very limited scope of literature on the mentoring needs of student-teachers, specifically on their needs towards the mentor lecturer. I am also of the opinion that this study will also be significant to other higher learning institutions that mentor student-teachers as a tool that they can use to guide them in implementing a

mentoring programme for their own institution that will meet the needs of their own student-teachers. Although the aim of this research is to assist the B. Ed student-teachers of the University of Pretoria during their teaching practice, the results of this study, although not generalisable to other populations and universities due to the research design that this study used (multiple case study design), can however be used by other institutions as a guiding method that they can use to implement their own mentoring intervention that will meet the needs of their own student-teachers. Lastly, this study is significant as it will also contribute to the theoretical model that guided this study which is Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring.

1.14 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1: Orientation to the study

The aim of Chapter 1 was to give an introduction and background of this study. It also discussed the rationale, purpose of the study, primary as well as secondary research questions, key concepts, working definitions, theoretical framework, epistemology, and data analysis strategies used in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature review

In Chapter 2, I discuss the conceptualisation of mentoring needs, especially for the student-teacher that is going to teaching practice for the first time. I also discuss the theoretical model that this study is based on which is Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

In Chapter 3, I discuss the research methodology process in detail by discussing the research design, selection of participants, the data collection and documentation used, as well as the data analysis and interpretation used. I will also discuss inductive thematic analysis as well as the ethics and quality criteria that this research used to ensure the safety and trustworthiness of my research.

Chapter 4: Results and findings of the study

In Chapter 4, I will present the results and findings of the study that emerged from using inductive thematic analysis. I will discuss the themes as well as the sub-themes that I gathered from analysing the two data sets that I will be using (2016 and 2017).

Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

In this chapter, I will reach a conclusion based on the findings that I have presented in Chapter 4. I will discuss the challenges that I came across with this study, as well as the potential value and significance of this study. I will also make recommendations for future endeavours that may be pursued by other researchers which may be similar to the topic of this research.

1.15 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter served as a brief introduction to the study, the existing theory and research findings as reflected in the literature and the objectives of the study. I have also introduced the research questions, and the Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring, forming the theoretical framework to the study, as well as a general bird's eye view of the interpretive philosophical paradigm, research methodology, ethical clearance, the role of the investigator and significance of the study was provided. Finally, a preview of the following chapters has been provided. The literature overview will be discussed in the next chapter which is Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, I presented an overview of this study. I presented the introduction, background, rationale, and purpose of the study, as well as the primary and secondary research questions, working assumptions, concept clarification, the theoretical framework that guided this study, paradigmatic perspectives, research design, and methodological strategies. I have also presented the ethical considerations, quality criteria and the role of the researcher, as well as the significance of the study.

In this chapter, I will explore the existing literature that focuses on the topic of this study. This chapter will report on the importance of teaching practice, what it entails, and what challenges student-teachers have to face during their first teaching practicum. Furthermore, the chapter will elaborate on the kinds of support student-teachers need, among others their need for proper mentoring. The latter will report on mentoring in general, what mentoring entails, who the mentor is, and how the mentor can support the student-teacher. Lastly, this chapter will report on the theory that guided this study, namely Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring. The chapter concludes with a synthesis of the literature and theory.

The following secondary research questions are addressed in this chapter:

1. Why do student-teachers need mentoring, especially from their mentor lecturers during their first teaching practicum?
2. What kind of support do student-teachers need, especially from their mentor lecturers during teaching practice?

2.2 TEACHING PRACTICE AS PART OF STUDENT-TEACHER TRAINING

Morrison and Werf (2012:1) are of the opinion that “theory without practice is empty; and practice without theory is blind”. For student-teachers to become qualified teachers, they are required to participate in a teacher education training program called teaching practice (Ntsaluba & Chireshe, 2013). Teaching practice is an important part of teacher training, and teacher’s education, and as such, it is important that student-teachers attend teaching practice because it aims to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills that will enable them to be effective teachers once they graduate and are certified as registered teachers (Altintas & Gorgen, 2014).

Teaching practice is a form of Work-Integrated Learning (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011) that locates learning within a working environment. Its focus is on how the theory learned at a learning institution can be applied to a working environment (Garnett, 2012; Mbango, 2009). Teaching practice aims to give student-teachers the opportunity to experience the working environment while they are still studying, thus it helps them to gain professional knowledge and skills as they get exposed to the working environment of teachers (Allen & Peach, 2011; Billet, 2011; Mbango, 2009).

Teaching practice is made up of three essential parts. Firstly, it is the practising of the skills required to teach and embody the role of a teacher; secondly it represents the entire experience that student-teachers go through at the schools they are placed in for their teaching practicum (the concept of teaching practice covers all the activities as well as the experiences that student-teachers have in the schools where they conduct their teaching practice) (Andabai, 2011). Thirdly, teaching practice represents the practical aspects of the education degree, which are different from the theoretical aspects (Musingafi & Mafumbate, 2014).

Teaching practice is an important component of the curriculum for training teachers to teach (Gareis & Grant, 2014; Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011). It is a process that is driven by the aim of developing competent teachers, who will be professional in their teaching careers (Bloomfield, 2010; Johnston, 2010). The goal of teaching practice is to provide student-teachers with practical teaching knowledge (Langdon, Alexander, Dinsmore &

Ryde, 2012). Teaching practice gives student-teachers the opportunity to physically apply the knowledge that they have learnt through the coursework from the higher education institutions in which they study, in the schools where they conduct their teaching practicum (Allen, 2009; Gujjar, 2010; Zailani, 2013). It also gives the student-teacher the opportunity to develop a teaching style which they believe expresses who they are, and who they would like to become as professional teachers one day (Nillas, 2010). According to Perry (2004) the number of schools, and time that student-teachers need to conduct their teaching practicum, differs according to the institution in which the student-teacher is completing their teaching qualification. At the University of Pretoria at the end of 2017, only those student-teachers that were in their final year of study (4th year) had the opportunity to go for teaching practice for 20 weeks for the first time since they commenced their studies (10 weeks from April to June, and 10 weeks from July to September).

Teaching practice aims to help develop teaching skills in student-teachers; to make student-teachers aware of the learning process; the different pedagogical situations that they will be exposed to as future teachers, and how to manage the classroom (Fry, Ketteridge & Marshall, 2009; Nillas, 2010). Gaining professional experience is very important for student-teachers, and as such, they regard the time that they are allocated to conduct teaching practice as a very important part of their teaching qualification (Crasborn & Hennissen, 2010). The activities that a student-teacher may participate in as they conduct their teaching practice in a school which they are placed, are such as classroom observations, assessment, planning, teaching and evaluation in the classroom setting (Andabai, 2010).

Student-teachers are assessed during teaching practice. Assessments that take place during the teaching practice describe the activities that are conducted by the student-teacher, and the assessors are the mentor lecturers, as well as the mentor teacher. These assessments help the mentor teacher and mentor lecturer to obtain knowledge on the skills and competencies of student-teachers that they are guiding during the teaching practicum (Ssentamu-Namubiro, 2010). The activities that the student-teachers can be

guided on could be on formal assessments such as observing the student-teachers teach, and then giving them a mark for the work conducted (Marsh, 2009).

Assessment instruments used in teaching practice provide the mentor teacher and mentor lecturer with a set criterion which states the knowledge and the skills that the student-teachers should display during their teaching practicum period. The criterion of the assessment has different levels of competence, which the mentor teacher and mentor lecturer use to assess the student-teachers' performance during their teaching practicum period (Ruszynak, 2011). The reason for assessment during the teaching practicum is so that the student-teachers' teaching abilities can be monitored; and the student-teachers can be given a grade; to motivate the student-teachers by giving them feedback, which will give them the motivation to want to improve on their teaching skills and become better teachers (Chimhenga, 2017).

Student-teachers at the University of Pretoria were assessed by their mentor lecturers, and according to Walkington (2005) and Portner (2008), assessment is often associated with the act of supervising and not mentoring. This is because supervisors are the ones that are tasked with judging one's performance, and mentors should not be tasked with such a role. However, although the task of assessment is mostly associated with that of a supervisor, mentor lecturers are professionally placed by the university, and as such, they must assess the competence of their student-teachers (Chimhenga, 2017; Ssentamu-Namubiro, 2010). When mentor lecturers assess their student-teachers, they gather information about their student-teachers' ability to teach and learn, and this then determines how competent the student-teacher is, according to the perspective of the mentor lecturer (Ruszynak, 2011). The mentor lecturer also assesses the student-teacher's ability to handle challenging situations, and how the student-teacher abides by the informal culture and practices of the school where they conduct their teaching practicum (Portner, 2008).

According to Ponte and Brunheira (2001) and Andabai (2011), the process of teaching practice will be able to change the perspectives that student-teachers have about the profession of teaching, because the experiences that the student-teachers have during their teaching practice, as well as the activities that they engage in during this period, will

help them to create a general, conceptual, and practical idea of what being a teacher entails.

With that said, teaching practice allows student-teachers to practically experience real-life classrooms and the challenges that are in these classrooms (Chien, 2014; Intrator, 2006; Koross, 2016).

2.3 CHALLENGES FACED BY STUDENT-TEACHERS DURING THEIR TEACHING PRACTICUM

According to Moletsane (2012), Kirumira (2016) and Mukeredzi and Nkambule (2017), that conducted research on teaching practice in school contexts, it was revealed that the challenges that student-teachers face during their teaching practicum period vary. The following challenges are a general representation of what research has indicated to be the common challenges that student-teachers face when conducting their first teaching practicum:

2.3.1 Academic challenges

2.3.1.1 Lesson planning

Student-teachers in their teaching practicum are expected to give a lot of attention to activities that may occur simultaneously in the classroom. They are expected to plan lessons, apply the lessons in the classroom, cater to the needs of the learners in the classroom, and identify the behaviour that the learners are demonstrating through verbal and non-verbal cues (Alamri, 2018). They need to monitor the attention of the learners in the classroom based on the content that they are teaching them, and they also need to assess the previous knowledge that the learners have on the subject being taught (Moos & Pitton, 2014). Student-teachers, therefore, need to show their ability to handle all these demands that are placed on them, and this may result in the student-teachers feeling overwhelmed (Ching, 2011). Student-teachers are expected to treat their learners in an equal and fair manner, and also to recognise and identify any emotional or social needs that a learner in the classroom may have (Heeralal & Bayaga, 2011).

These expectations and demands that are placed on the student-teacher may be very stressful for them, because a lot of them are tasks that the student-teacher must perform in the classroom, as a form of multitasking while teaching the learners. Therefore, the student-teacher must think about such things as managing the behaviour of the learners in the classroom while also thinking about how to present and apply the lesson plan prepared for the learners for that particular lesson (Bullough, Young & Draper, 2004; Ambrosetti, 2014).

2.3.1.2 More theory, less practice

The literature by points out that student-teachers spend more time in their educational institutions learning about the theory of teaching, instead of them being in the actual schools, practising teaching (Ilaiyan & Zidan, 2008; Quick & Sieborger, 2005). This was also the case for the student-teachers at the University of Pretoria that participated in this study. These students were exposed to teaching practice only when they were in the final year of their teaching degree.

Being exposed to too much theory on teaching, and not enough practice of teaching is not an issue that is only faced by the student-teachers that participated in this study. Student-teachers in China have also revealed that their teacher education program often focuses more on theory than it does on the practical aspects of teaching (Lu, 2013). Therefore, student-teachers in China stated that they were also faced with the challenge of not getting enough time to go for their teaching practicum (Zhou & Zhu, 2007). A study conducted by Msiska & Salik (2016) in China, elaborated on this challenge by revealing that the student-teachers in China only get exposed to ten weeks of teaching practice a year.

Darling-Hammond (2006), Kadji-Beltran, Zachariou, Liarakou, and Flogaitis (2014), and Gut, Beam, Henning, Cochran & Knight (2014) state that for a teacher-training programme to be strong and effective, it must set aside sufficient time for the student-teachers to conduct their teaching practicum.

However, a study conducted by Ronfeldt & Reininger (2012) investigated whether prolonging the amount of time spent on teaching practice for student-teachers had a positive impact on the student-teachers, in terms of them being more instructionally prepared to teach. This study revealed that the time that student-teachers spend on the teaching practicum has very little effect on the student-teacher's success during their teaching practicum period. However, what does influence the student-teacher's success is the quality of the teaching practicum that they receive.

Studies were also conducted by Chambers and Hardy (2005) and Spooner, Flowers, Lambert and Algozzine (2008) to see if a difference existed between student-teachers that go for teaching practice for one semester and those that go for it for two semesters. The findings from these studies concluded that there was no significant difference between the two groups of student-teachers when measured on their teaching skills, such as how they manage the classroom, and their self-perceived abilities to teach based on the duration of their teaching practice.

2.3.1.3 The lack of constructive feedback

A study conducted by Hamel and Jaasko-Fisher (2011), revealed that mentor lecturers due to the time constraints that they have, which are caused by their demanding jobs, struggle to find time to provide proper feedback to their student-teachers during their teaching practicum. Bechuke, Thomas and James (2013) revealed that mentor lecturers are also not consistent in how they mentor student-teachers during their teaching practicum. Some mentor lecturers do not visit the schools in which their student-teachers are conducting their teaching practicum. This lack of visits from the mentor lecturer can also impact the feedback that student-teachers get during their teaching practicum from their mentor lecturers (Mukeredzi, 2017).

Studies conducted in Turkey have also revealed that the student-teachers there have major issues that they face in their teaching practicum in relation to the supervisors (mentor lecturers) that mentor them during this time (Kuter & Koç, 2009). These student-teachers stated that they were not receiving adequate attention from their mentor

lecturers and that their mentor lecturers often gave them limited feedback when they consulted with them, regarding their teaching practice.

Studies conducted by Paker (2005) and Kuter and Koç (2009) state that the mentor lecturers that were responsible for student-teachers during their teaching practicum did not give priority to the fact that they had to give feedback to their student-teachers, and this indicated a lack of awareness of the responsibilities that the mentor lecturers had about their role, as mentors during the teaching practicum period. This lack of being provided with feedback puts student-teachers at a disadvantage because the feedback that student-teachers obtain from their mentor lecturers can be used as a way in which student-teachers monitor their progress during their teaching practicum (Bradbury & Koballa, 2005).

2.3.2 Pedagogical challenges

2.3.2.1 Classroom management

Teaching classrooms are multidimensional, and as a result, they require that student-teachers' multi-task and keep the classroom organised (Ching, 2011). The events that occur in a classroom can be immediate and unforeseen. According to Frick, Arend and Beets (2010), student-teachers are not sufficiently equipped to deal with classroom management challenges, and a lot of student-teachers during their teaching practicum have challenges that are based on classroom management (Balli, 2009; Corzo & Contreras, 2011).

A study conducted by Doyle (1986) revealed that school teachers make about 500 decisions per day within their school working hours. Student-teachers may also be required to make a lot of decisions as they conduct their teaching practicum, such as what activities the class are going to engage in and how to keep learners motivated and engaged during the lesson. In addition to these, student-teachers are expected to manage the classroom and to also manage discipline in their classroom (Ching, 2011). This decision-making process can be a huge challenge for student-teachers, and it may leave them feeling overwhelmed.

Classroom management is also specifically a challenge for student-teachers in the South African contexts, where there is a problem regarding overcrowded schools (Marais, 2016). In South Africa, the maximum ratio, when it comes to learners to educators in a classroom is 40:1 for primary schools, and 35:1 for secondary schools (Motshekga, 2012). Although these are the stipulated rules for a classroom in South Africa, some schools have exceeded the number of learners that they must accommodate in each class, and when student-teachers are conducting their teaching practicum, they are then exposed to overcrowded classrooms. According to John (2013) in a report that he conducted, it was revealed that some schools in the Eastern Cape had three to four learners seated in one desk, in a desk that was naturally designed to sit two learners. Another school in the Eastern Cape has 1300 learners in the school with only 24 teachers to teach them.

Imtiaz (2014) and Mustafa, Mahmoud, Assaf, Al-Hamadi and Abdulhamid (2014), stated that teachers, as well as student-teachers who are exposed to overcrowded classrooms, are also challenged by time management because they cannot fulfil their instructional duties when they have too many learners to teach in their classrooms.

Nillas (2010), states that most student-teachers are faced with classroom management challenges during their teaching practicum because the lectures that they have attended at the educational institutions in which these student-teachers' are studying for their teaching degree have not provided realistic information to the student-teachers about classroom management.

Student-teachers may also particularly have pedagogical challenges because there may be a discrepancy between what they have learnt about teaching from their educational institution, and what they are exposed to once they begin their teaching practicum (Mai & Baldauf, 2010). Therefore, student-teachers may be challenged when it comes to how they should put the theory that they know about teaching, into practice in the classrooms that they teach during this period of their teaching practicum (Gan, 2013).

(b) Discipline

Discipline is a very challenging phenomenon in South African schools, and there are not a lot of disciplinary measures that can be put into place to curb this (Kepe, 2014). Studies conducted by Ababneh (2012), Dicke, Elling, Schmeck, & Leutner (2015), have revealed that student-teachers state discipline issues that arise in the school as well as the classroom context, as one of the challenging aspects that they encounter during their teaching practicum.

A study conducted by Heeralal and Bayaga (2011) on the Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) and B. Ed student-teachers at a South African university, revealed that the student-teachers there, while conducting their teaching practicum, were majorly concerned about the behaviour of the learners in the classrooms in which they conducted their teaching practicums. Learner indiscipline in schools can present itself in many forms such as theft, vandalism, disobedience, intimidation and rape, to name a few (Marais & Meier, 2010). South African schools have presented a lot of disciplinary issues. Marais and Meier (2010) have also noted that teachers in South African schools are severely stressed due to the discipline problems that exist in schools. Thus, disciplining learners is an even more challenging duty for teachers and student-teachers to fulfil, especially since the abolishment of corporal punishment in schools in South Africa (Naong, 2007).

(c) The use of teaching methods and teaching aids

Student-teachers must be well-trained and mentored on how to plan lessons; how to use classroom resources such as the blackboard, and how to articulate their lesson, based on the size of the classroom in which they will be teaching to be effective teachers one day. Student-teachers should also know what to prepare for a class, when to prepare it, and how to go about this preparation (Tankersley, 2010).

An effective mentor lecturer needs to show the student-teacher that there is always a connection between the lessons, assessments and teaching of a subject (Tankersley, 2010). A mentor lecturer can show a student-teacher how to teach, and how to use different teaching methods, learning styles, differentiation, and teaching aids through them modelling these for the student-teacher. Modelling is a very important factor when

mentoring student-teachers because it allows the student-teacher to practically view lessons, classroom management skills, and many other practices that take place within the classroom from their mentor lecturer (Moir, 2009).

2.3.2.2 The inability of mentor lecturers to fulfil their mentoring role

Bechuke et al., (2013), while conducting a study in South Africa on the challenges that student-teachers face during their teaching practicum, discovered that most mentor lecturers are not aware of their responsibilities as mentors during the teaching practicum.

In some instances, mentoring can be unguided as mentors lack specific training about how they should mentor student-teachers (Zeichner, 2010). Clarke, Triggs and Nielsen (2012) support this statement by also stating that there is a lack of training when it comes to the mentoring of student-teachers (Hudson, 2010). The lack of training of mentor lecturers may hinder the professional development of student-teachers during their teaching practicum. Some mentors are not trained substantially in their roles and duties as mentors. This has been identified as an ongoing gap when it comes to mentor preparation in mentoring programmes (Beutel & Spooner- Lane, 2009; O'Brien & Goddard, 2006; Tang & Choi, 2005). Mentor lecturers need to be trained to mentor student-teachers, and if they are not trained, then mentoring programs run the risk of failing (Dos Reis, 2013).

The literature on student-teachers and teacher education and training lacks a focus on the training of mentor lecturers for mentoring student-teachers. Mentor lecturers need to be trained on how to mentor student-teachers before they can successfully mentor them (Ambrosetti, 2016). Hibbert, Heydon, and Rich (2008), Batt (2010) and Nasser-Abu Alhija & Fresko (2014), state that mentor lecturers need time to learn, and to gain experience about mentoring student-teachers. They state that in cases where someone is a good teacher, it does not mean that they will equally be a good mentor. Moir, Barlin, Gless, and Miles (2009), state that the professional development of mentor lecturers need to be carefully planned out. If mentor lecturers are not well prepared to do their job as mentors, then they will not be able to meet the needs and expectations of their student-teachers

during their teaching practicum (Harrison, Dynmoke, & Pell, 2006; Nevins Stanulis & Floden, 2009).

2.4 MENTORING CONCEPTUALISED

There is no universal definition of mentoring (Gold, 1996; Mullen, 2012). Mentoring is a widely accepted practice that can be found and applied in different contexts. Therefore, the understanding and meaning of the word will vary, according to the context in which it is applied (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015; Bridge Quick Resource, 2016). According to Clawson (1980, as cited in Koc, 2011), the term "mentor" originates from Homer's Greek epic poem "*The Odyssey*'. The poem tells a tale about how king Odysseus had to leave home, and in leaving home, he gave his friend "Mentor" the responsibility of nurturing his son Telemachus. "Mentor" was a loyal friend and advisor, as well as a guiding, supportive and trusted educator. "Mentor" was entrusted with the task of teaching and developing Telemachus while his father was away, in preparation for one day when he would be required to take on a leadership role for his country.

With regards to this study, the word "mentoring" will support the view of Korthagen, Loughan and Russel (2006), which explores mentoring, from the background of a nurturing relationship. This view explores mentoring between a mentor (mentor lecturer), and a mentee (student-teacher), through the mentor lecturer guiding the student-teacher, and helping them through any challenges that they may face during their teaching practicum. This definition of mentoring applies explicitly to teaching and teacher training. Therefore, mentoring refers to one being provided with support, being challenged and then receiving guidance from another person that has more skills, and knowledge in a particular field or context, in which the mentee has an interest in becoming a part of (Maritz, Visagie & Johnson, 2013).

According to the Department of Higher Education and Training (2011), a mentor is required to fulfil the role of being a teacher, motivator, supporter, advisor, change agent, role model, counsellor, demonstrator, companion and coach. The purpose of mentoring during teaching practice is to counsel and guide the student-teacher to develop a

professional teacher identity (Musingafi & Mafumbate, 2014). However, the role of the mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum seems to be underrated and forgotten (Marks, 2002). This may also be as a result of the fact that most of the literature on teacher training does not refer to the mentor lecturer through the direct words of “mentor lecturer”, but it refers to the mentor lecturer as a “university supervisor” (Steadman & Brown, 2011).

The term “mentor” is often understood in conjunction with the word’s “supervisor” and “coach” (Koc, 2011, Parker, Hall & Kram, 2008). This is problematic as many mentors have been using supervisor techniques and strategies in the place of mentoring (Aladejana, Aladejana & Ehindero, 2006; Batt, 2010; Hudson & Millwater, 2008). What has been more problematic in the literature on mentoring student-teachers is the idea that the mentor teacher has been identified as an individual that assumes both the roles of a mentor and supervisor (Bechuke et al., 2013; Hennissen, Crasborn, Brouwer, Korthagen, & Bergen, 2008).

This is a problem because there are differences that exist between a supervisor and a mentor. A supervisor is a person of a higher position who plays a hierarchal role to those that he/she is supervising (Fransson, 2010). Bray and Nettleton (2006), state that a supervisor is one that plays the role of being a teacher, assessor, boss and expert; whereas, a mentor plays the role of assisting, guiding (Oetjen & Oetjen, 2009), counselling and befriending (Dos Reis, 2012).

Mentoring in teacher training is a form of guidance where a mentor takes on the role of professionally guiding the mentee (student-teacher). Mentor lecturers are assigned the role of mentoring student-teachers. This role requires that they work with the student-teachers, and that they also share the knowledge and experiences that they have gathered in the years that they have been professional teachers, with the student-teachers that they mentor (Botha & Reddy, 2011; Du Plessis, 2013; Hudson, 2010).

Lai (2005) states that mentoring is made up of three components. Firstly, mentoring is relational because it focuses on the relationship that gets formed between the mentor and the mentee. Secondly, mentoring is a developmental process because it aims at developing the mentee, as well as developing the mentor professionally and personally

during the mentorship that takes place between the two. Lastly, mentoring is contextual because it also focuses on the context in which the mentoring takes place.

According to Jones (2009) and Ambrosetti and Dekkers (2010), it is these three components that form the process of mentoring. The roles of the mentor lecturer during teaching practicum according to the Alberta Teachers' Association (2003) are those such as teaching the student-teachers and helping them to come up with teaching strategies that can be used in the classroom by the student-teacher to teach effectively. Mentor lecturers need to be aware of and to understand the different challenges that student-teachers are exposed to during their teaching practicum, and as such, they also need to be aware of the needs of their student-teachers. Mentor lecturers are responsible for communicating effectively with their student-teachers, and to also provide the student-teacher with all the necessary information that they may require with regards to teaching that a student-teacher may need from them.

In the next section I will discuss the importance of mentorship as part of teaching practice, stressing the value of mentoring, Du Plessis et al., (2010: 328) note that "if, as research indicates, practice teaching is the most single powerful intervention in teachers' professional preparation, then mentoring is the single most powerful process of such intervention".

2.5 MENTORING AS AN ASSET IN TEACHER TRAINING

During teaching practise student-teachers depend on the guidance or mentoring of their teachers and mentor lecturers (Johnson & Napper-Owen, 2011; Lunsford, 2016).

Mentor lecturers and mentor teachers are also responsible for providing support to the student-teacher during their teaching practicum (Lawson, Cakmak, Gunduz & Busher, 2015). Mentoring in teacher training and education is important because student-teachers need to understand the complexities that come with the profession of teaching, and they can only do so within the real school contexts in which they are placed, to conduct their teaching practicum (Ng, 2012).

According to Maphalala (2013), mentoring during teaching practice is important for student-teachers because it influences the professional development of the student-teacher. All learners in a school deserve to have a teacher that is highly competent, knowledgeable and holds a high level of teaching skills. It is through mentoring that student-teachers can be shaped to develop such competence, knowledge and skills (Martinez, 2004), and it is also through mentoring that quality teachers can be formed (Baker & McNicoll, 2006). Mentoring is, thus, a valuable tool that can help student-teachers to develop their own teacher identity (Kaasila & Lauriala, 2010; Leshem, 2012).

Student-teachers through being mentored, also get access to the resources that exist within the profession of teaching, and it also helps the student-teachers to set clear professional goals for themselves. Mentoring can also help to reduce the number of beginning teachers that leave the profession of teaching within the first few years of entering it (Dynmoke et al., 2006; Freeman, 1998; Salis, 2004; Sweeny, 2001).

2.6 MENTOR TRAITS THAT PROMOTE GOOD MENTORING

According to a study conducted by Marable and Raimondi (2007), it was revealed that the personalities of mentor lecturers play a very significant role in the success of the mentoring relationship that exists between the mentor lecturer and student-teacher during the teaching practicum. According to Trout (2010), the personality traits of the mentor lecturer influence student-teachers' experience of the quality of mentoring once mentor lecturers are selected and placed to mentor them.

Mentor lecturers are individuals that possess good communication skills and are also good listeners (Wiebke & Bardin, 2009). Mentor lecturers need to be able to provide emotional support to their student-teachers and be willing to listen and to create a safe space where the student-teacher can feel free to confide in them. They should be individuals that empathise with their student-teachers, and their actions towards the student-teachers should not be based on any pre-conceived judgments that they have made about their student-teachers (Mahomed & Singh, 2011). The mentor lecturer must also hold strong interpersonal skills (Simatwa, 2010). A mentor is also a person that has

appropriate knowledge, and the passion, skills and desire to share their knowledge with another person (Beutel & Spooner-Lane, 2009; Hamilton, 2003).

The ideal relationship that should exist between a mentor and a mentee should be based on characteristics such as trust, mutual respect, understanding and empathy from both the mentor lecturer and the student-teacher. The goal of the mentoring relationship should also be mutual, it should be based on a common goal which is to advance the personal, as well as the academic knowledge of the student-teacher (Rockquemore, 2013).

According to Heeralal (2014), student-teachers want a mentor that is respectful towards them as student-teachers. Therefore, a mentor needs to be someone that treats the mentee as a colleague rather than someone who sees themselves as having more power over the mentee and then using their power to undermine the mentee (Cox, 2018). A mentor is someone that sees themselves as equal to their mentee; someone that takes on the role of being a friend to their mentee; someone that is a collaborator as he/she works side by side with their mentee, as the mentee works on gaining the relevant skills and knowledge from the mentor.

Mentor lecturers need to be able to consider the feelings, beliefs, questions and worries that the student-teacher may have pertaining to their teaching practicum (Bird, 2012). Mentor lecturers are expected to engage with the student-teacher constructively and to be professional and supportive towards the student-teacher (Chimhenga, 2017). Mentor lecturers are individuals that are committed to life-long learning and should also possess the characteristics of being trustworthy individuals (Moir, 2009). They should encourage student-teachers to develop their own teacher identity even though the student-teacher may have a teacher identity that is completely different from the one that they have as mentor lecturers (Pitton, 2006).

Therefore, a mentor is also a person that encourages their mentee to develop their own individual skills, expertise, judgments as well as their personal mastering of the profession into which they want to get. If mentor lecturers want to effectively mentor their student-teachers, they have to accept the perspectives that the student-teachers may have

regarding the teaching practicum, even if the perspectives that they hold are contrary to that of the mentor lecturer (Kilburg, 2007; Nwanekazi et al., 2011).

Mentor lecturers' attributes, especially those that they portray towards the student-teacher, can serve as a foundation that can enhance the student-teacher's development as a teacher, as they conduct their teaching practicum (Ganser, 2002; Kennedy & Dorman, 2002). Therefore, the mentor's lecturers' attributes in this regard have an impact on how the student-teacher develops during the teaching practicum.

According to a study conducted by Jones (2009) and Chimhenga (2017), the roles of the mentor lecturer from the perspective of the student-teacher are that the mentor lecturer needs to be someone that provides support; someone that can be a critical friend, who can offer constructive criticism and feedback (Pekannli, 2011). Maynard (2000) further expands this by stating that a mentor lecturer needs to be someone that creates an inclusive environment for the student-teacher so that the student-teacher can feel welcomed (Kilcullen, 2007) and included in the context of them being mentored during their teaching practicum.

Ambrosetti, Knight and Dekkers (2014), state that a mentor is a supporter. Therefore, a mentor lecturer needs to be someone that can provide support to the mentee through encouraging him/her and giving the mentee direction in terms of how to reach the goal on which the mentoring relationship is based. O'Brien and Hamburg (2014), further add that a mentor is one that provides guidance as well as suggestions to his/her mentee.

There are multiple functions of mentoring in the educational organization as well as in the individuals involved in it (Ambrosetti et al., 2014), and as such, the roles of the mentor and mentee have to be established, taking into consideration what the two parties involved perceive to be their role in the mentoring relationship. The skills needed for one to be a mentor can be learned and developed through proper training. Therefore, mentor lecturers must be prepared to become mentors so that they can develop knowledge of the correct mentoring techniques, and skills that will enable them to mentor their student-teachers effectively (Hennissen, Crasborn, Frank, Brouwer, Korthagen & Bergen , 2008; Masters, 2009; Wang & Odell, 2002). If mentor lecturers are unclear about their mentoring

roles, and the expectations that are set on them are unrealistic, it may then result in them not being in a position to fulfil their duties as mentor lecturers towards their student-teachers (Clarke et al., 2012; Hall-Kenyon, Draper, Smith, and Bullough, 2008; Simpson, Hastings, & Hill, 2007).

From the perspective of Johnson (2009), a mentor should also possess cognitive abilities which are grounded on the basis of the mentor having theoretical knowledge; a sense of caring about their mentee; be dedicated to their task of mentoring and have the willingness to experiment with the mentee during the mentoring process.

Clutterbuck (2013), states that mentors need to be competent in such things as being able to solve problems and being able to respect and recognise the boundary that exists in the mentoring relationship between themselves and their mentee. Mentors also need to possess technical skills.

It is thus evident that for mentoring to be effective, it needs to be well-structured and well-organised. Mentees must also be paired with mentors that will be able to meet their mentoring needs (Majoni & Nyaruwata, 2015).

Mentor lecturers should thus be trustworthy and possess goodwill towards their mentees as this will enhance the professional growth of their mentees. They should also be models of commitment, responsibility, efficiency and enthusiasm towards their profession. Mentor lecturers must display such characteristics as they influence the development, orientation, disposition, as well as the conceptions and classroom practices that student-teachers have (Kettle & Sellars, 1996). Thus, the role of a mentor lecturer is multifaceted as they act as a “guide, coach, supervisor, counsellor, role model, nurturer, advisor, critic and supporter” (Shumba, Shumba & Maphosa, 2007).

In the next section, I will elaborate more on the kind of support mentors can offer student-teachers during their teaching practicum.

2.7 STUDENT-TEACHERS' NEED FOR MENTOR LECTURER SUPPORT

The aim of teacher training programmes is to help student-teachers to gain professional teaching skills, and for them to understand the teaching profession. A tool that can make sure that such an aim is reached, is the tool of mentoring (Dos Reis, 2013). In the context of teacher training, mentoring is used as a support mechanism (Howe, 2006) during teaching practice to mentor student-teachers as they conduct their teaching practicum in a school (Vumilia & Semali, 2016).

Student-teachers are in desperate need of mentoring from their mentor lecturers. Mentoring in teacher training and education is important, especially during the process of teaching practice (Butler & Cuenca, 2012; Hennissen, Brouwer, Korthagen & Bergen, 2011; Ng, 2012). Mentor lecturers have the ability to influence student-teachers; they have knowledge on content that relates to the teaching course; they know about "learning facilitators, curriculum developers, mentors and role models; resource providers and supporters of student-teachers" (Asplin & Marks, 2013:2). Thus the role of mentor lecturer is a very crucial one, and their presence in the lives of student-teachers during their teaching practicum can enhance the teaching practice experiences of the student-teachers in a very positive way, and they are in the greatest position to mentor student-teachers' during their teaching practicum. Edgar, Roberts and Murphy (2009: 36) are of the opinion that "understanding the needs of student-teachers during the student teaching phase of their professional training program is paramount to producing highly qualified, and motivated professionals who will enter the profession".

To be an effective mentor, the mentor lecturer must know the student-teachers' mentoring needs during their teaching practicum (Kajs et al., 2001). It is due to the issues that have been discussed above about the challenges faced by student-teachers in their teaching practicum, that they have mentoring needs during their teaching practicum.

While student-teachers are conducting their teaching practicum they are in need of guidance and support from their mentor lecturers, to be able to understand and adapt to teaching, the school culture, as well as the demands that come with the profession of teaching (Hyde & Edwards, 2013; Rusznyak, 2016). Mentor lecturers need to support the

student-teacher yet also instruct them. They, therefore, need to strike a balance of support, and instruction in their mentoring relationship with their student-teacher (Brondyk & Searby, 2013).

As already highlighted, it is evident that the process of learning to teach can be a daunting experience for student-teachers. As such, it is important that student-teacher's receive support, guidance, and nurturing during their teaching practicum, as this will help them towards their professional growth as teachers (Graves, 2010). Student-teachers particularly need mentoring from their lecturers because it is mentor lecturers that have an awareness of issues that exist within the education system, and within teaching practice, and as such, they are the right sources of knowledge that can help student-teachers to navigate their way towards becoming qualified teachers (Maphalala, 2013).

Due to the challenges that have been discussed above that student-teachers face during their teaching practicum period, it is thus a necessity that student-teachers are mentored (Chimhenga, 2017).

Student-teachers are in desperate need of emotional support during their teaching practicum period (Nasser-Abu Alhija, & Fresko, 2014). They need to experience care and trust from their mentor lecturer. They also need their mentor lecturer to offer them positive support and a listening ear (Hennissen, Brouwer, Korthagen & Bergen, 2011). Without emotional support student-teachers tend to be "more apt to have anxiety, insecurity and lack of confidence" (Kilburg, 2007: 297), and it is thus very important that the emotional health of student-teachers be attended to at this early stage of their careers which is during training, so that the necessary support services can be provided to them early on (Uzman & Telef, 2015).

Support can be divided into four major categories according to the hierarchical model of social support as designed by Tardy (1985). These categories of social support can be known as instructional, instrumental, appraisal and emotional support.

(a) Instructional support

Instructional support refers to support that is given through the provision of information (Suldo et al., 2009). According to Gold (1996), instructional support refers to providing student-teachers with the knowledge and skills that will help them to be effective teachers in the classroom. Instructional support is tangible in its nature, and it aims to foster, and improve how one learns and even teaches (Tennant et al., 2015). Concerning this study, instructional support for student-teachers refers to them receiving constructive feedback and criticism from their mentor lecturer (Zeru, 2014).

Student-teachers during their teaching practicum need to receive feedback from their mentor lecturers. The feedback that they need to be given should be based on their professional development towards becoming teachers (Range, Young & Hvidston, 2013). Constructive criticism from mentor lecturers allows for the student-teacher to reflect on how they have been performing their teaching duties, during their teaching practicum. According to Hattie (2009) and Oppong (2013), effective criticism during teaching practice answers questions such as where the student-teacher is headed; how they intend to get to where they are headed, and lastly where they will be headed next after they have reached their desired goal.

Feedback that is given to student-teachers should be about addressing issues such as classroom management, discipline in the classroom, lesson planning and other teaching needs that the student-teacher may identify (Azure, 2015; Evans-Andris, Kyle & Carini, 2006). Feedback may be presented in written or oral form, and it is presented with total honesty, to make the student-teacher grow, and not to harm them (Glenn, 2006; Hudson, 2016). However, according to studies conducted by Paker (2005), Eraslan (2009), and Kuter and Koç, (2009), being given feedback during teaching practice seems to be one of the problems and challenges that student-teachers encounter. In their studies, they conclude that mentor lecturers do not regard feedback as an important factor when mentoring student-teachers. This puts student-teachers at a disadvantage because, the feedback that student-teachers get from their mentor lecturers can be used as a way in which they monitor their progress, so that they too are aware of the improvement that they are making during their teaching practicum period.

Shakir (2009) states that new teachers are generally proficient in academics, but that they lack soft skills such as ethics, moral and professional skills such as critical thinking, and communication skills. Soft skills are personal attributes that improve one's interactions, job performance and career prospects. There is a strong need for the development of soft skills in student-teachers. These strong skills being, but not limited to such things as, communicative, thinking, and problem- solving skills (Pachauri & Yaduv, 2014). Student-teachers need to develop these soft skills because they find it challenging to link classroom outcomes to real-life situations (Onabamiro, Onuka & Oyekanmi, 2014). The most effective way that student-teachers can develop soft skills is through having them modelled by their mentor lecturers (Aricia, 2013). With that said student-teachers thus have an inherent need to have the professional behaviour of teachers be modelled for them during their teaching practicum. Subramaniam (2013) states that the acquisition of soft skills could bring about positive changes to student-teachers in how they handle their emotions, their interactions with others as well as improve their ability to work well with others as a team.

(b) Instrumental support

Instrumental support is the support that is provided which is tangible, and it aims to foster and improve how one learns (Tennant et al., 2015). This kind of support could be provided through things such as money and time (Malecki & Demaray, 2002).

Student-teachers need a considerable amount of time to consult with their mentor lecturers. Student-teachers also need time with their mentor lecturers to debrief about their teaching practice and to also discuss any changes, that may be implemented to their teaching practicum, and mentoring process (Ganser, 2002). Time invested by the mentor lecturer is of a very important factor especially to student-teachers that are struggling, and therefore require their mentor lecturer to assist them in a deep and detailed way. Therefore, mentor lecturers need to set out enough time that will be for consulting with their student-teachers, so that effective and productive mentoring takes place (Hudson, Usak, & Ganser, 2009).

The student-teachers need for time and availability from their mentor lecturer is one of the needs that mentor lecturers may be challenged to meet. This is because mentor lecturers operate on very busy schedules whereby, they are required to observe the student-teacher, give them feedback while also attending to other matters that demand their time and attention such as conducting research and lecturing (Anderson & Radencich, 2001).

(c) Appraisal support

Appraisal support is the form of support that can be provided through giving praise, affirmation and even feedback to an individual (Kelly & Antonio, 2016). Through learning about the pedagogical skills of teaching (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2011), student-teachers are also taught how to become reflective practitioners who are able to reflect on their teaching, during their practicum, and then link it to the feedback that they have been given by their mentor lecturers about how they have performed during their teaching practicum (Sempowicz & Hudson, 2011).

Therefore, mentor teachers and mentor lecturers that are responsible for training and mentoring student-teachers can offer appraisal support to their student-teachers through giving them feedback about their performance during their teaching practicum period (Gielen, Peeters, Dochy, Onghena & Struyven, 2010; Andersson & Palm, 2017).

(d) Emotional support

According to studies conducted by Huffman and Leak (1986); Booth (1993); Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop (2007), and Bradbury (2010), it was discovered that during teaching practice, student-teachers need emotional support from their mentors. Emotional support refers to giving an individual love, care and showing them empathy (Hennissen et al., 2011).

When student-teachers are being trained to become professional teachers during their teaching practicum, their mental health and well-being is often neglected (Abell, Dillion, Hoplins, Mc Interney & O' Brien, 1995; Awaya, Mc Ewan, Heyler, Linsky, 2003; Deng, Zhu, Xu, Li & Rutter, 2018), and more attention is directed at helping them to develop practical skills needed to become teachers (Mehdinezhad, 2012). During teaching

practice student-teachers experience intense feelings and emotions such as worry, fear and anxiety (Bloomfield, 2010; Timoštšuk & Ugaste, 2010). The emotions that student-teachers feel, and experience influence their learning during their teaching practicum period (Grudnoff, 2011; Izadinia, 2016).

Although the goal of teaching practice is to provide student-teachers with teaching experience, there is never a direct focus on the emotional as well as the psychological issues that student-teachers are confronted with during this time (Kim & Cho, 2014). Teaching practice is a new experience for student-teachers and thus the training that they go through during their teaching practicum can be psychologically demanding, and it may place huge amounts of stress and vulnerability on the student-teacher (Durksen & Klassen, 2012). Teaching practice can stir a lot of emotions in student-teachers, and as such, it may make them feel anxious, excited, and they may also feel apprehensive as they are about to embark on the journey of their teaching practicum (Manion, Keith, Morrison & Cohen, 2003; Teng, 2017). One student in Gray, Wright & Pascoe (2017) replied: “I was not prepared for the emotional rollercoaster of prac [practicum]. One minute I was stressed out of my mind, the next minute I was having a ball. I’d go from hating it, to loving it and all in the matter of an hour. One minute I’d dread walking into class and the next minute I’d be exhilarated from teaching a great lesson. Luckily, I had a strong mentor teacher to learn from, and support me. Prac is definitely the toughest part of this degree but then definitely the best too” (p. 36).

A study conducted by Malik and Ajmal (2010) found that student-teachers regarded teaching practice as a stressful time for their teacher training. This is because at this time they would be observed, assessed, and evaluated by their mentor teachers and mentor lecturers. However, Perry (2004) states that student-teachers can experience teaching practice as both a positive and negative part of their teacher training. Student-teachers may be excited at the idea of being exposed to a real-life classroom, being exposed to learners, as well as having the chance to plan their lessons and prepare for their own teaching to take place in a classroom (Ambrosetti et al., 2014).

Student-teachers may also experience feelings of self-doubt as they may wonder if they will be able to teach effectively during this period; they may have doubts about the school

context in which they will be teaching in, with reference to the different working relationships that they will form with the teachers that teach, in that particular school (Chimhenga, 2017; Machado & Meyer-Botnarescue, 2001). Student-teachers may also have doubts about the kind of relationship that they will have with their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum (Perry, 2004). According to Monir (2012) student-teachers experience negative thoughts and feelings during their teaching practicum. Student-teachers experience feelings such as frustration, embarrassment, helplessness and confusion. They may also experience the feeling of anger if they feel that they were not successful in their teaching practicum. It is such feelings that have resulted in student-teachers regarding the teaching practicum period as being very stressful (Mapfumo, Chitsiko & Chireshe, 2012).

According to Du Plessis and Marais (2013), there is a lack of qualitative studies that focus on the emotional challenges that student-teachers encounter during their teaching practicum, and what this means is that the emotional needs, and development of student-teachers are neglected during the teaching practicum. As an emotionally demanding profession (Du Plessis & Marais, 2013), teaching is thus an emotional exercise, and student-teachers must receive the kind of mentoring that will enable them also to develop emotionally (Zembylas & Schutz, 2009), so that they are able to handle the emotional demands that come with the profession.

The emotions that student-teachers experience during their teaching practicum can affect how negatively or positively student-teachers become towards the learners that they must teach, as well as their mentoring relationship with their mentor lecturer (Du Plessis & Marais, 2013). Emotions play an influential role in how student-teachers teach during their practicum (Gratch, 2010; Grudnoff, 2011). During teaching practice student-teachers go through a lot of emotional experiences and being able to express these emotions can help them in their professional development during their teaching practicum (Gallant, 2013).

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical model that guided this study is known as Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring (Hudson, 2004). This mentoring model consists of five-factors for mentoring student-teachers. These factors provide a structure that mentors can use to guide and mentor student-teachers during their teaching practicum. The five factors of Hudson's model for mentoring are namely: personal attributes, pedagogical knowledge, system requirements, feedback and modeling.

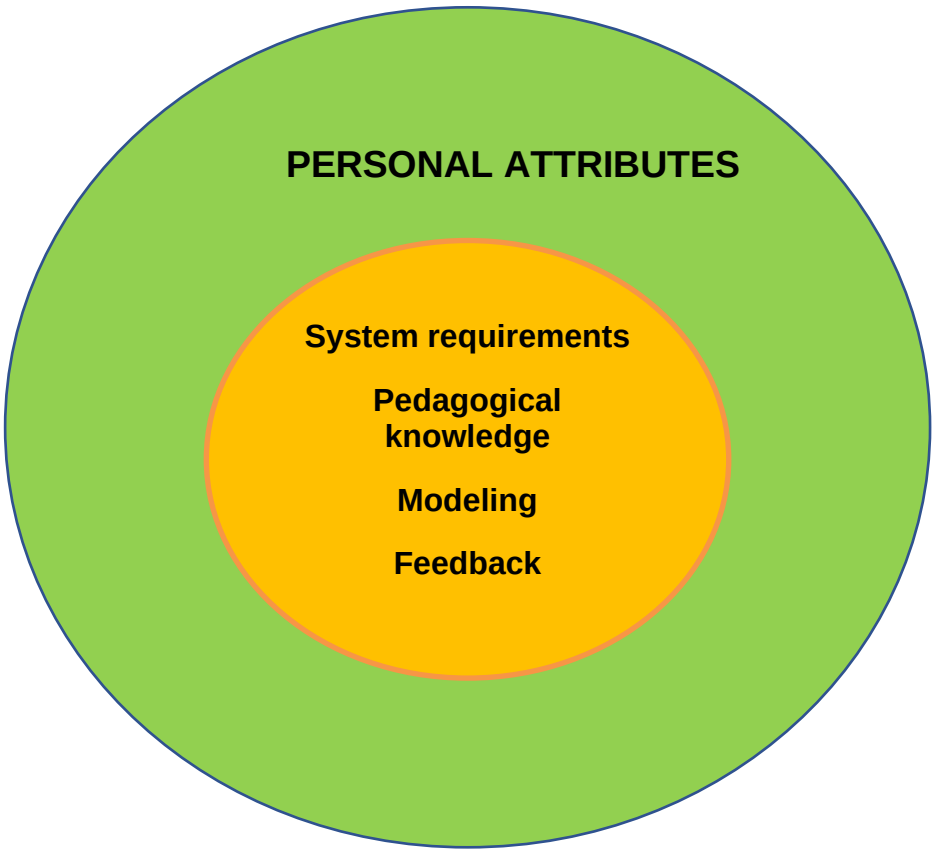


Figure 2-1: Theoretical framework of the study (adapted from Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring, 2004).

2.8.1 Personal attributes

In order for mentor lecturers to be effective mentors they need to focus on their personal, as well as interpersonal skills which will enable them to be able to build a strong and

trusting relationship with their student-teacher during the teaching practicum (Hudson, 2004; Moir et al., 2009; Udelhofen & Larson, 2002). Mentor lecturers need to provide quality mentoring that is based on good communication, encouragement, honesty, emotional and academic support, as well as constructive feedback (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Izadinia, 2016; Zanting, Verloop & Vermunt, 2001). Mentor lecturers need to show characteristics such as those of being authentic, gentle, consistent, honest, and they should also portray a positive attitude towards their student-teacher (Hurst & Reding, 2002). It is the portrayal of such characteristics and more that student-teachers need from their mentor lecturer, for them to feel that they have a form of support, and a person that they can rely on to journey with them through the time in which they are conducting their teaching practicum.

The personal attributes of the mentor lecturer also influence the kind of teaching identity that student-teachers develop during the practicum (Izadinia, 2016). According to Hudson (2004), if a mentor lecturer is a good listener, are organized, and they are also enthusiastic about their duties as a mentor, then this kind of mentor lecturers have the ability to inspire student-teachers, this which will make the student-teacher more confident in their teaching skills and abilities during their teaching practicum. When mentor lecturers have positive personal attributes, they may also help student-teachers to overcome any stressful situations that they may encounter during their teaching practicum (Stokes & Stewart, 1994).

The personal attributes of mentor lecturers can thus add value to the mentoring relationship that exists between the mentor lecturer and their student-teacher. Positive personal attributes allow for the student-teacher to trust their mentor lecturer, and therefore making the teaching practicum experience one that is based on a trustworthy relationship that exists between the mentor lecturer and the student-teacher (Moir, 2009; Moir et al., 2009; Udelhofen & Larson, 2002).

2.8.2 System requirements

A teacher must not only demonstrate teaching skills, but they must also demonstrate an understanding of the lesson objectives, curriculum, in our case the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) document which is a revision of the previous National Curriculum Statement (NCS). CAPS provides teachers with information on how they can assess and teach each grade and subject. It also gives clear guidance of assessment requirements, as well as the policies that are structured around each specific subject, a school, and the department of education as a form of quality control measure (Snowman, McCown, & Biehler, 2009). Therefore, student-teachers are required to gain knowledge on the practices of the schools that they are placed in, as well as the objectives and outcomes of the department of education. The curriculum of the school, along with its aims and policies are fundamental information that the student-teacher needs to be made aware of as they are being mentored by their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum (Wynne, 1999).

Mentor lecturers need to focus on these system requirements so that when a student-teacher prepares their lesson plans, they do so having been guided by the requirements of the school that they will be conducting their teaching practicum in (Riggs & Sandlin, 2002). Therefore, mentor lecturers need to make student-teachers aware of these policies. They need to outline them so that student-teachers are aware of them, and so that they implement them within the school (Achinstein, 2006; Hudson, 2004; Gujjar, Naoreen, Saifi & Bajwa, 2010).

When student-teachers start teaching practice, they are not aware of the school as an organization that functions on principles that the school adheres to. The schools in which a student-teacher is undertaking their teaching practicum in, need to provide the student-teacher with clear guidelines, and rules that the school follows when it comes to issues of disciplining learners (Strategies and Guidelines for Teachers and Administrators, 2010). It is also the role of the mentor lectures to teach the student-teachers the right skills that can help them deal with different discipline issues that may arise in the classroom.

Mentor lecturers can help student-teachers to gain knowledge of this system called the ‘school’ through them also provide the documents that they adhered to as teachers, when

they were teaching in schools, such as the curriculum policies. The student-teacher can then use these documents as a learning tool that they can use to improve their teaching practice (Hudson, 2007).

2.8.3 Pedagogical knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge is comprised of content and practical knowledge of teaching. It can focus on practical aspects that focus on teaching in the classroom such as, teaching strategies, implementation, timetable, lesson planning, as well as solving any classroom challenges that may arise. Pedagogical knowledge focuses on the articulation of the best teaching practices. It is the knowledge that includes, but is not limited to, understanding the teaching curriculum and the strategies for teaching (Smith, 2000; Tankersley, 2010; Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications, 2011). Mentor lecturer's pedagogical knowledge serves as one of the most important factors that motivate the need for teaching practice. This is because pedagogical knowledge is the knowledge that is focused on how to teach in the classroom context.

Mentor lecturers must provide student-teachers with the support that focuses on teaching student-teachers how to teach in the classroom. Mentor lecturers can do this by sharing their own knowledge and resources with their student-teachers, so that student-teachers may navigate their way through teaching in the classroom. The knowledge that the mentor lecturer imparts on the student-teacher must be diverse such as that which focuses on content knowledge, grade level knowledge (to name a few) (Moir et al., 2009; Hudson, 2013). According to Hudson (2004), pedagogical knowledge is based on the content of a particular subject, and as such, if mentor lecturers are to be competent in their mentoring they are expected to have sound pedagogical knowledge as mentor lecturers, because they will have to share this knowledge with their student-teachers during the teaching practicum process.

2.8.4 Modeling

Teaching practice is paramount for the development of a student-teachers teaching identity. According to Darling-Hammond (2010:216). "It is impossible to teach people how

to teach powerfully by asking them to imagine what they have never seen or to suggest they do 'the opposite' of what they have observed".

Student-teachers regard mentor lecturers as models of the best instructions of teaching, therefore when student-teachers observe their mentor lecturer teach, they learn how to take these examples of teaching as displayed by their mentor lecturer and use it in their own classrooms when they teach. Therefore, mentor lecturers when modelling teaching practices serve as a learning tool that student-teachers use to better their pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Abongdia & Foncha, 2015).

Mentor lecturers can model teaching practices such as how to prepare a lesson plan, and how to manage a classroom, and many other practical examples that pertain to teaching in the actual classroom (Hudson, 2012). The factor of modeling effective teaching practices is effective simply because, the student-teacher in the classroom observes these teaching practices as he/she observes their mentor lecturer teach. Therefore, modelling allows student-teachers to have first-hand experience of their mentor lecturer teach in the classroom (Du Plessis et al., 2010; Hudson, 2004). Through modelling, mentor lecturers then become experts in the eyes of their student-teachers because they will be showing them how to conduct themselves in the classroom and school environment (Barab & Hay, 2001). Mentor lecturers also need to model current methods of teaching that are in conjunction with the subject that they will be modeling to the student-teacher. According to Hudson (2004), mentoring can only be regarded as being of quality if it associated with the eight attributes and practices. These are, classroom management; a proper language of teaching and instruction; modelling of the best teaching practices; a clear, well-focused design on the planning of lessons; practical lessons that are very hands-on and building rapport with the learner's in one's classroom.

2.8.5 Feedback

When mentor lecturers give feedback to their student-teacher the feedback should address issues that are related to but are not limited to the pedagogy of teaching such as classroom management, lesson plans and assessments (Evans-Andris, Kyle & Carini, 2006; Tillema, Van der Westhuizen & Smith, 2015). Mentor lecturers need to give student-

teachers feedback that is embedded in total honesty (Al Sohbani, 2012; Glenn, 2006) and they should do so to build the student-teachers confidence so that they can become better at their teaching. Feedback needs to be structured in such a way that it is centred on the needs of the student-teacher. The nature and essence of feedback should be that it is constructive so that student-teachers can take the feedback given to them and apply it to their teaching practice. Constructive feedback can focus on issues such as classroom behaviour management, lesson planning, and the needs of the learners in the classroom (Du Plessis, 2013; Evans-Andris, Kyle & Carini, 2006).

Feedback plays a very important role in a mentoring relationship because it allows for the student-teacher to have an idea on their progress and development during their teaching practice period (Oppong, 2013). When student-teachers do not receive feedback they may be affected in a negative way because being given feedback allows them to reflect on their teaching practice, and without such feedback, they will not know where they are going wrong or right (Green, 2010; Hudson & Skamp, 2001).

When the feedback that is given by mentor lecturers to their student-teachers is constructive, it will help both the mentor lecturer and the student-teacher to be able to reflect on their teaching practices, and will thus help the student-teacher to strengthen his/her teaching during the teaching practicum. Feedback will also help student-teachers to be independent, and to be critical thinkers (Bird & Hudson, 2015). Clear, and constructive feedback also allows for the mentor lecturer to set out their expectations of the student-teacher. It also addresses issues that a student-teacher may be experiencing such as challenges in classroom management and discipline, reviewing of lesson plans and the preparation of resources for teaching in the classroom.

Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring provides a framework for mentoring that is purposeful. This model is significant because it demonstrates how the mentor lecturers' personal attributes are the foundation in which the mentoring process can articulate pedagogical knowledge, system requirements, modeling, and feedback (Hudson, Skamp et al., 2005).

2.9 SYNTHESIS OF CHAPTER

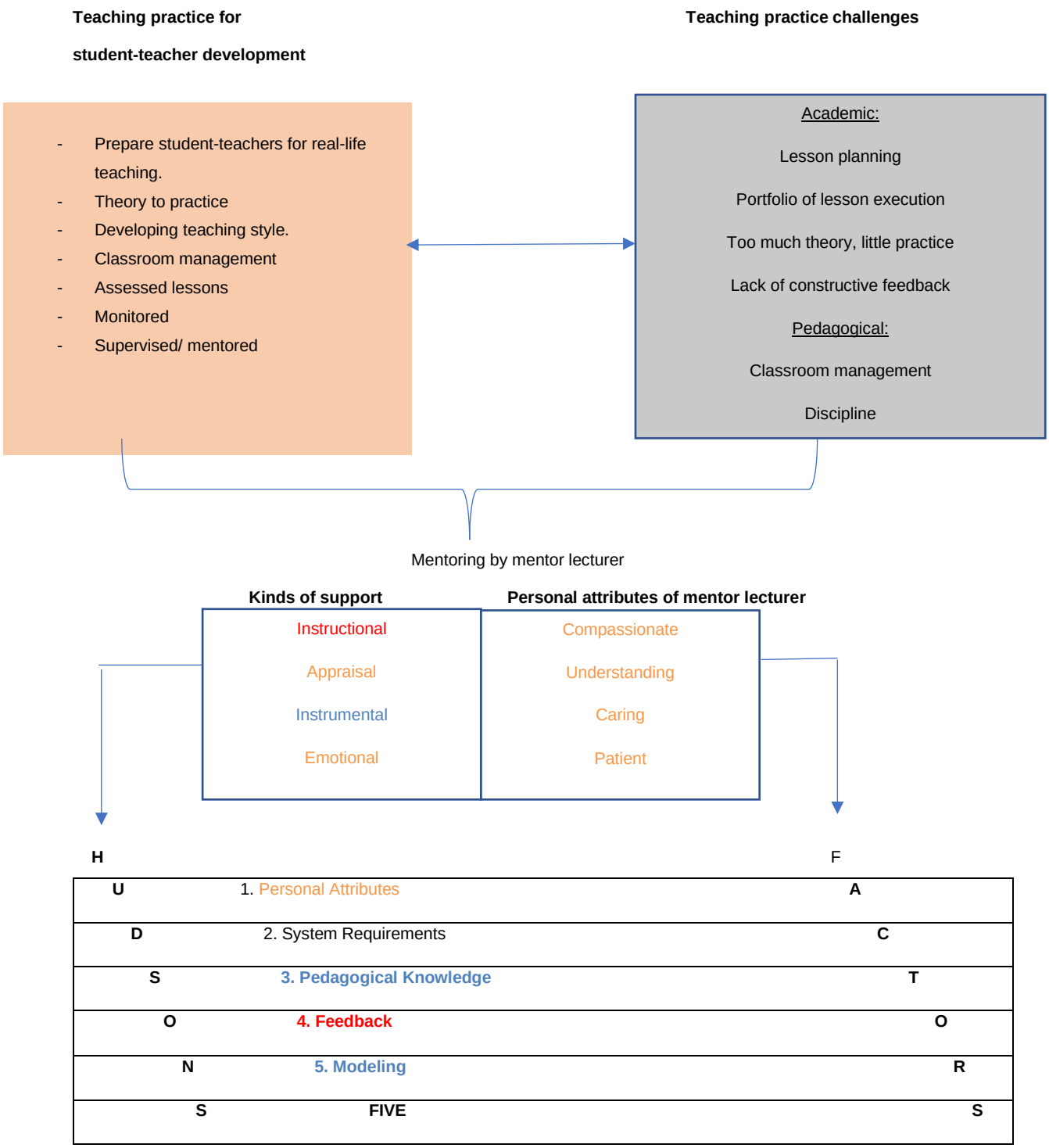


Figure 2-2: A synthesis of this chapter

Student-teachers need to participate in teaching practice in order to develop their teaching abilities (see Section 2.2). Since teaching practice exposes student-teachers to the actual teaching context (schools and classrooms), it thus prepares student-teachers for real-life teaching. Teaching practice helps student-teachers to transfer the theoretical knowledge that they have about teaching into practical knowledge on teaching. Student-teachers need to go for teaching practice because they also need to develop a teacher identity, which will lead to them developing a teaching style (see Section 2.2). During teaching practice, student-teachers will learn how to manage their classrooms. During teaching practice, student-teachers are mentored by their mentor lecturers. The mentor lecturers also play the role of monitoring the progress that the student-teacher makes during their teaching practicum. Mentor lecturers monitor the progress of their student-teachers through assessing them (see Section 2.4).

However, student-teachers face several challenges during their teaching practicum. They are faced with academic challenges such as those of lesson planning (see Section 2.3.1.1), and they also feel that they have not been exposed to a lot of teaching practice, and thus feel that they have acquired too much theory on teaching, and little practice of it (see Section 2.3.1.2). Student-teachers also have a challenge when it comes to the lack of constructive feedback that they get from their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum. Student-teachers also have pedagogical challenges that are on classroom management and discipline (to name a few) (see Section 2.3.1.3).

It is for the challenges mentioned above that student-teachers are thus in need of mentoring that is specifically from their mentor lecturer. Student-teachers need different kinds of support from their mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum period. They need instructional, appraisal, instrumental and lastly, emotional support (see Section 2.6). All these kinds of support that student-teachers need will be able to help them with the challenges that they experience during their practicum.

However, the ability of the mentor lecturer to be able to meet the needs of the student-teacher, they need to have certain personal attributes such as them being compassionate, understanding, caring and patient (to name a few) (see Section 2.5).

The only way in which this study believes that mentor lecturers can offer quality and effective mentoring is through mentor lecturers using Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring. This mentoring model which consists of five factors namely, personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, feedback and modelling (see Section 2.8). Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring represents mentoring as a holistic process that focuses on more than the practical aspects of mentoring, during teaching practice (Hudson, 2004; Hudson, 2012). It focuses on other important aspects of mentoring which when combined, bring about a holistic view of what needs to be done by mentor lecturers, when mentoring student-teachers during their teaching practicum.

2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has discussed the activity of teaching practice as a part of the teaching curriculum that student-teachers that are studying towards their B. Ed need to participate in. The literature has revealed that teaching practice comes with a lot of challenges that student-teachers cannot work through on their own, and it is because of these challenges that they need mentoring. The literature indicates that the kind of mentoring that student-teachers need is one that goes beyond just meeting the academic challenges that student-teachers are faced with. Student-teachers are also faced with a lot of emotional challenges during their teaching practicum. It is for these reasons that student-teachers need mentoring that is holistic; one that takes the student-teachers academic and emotional well-being as a priority and one which caters for both the academic, as well as the emotional well-being of their student-teacher. Based on the literature, and the focus of this study, a mentoring model such as that of Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring fits perfectly into a mentoring model that can help student-teachers not just academically during their teaching practicum.

The chapter that follows is Chapter 3. In this chapter the research design and methodology of this study will be explored.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, I presented the theoretical framework that guided this study, namely "Hudson's five-factor model" (Hudson, 2004). I reviewed existing literature on the mentoring needs of student-teachers during their first teaching practicum. I focused on the kinds of support student-teachers need when they embark on their first teaching experience. I furthermore focused on the influence of mentor lecturers' personality traits and professionalism as mentors supporting student-teachers to embark on their professional journey.

In Chapter 3, I provide more detail on the research design and methodology introduced in Chapter 1. I explain and justify the paradigmatic and methodological choices I made and describe how I conducted rigorous and ethical research. Lastly, I elaborate on my role as the researcher within this study.

3.2 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVES

In the section to follow, I discuss the epistemological and methodological paradigms selected for this study. A paradigm according to Babbie (2016) is a structure that is constructed to organise ideas and observations. Nieuwenhuis (2007a) further adds that a paradigm is made up of a set of beliefs about reality, and it is these beliefs that lead one to view the world from their perspective.

Paradigmatic approaches are a necessary and vital aspect of research because they provide the researcher with the knowledge that will allow him/her to understand the world and the behaviours of people in a far detailed way. Therefore, paradigmatic approaches are a form of guidance that can be given to researchers to help guide the thoughts and

actions of the researcher (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2005; Mertens, 2010). The world view that can be influenced by using a paradigm refers to the position, way of thinking, or perspective that contributes to the meaning of research data. According to Lather (1986), and Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), a research paradigm contains the beliefs that the researcher holds about the world in which they live and those of a world in which they would like to live. It is made up of the actual beliefs, perspectives and principles that come to shape and influence how a researcher views the world, and how they behave within that world. Paradigms provide a lens through which a researcher can view the world (DuPlooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). They help researchers to examine the methodological sections of their research to make decisions on what research methods it is that the researcher will use in his study, as well as the data collection method/s that the researcher will use in collecting data for his study.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), as well as Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), a paradigm provides a form of guidance that a researcher can use to conduct research. Paradigms are constructed by humans (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). They rely on the principles that people live by, which serve as a reference point for where the researchers' opinions come from, which then influences the interpretation of the data in one's research. Paradigms are therefore important because they provide beliefs which fit disciplines, and thus they guide scholars on what should be studied, how it should be studied and how the results that are gathered from a study can be analysed and interpreted. Paradigms define the philosophical perspective of a researcher, and as will be seen in this paper, this is very significant in the process of research, and for the methods and methodology used in the research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Therefore, a paradigm reveals how meaning will be constructed from the data that was collected for this study, and it thus reveals how meaning is individually constructed.

3.2.1 Epistemological Paradigm: Interpretivism

I selected an interpretivist epistemological paradigm for this study. The latter paradigm in qualitative research sees the world as something that has been socially constructed and interpreted by people as they interact in the world (Jansen, 2016; Maxwell, 2006). The

nature of this paradigm is to interpret phenomena contextually, to understand the phenomena in its context, and not to generalise it to larger populations (Crous, 2011; Farzanfar, 2005). Within the interpretivist paradigm, knowledge is gathered subjectively through the researcher interacting with the participant and thus gathering the subjective meaning of the phenomena being researched (Maree, 2016). According to Creswell (2013), interpretivism in a study relies on the understanding of a phenomenon from the perspective of the participants of the study. Therefore, interpretivism is an efficient and valuable epistemological paradigm to utilise when the goal of the researcher is to understand the deeper meaning of the phenomenon under study, from the perspective of the people experiencing it (Wahyuni, 2012; Yin, 2016). According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the best way to understand a phenomenon in research is through seeking answers from the people who have had experience with the phenomena that is being investigated.

This epistemological paradigm can also be linked to the ontology of the paradigm which is grounded in the postmodern tradition (Willig, 2008), that states that there is no objective understanding of reality, but that every individual can create his/her reality (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2010). Therefore, the order of something being regarded as being real is subjective, and because anyone can construct their reality, it means that there are multiple realities that exist (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Hergenhahn, 2005; Shaw, 2010).

The axiology of interpretivists is to understand the individual beliefs and values that people have about a specific phenomenon which they have experienced (Maree, 2012), and this is the perspective that researchers, utilising this epistemology use when they are conducting their research, and collecting their data (Ashworth, 2008; De Vos, Delport, Fouche & Strydom, 2011). According to Sefotho (2015), interpretivism states that there are varied and multiple meanings to a phenomenon. I am therefore of the opinion that because I utilised this epistemological paradigm in my study, it enabled me to analyse the complex views and perspectives of my participants with no restriction. This also allowed me to have a broader understanding of the mentoring needs of the student-teachers that were the participants of this study (Creswell, 2007, 2009; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Interpretivism, however, can pose the challenge of being very time consuming because it wants to gather rich and detailed data of the topic being researched, and the researcher can become biased and very emotionally invested in the research project (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls, & Ormston, 2013). Although this is a challenge for interpretivism, this can also be regarded as one of the strengths of interpretivism. This is because in using this epistemological paradigm to collect data, the data collection process will therefore be very thorough as it wants to capture all the meanings gathered in the study from the participants, and this is can also serve as a reflection that the researcher understands and cares for his/her research participants and the opinions that they have to share about the phenomena under study (Babbie, 2010; Ulin, Robinson & Tolley, 2004).

The epistemological paradigm of interpretivism was well-suited for my study because my aim with this study was to gather the subjective mentoring needs of the final year student-teachers at the University of Pretoria that participated in my study; mentoring needs which were based on the fact that these students were experiencing teaching practice for the very first time in their final year of study. Therefore, their mentoring needs were subjective in this sense because they came from within themselves as student-teachers, and they were not influenced by any external factors (Shneider, 2015). These needs were based on what the student-teachers experienced during their first teaching practicum, which they were only exposed to in their fourth year of study.

3.2.2 Methodological paradigm: Qualitative approach

Traditionally, research was mostly conducted from a scientific and objective perspective whereby the researcher aimed to discover the cause and effect of a phenomenon, therefore discovering the laws of how a phenomenon came to be (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This study chose to use a qualitative research methodology. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative research focuses on a specific kind of data that is normally in images or words. Qualitative research is focused on understanding how people make meaning of their experiences, and how they construct their social world (Creswell, 2014; Merriam, 2009). It is inductive (Atieno, 2009), in the sense that it is focused on the

discovery of individual meaning to a situation and is less focused on using generalisations as a way of understanding a social phenomenon (Ashworth, 2008; Berg & Lune, 2012).

Qualitative researchers study situations in the context in which they occur. They aim at understanding the phenomenon under study from the perspective of those individuals that are participating in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Qualitative researchers study a phenomenon in its natural setting of occurrence, to have the assurance that no other external factors outside of the natural setting of the phenomenon have influenced the issue being investigated. Therefore, with that said, when using a qualitative research methodology, there is no way of manipulating the subject/s that is under study (Creswell, 2013; Tuckman & Harper, 2012).

The qualitative approach added great value to my study because I made use of the student-teacher's own meanings about what it is that they needed during their first teaching practicum from their mentor lecturers. Therefore, I focused on the answers that the participants in the study gave towards the issue being investigated. What this means is that I was able to investigate the perceived mentoring needs of the student-teachers from the multiple perspectives that the student-teachers have, this which made me gain holistic answers as to what it is that student-teachers perceive to need from their mentor lectures during their first teaching practicum (Creswell, 2007).

The challenges that I faced in using qualitative research were issues of the use of language when conducting the study. This is because there are ambiguities in terms of meaning and understanding when it comes to the use of human language, and as such what I as the researcher may interpret from what the research participant said when I read through the answers that they provided in the questionnaire may not be exactly what the participant meant.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Research design: Descriptive case study design

A research design refers to the logical plan which illustrates how a researcher will undertake his or her research (Yin, 2011). It also explains the kind of study that the researcher will be conducting (Ferreira, 2012 in Maree, 2012). This study followed a descriptive case study design as part of a baseline study.

Yin (2009) and Creswell (2013), state that a case study design is a research design that is its own methodology because within it exists its own theory, and a set way in which inquiry of the case being studied should be conducted. Case studies can be used to explain, explore or describe a phenomenon in its naturally occurring context (Nieuwenhuis, 2016; Salkind, 2010; Yin, 2009).

A case refers to a unique, real-life object/s, situation, or community of people that are being investigated (Liamputtong, 2013; Smeijsters & Aasgaard, 2005; Stake, 2008). According to Smith (1978), when a researcher decides to use the case study research design, they should take the case that they are investigating as an object, rather than a process which needs to be inquired into. A case has its own function, a purpose, and it is comprised of its own working parts (Liamputtong, 2013). Therefore, for one to regard a phenomenon as a case, they must be able to draw boundaries around the case by contextualizing the phenomena in its place of occurrence (Yazan, 2015).

For this study, the case refers to the 2016 and 2017 final year student-teachers at the University of Pretoria that were studying towards their Bachelor of Education degree and who were the participants of this study and were only exposed to teaching practice in their final year of study. Case studies can either focus on single cases or multiple cases. Yin (2003) states that there are three types of case studies, and these can either focus on a single case or on multiple cases.

This study chose to use the descriptive case study because it wants to define and describe the mentoring needs that the final year student-teachers that this study is based on, had during their first teaching practicum. Case studies can also be approached in various ways, and this depends on the epistemology that the researcher used for his/her study (Rule & John, 2011; Thomas, 2011). Case studies can take on an Interpretivist

approach, whereby the researcher wants to understand the individual meanings that people ascribe to a phenomenon.

This study specifically used the descriptive case study design (Mills, Durepos & Wiebe, 2010). Descriptive case studies focus on deep descriptions and details of the phenomena under investigation, as well as the context in which the phenomena occurs in. With that said, it is thus evident that because a case study also focuses on the context in which the phenomena under study occurs in, what this means is that as a research design, case studies use multiple perspectives in understanding a phenomena because in a context there exists a population of people that each have different perspectives about the phenomena and how it affects them (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2013; Tellis, 1997).

For this study, a descriptive case study design was selected because I was interested in the uniqueness of the case of this study (2016 and 2017 final year B.Ed student-teachers at the University of Pretoria), and I also wanted to gather an understanding of the case, as well as to hear, and engage in the stories of the (participants), and what they needed from their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum (Stake, 1995).

I am of the opinion that selecting a descriptive case study design was good for this study because a case study design works well for contemporary events such as people's thoughts and behaviour's, which are some of the things that cannot be manipulated by the researcher. Case studies also serve as a good research design method to use when it is the aim of the study to capture the individual differences of a phenomenon, such as the mentoring needs of the student-teachers that participated in this study (Mahlangu, 2015).

3.4 METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES

In this section, I discuss the process that I undertook in conducting this study. I also identify the advantages and disadvantages of the different choices that I made throughout the research process of this study.

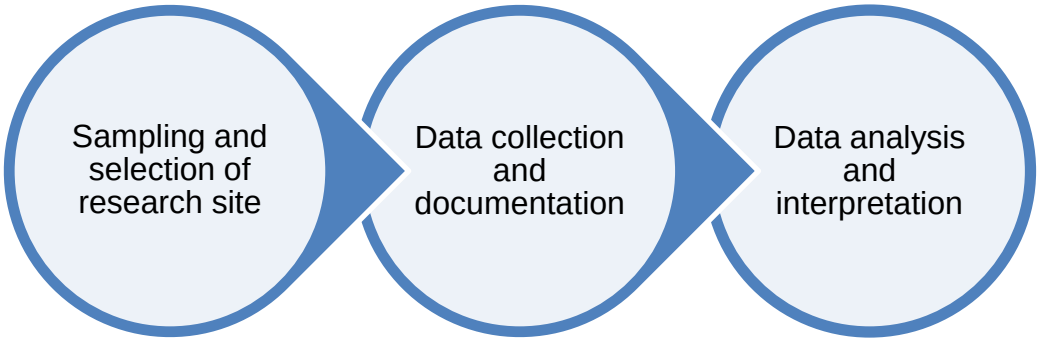


Figure 3-1: Research process followed by the study

3.4.1 Selection of participants and research site

When one conducts research one cannot conduct the research on the entire population of people that one is interested in, but one has to focus on a sample which he/she believes to be a representation of the entire population in which the sample was derived from (Creswell, 2005; Kumar, 2011; Morgan & Sklar, 2012). Therefore, the term 'sampling' refers to this process of getting a sample from the population.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), the research site that is selected to complete a study needs to match the design of the study, and it should be practical in terms of time, it is easily accessible for the researcher and participants of the study as well as it being resourceful. The research site for this study was convenient since the study was based on student-teachers at the university (Tracy, 2013), and the participants were purposefully selected.

Figure 3-2: Data collection site (University of Pretoria, Groenkloof campus)

Purposive sampling is a sampling strategy that is used when selecting participants for a study. This strategy is based on a researcher's judgment that the participants that he/she selects for the study, will purposefully contribute towards the study because of a common feature/ characteristic that the participants have in relation to the topic that is being investigated (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

I purposely selected the case of my study as the participants of both cohorts of my study (2016 and 2017) were final year student-teachers at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus) that were studying towards their B. Ed, who were in their final year of study (4th

year). There were a total number of 170 student-teachers that participated in the 2016 cohort of this study as well as 263 student-teachers that participated in the 2017 cohort of this study. The 2016 student-teachers were assessed in the second semester, and the 2017 students were assessed in the first semester since they were “block A” students. The participants of this study were completing their first teaching practice period in the first semester (April- July), and they had to be available for data collection sessions after they had completed their teaching practice period.

The research was conducted in the Normaal Saal building at the university. The participants were purposefully selected since they were all final year students, and they had just completed their first teaching practicum during their four years of study. I used convenience sampling for my study because the data of the study had already been collected as this was a baseline study (as already stated in Chapter 1), it was easily available and ready for me to use, and the participants of my study were purposefully selected because they were final year student-teachers at the University.

3.4.2 Data collection and documentation

Data collection and documentation refers to the strategy which I, as the researcher of the study, used to collect and document the data (Vithal & Jansen, 2010). It is very important to note that I did not collect the data of this research myself as this was a study that was conducted in 2016 and 2017; therefore the secondary data had already been collected by the time I became a part of this project (as already discussed). Therefore, this section aims to explain the procedures that took place in collecting data for this study and to also give justifications as to why certain procedures were chosen for this study based on the research question as well as the purpose of this study.

3.4.2.1 Semi-structured, open-ended questionnaires

The data collection method that the 2016 and 2017 cohort used was a semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions.

A semi-structured questionnaire with open-ended questions is a survey instrument that consists of structured and unstructured questions in it that participants must answer. These questions often start with the words 'how, why, what, where and when'? (Acharya, 2010; Reja, Manfreda, Hlebec & Vehovar, 2003). The potential value of using qualitative questionnaires with open-ended questions for my study is that it gave participants the opportunity to express themselves through the answers that they gave to the questions that were asked in the questionnaire (Bailey, 1987; Maree & Pietersen, 2016) and as such it is, therefore, my opinion that the student-teachers were able to express what their mentoring needs were during their teaching practice. Therefore, open-ended questions do not limit the participants' answer, and as such, they can even create the opportunity for the participant to raise new issues that the researcher may not have anticipated.

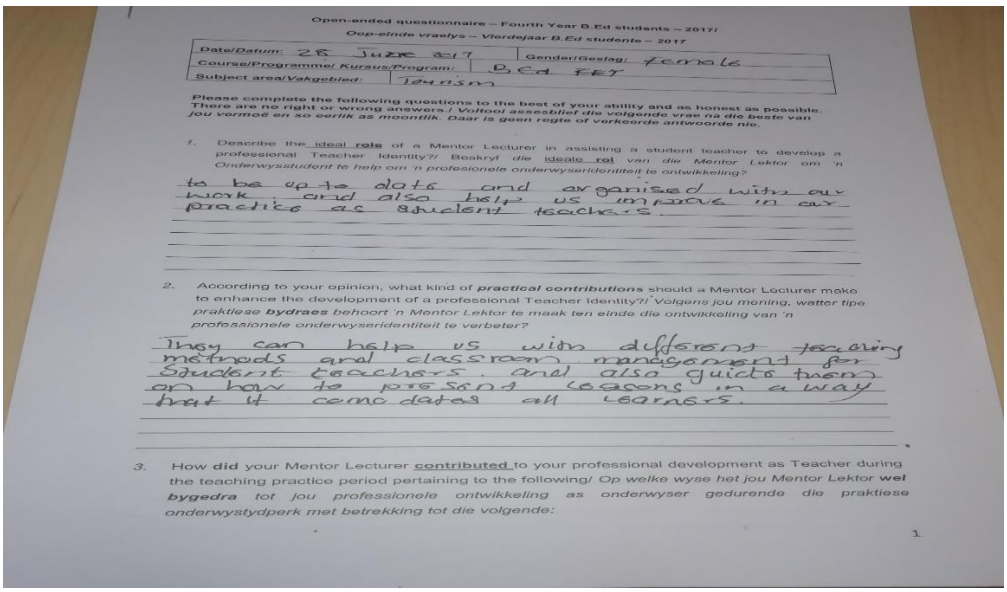
The following are some of the questions that were asked to the participants of this study:

1. Describe the ideal role of a Mentor Lecturer in assisting a student-teacher during their first teaching practice.
2. According to your opinion, what kind of practical contributions should a Mentor Lecturer make to assist you with your first teaching practice?
3. What were your major concerns pertaining to the mentoring process by your Mentor Lecturers that might/could have inhibited your professional development?

A challenge that I faced when conducting this study was related to the use of the open-ended questionnaires for collecting the data of this study. The questionnaires for this study were self-administered, and because of this, I was faced with the issue of some participants not responding to some of the questions for example, through leaving the question blank and thus unanswered. This posed a challenge for me because I did not know how to interpret the blank responses (Dawson, 2002; Maree & Pietersen, 2016).

No field notes or voice recording tapes were used for both phases of this study because it was a baseline study (ASARECA, 2010). The baseline study was used as a way of finding out what it is that student-teachers need from their mentor lecturers during teaching practice. Therefore, this was a pre-study.

The two sources of documentation that were used in this study for both phase one (2016) and phase two (2017) were the questionnaires that the student-teachers had to complete, where they had to report on their teaching practice, and they also had to submit their teaching practice files, as well as the reflective journal that I kept. Only those students that were assessed during their teaching practicum completed the questionnaires. The questionnaires were given to them during the meeting, and they were given 15 minutes to complete it.



Open-ended questionnaire – Fourth Year B.Ed students – 2017/
Oop-einde vraelys – Vierdejaar B.Ed studente – 2017

Date/*Datum*: 28 June 2017 | Gender/*Geslag*: female
Course/Programme/ *Kursus/Program*: B.Ed FET
Subject area/*Vakgebied*: Tourism

Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability and as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers./ *Voltooi asseblief die volgende vrae na die beste van jou vermoë en so eerlik as moontlik. Daar is geen regte of verkeerde antwoorde nie.*

1. Describe the ideal **role** of a Mentor Lecturer in assisting a student teacher to develop a professional Teacher Identity?/ *Beskryf die ideale* **rol** *van die Mentor Lektor om 'n Onderwysstudent te help om 'n professionele onderwyseridentiteit te ontwikkeling?*

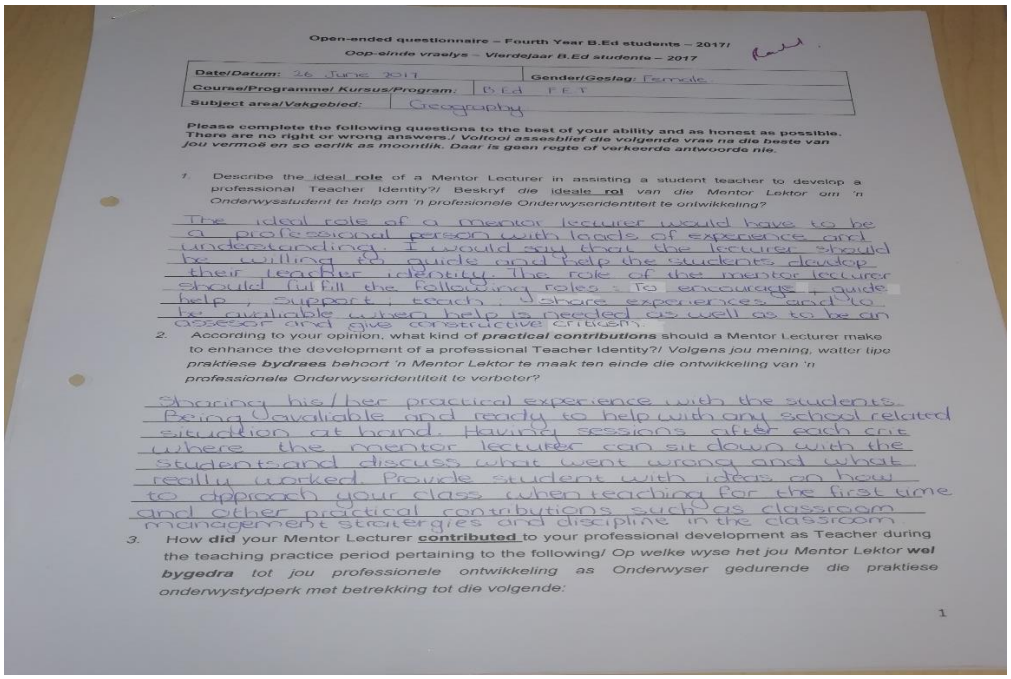
to be up to date and organised with our work and also help us improve in our practice as student teachers.

2. According to your opinion, what kind of ***practical contributions*** should a Mentor Lecturer make to enhance the development of a professional Teacher Identity?/ *Volgens jou mening, watter tipe praktiese* **bydraes** *behoort 'n Mentor Lektor te maak ten einde die ontwikkeling van 'n professionele onderwyseridentiteit te verbeter?*

They can help us with different teaching methods and classroom management for student teachers. And also guide them on how to present lessons in a way that it come dates all learners.

3. How **did** your Mentor Lecturer **contributed** to your professional development as Teacher during the teaching practice period pertaining to the following/ *Op welke wyse het jou Mentor Lektor* **wel bygedra** *tot jou professionele ontwikkeling as onderwyser gedurende die praktiese onderwystydperk met betrekking tot die volgende:*

1



Open-ended questionnaire – Fourth Year B.Ed students – 2017/
Oop-einde vraelys – Vierdejaar B.Ed studente – 2017

Date/*Datum*: 26 June 2017 | Gender/*Geslag*: Female
Course/Programme/ *Kursus/Program*: B.Ed FET
Subject area/*Vakgebied*: Geography

Please complete the following questions to the best of your ability and as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers./ *Voltooi asseblief die volgende vrae na die beste van jou vermoë en so eerlik as moontlik. Daar is geen regte of verkeerde antwoorde nie.*

1. Describe the ideal **role** of a Mentor Lecturer in assisting a student teacher to develop a professional Teacher Identity?/ *Beskryf die ideale* **rol** *van die Mentor Lektor om 'n Onderwysstudent te help om 'n profesionele Onderwyseridentiteit te ontwikkeling?*

The ideal role of a mentor lecturer would have to be a professional person with loads of experience and understanding. I would say that the lecturer should be willing to guide and help the students develop their teacher identity. The role of the mentor lecturer should fulfill the following roles: To encourage + guide, help, support + teach, + share experiences and to be available when help is needed as well as to be an assessor and give constructive critism.

2. According to your opinion, what kind of ***practical contributions*** should a Mentor Lecturer make to enhance the development of a professional Teacher Identity?/ *Volgens jou mening, watter tipe praktiese* **bydraes** *behoort 'n Mentor Lektor te maak ten einde die ontwikkeling van 'n professionele Onderwyseridentiteit te verbeter?*

Sharing his/her practical experience with the students. Being available and ready to help with any school related situation at hand. Having sessions after each one where the mentor lecturer can sit down with the students and discuss what went wrong and what really worked. Provide student with ideas on how to approach your class when teaching for the first time and other practical contributions such as classroom management strategies and discipline in the classroom

3. How **did** your Mentor Lecturer **contributed** to your professional development as Teacher during the teaching practice period pertaining to the following/ *Op welke wyse het jou Mentor Lektor* **wel bygedra** *tot jou professionele ontwikkeling as Onderwyser gedurende die praktiese onderwystydperk met betrekking tot die volgende:*

1

Figure 3-3: Completed questionnaires

3.4.3 Researcher reflective journal

I used a reflective journal to keep a record of the different ideas and perspectives that I was gathering through analysing the data of this study. I kept this reflective journal so that I could have the opportunity to reflect on the different points that were made by the students that participated in this study. The reflective journal was very important to me, because it helped me to keep a record of my thoughts about the data (Palaganas et al., 2017), and it also helped me to be able to think on a much deeper level about the different opinions that the student-teachers had about their mentoring needs during the teaching practicum (Niewenhuis, 2007). The reflective journal helped me to enhance reflexivity for this study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

3.4.4 Data analysis and interpretation

Figure 3-4: Thematic analysis and interpretation of data

I obtained two sets of data. These were from the 2016 and 2017 final year student-teachers at the university. The 2016 cohort had several 170 of participants, and 2017 had 265 participants that were also final year students. The 2016 data was already analysed, but I had to re-analyse it to seek any new knowledge that I could gather from the data. Although the data used for this study was collected by someone else, I used it to address a new problem (mentoring needs of student-teachers) which is a focus that the data collected didn't previously address.

I did not want to compare the results gathered from these two data sets, but what I wanted to gather was the themes from these data sets. In gathering these themes, I utilised Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis method. I utilised thematic analysis inductively to analyse both data sets.

Conducting research from an "inductive" perspective means that the meanings identified in the research are derived from the context or field in which the research is conducted. Therefore, the meanings of the phenomena under study come from the field that is being studied itself, and not from a theory that was previously established on the topic being researched (Tracy, 2013).

Thematic analysis is a research method that is used to identify recurring themes and patterns that are appearing within the data set that is being analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These are themes that are deemed as being important to the description and the provision of knowledge of the phenomenon that is being researched (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997). The process of identifying themes involves reading and re-reading the information provided by a dataset. In an inductive thematic analysis the themes, patterns, and the way in which the coding is done for the data set is led by the content that is found within the data set, and the findings are used to generalize to other contexts beyond that of the specific case which they were collected from (Ibrahim, 2012).

The advantage that I came across as I utilised the inductive thematic analysis is that it is simple to apply as its focus is on arranging data into patterns and themes. Another advantage of using thematic analysis is that it is a method rather than a methodology. What this means is that it is not tied down to one epistemology or theory, but rather that it is flexible, and it can be applied to various kinds of studies (Clarke & Braun, 2013). The potential challenge that I came across when using this method of analysis for my study is that some of the data gathered for my study did not neatly fit into one theme and this caused the themes to overlap (Braun & Clarke, 2006). I resolved this challenge by making sure that the themes that I created for the data were not rigid, but that they were flexible so that data that was not limited to just one theme was accommodated. I did this by providing enough examples from the data so that a sufficient number of themes were developed (Care, 2016).

The following describes how I analysed my data using Braun & Clarke's (2006) six steps to conducting an inductive thematic analysis. (Please refer to Figure 1-1).

Phase 1-Familiarise yourself with the data: This first phase involves reading and re-reading the transcripts. A researcher/analyst has to get familiar with his/her entire data set before analysis can take place. To familiarise myself with the data, I had to read and re-read the 2016 data. This data was already collected and transcribed for me, so to get familiar with it I had to read it for about three times to get the nature of what the entire data set was about (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

I then had to transcribe the 2017 data from the hardcopy questionnaires into a Microsoft word document. While I was busy transcribing the data, I was also reading it and familiarising myself with it. I also noted any similar answers that kept coming up with the questions that were asked in the questionnaire.

Phase 2- Generating initial codes: This phase involves organizing the data in a meaningful way. A code can be a word or a short sentence/ phrase that symbolize or even captures the essence of a data set. The data can be in the form of questionnaires, interviews, journals, and so forth (Boyatzis, 1998). Qualitative quotes, according to Saldana (2009), capture the nature of the story that the research wants to tell. When the codes are then clustered together according to the similarities that they share, they then reveal patterns which then further lead to an analysis of their connections. Coding for my data was done separately for both cohorts of my study. I firstly started with the 2016 data and then moved on to the 2017 data. Hardcopies of both data sets were printed out, and I used those alongside with pens and highlighters to generate my initial codes of the transcripts through highlighting codes that I believed provided answers for my research topic.

I coded my data by going through every single response to the questions in the questionnaire that was given to the participants of my study. This is because I was conducting inductive thematic analysis. I paid meticulous attention to the answers that the participants gave individually. I colour coded and grouped the answers according to their similarities. The similar answers were coded in one colour, and I did the same for all the

answers that were given by my participants. The codes were named after words that frequently appeared in the answers given by the participants which I believe were relevant to addressing my research question. When I was done with both data sets, I identified the differences and similarities that existed between the two data sets and modified the codes.

***Phase 3-Searching for themes*:** According to Saldana (2009:13) "a theme is an outcome of coding, categorization, and analytic reflection, not something that is, in itself coded". Braun and Clarke (2006), also define a theme as a pattern that captures something important about the research question.

In this phase, I took the codes which I had generated and put excerpts from my data set under each of them. I tabulated this process so that I had a code and the excerpts underneath the code. As I was reading the excerpts, my focus was on identifying strong excerpts that provided answers for my research topic. While in this phase I then also realised that some codes formed themes, while others formed subthemes. I decided to only select codes that provided a deep meaning towards answering my research topic and, those that were of significance to it. I combined the themes that seemed to speak to the same ideas, and then also had sub-themes for them. Afterwards, I then discarded those themes that seemed irrelevant and could not provide answers for my research topic. At the end of this phase, I had codes that were now made into themes which provided information for my research question. Also, in the end, there were no sub-themes generated for my data. My themes were mostly explanatory because my research question was based on the perceptions of the student-teachers; therefore, my themes explained patterns in the data that were relevant to my research topic (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

***Phase 4- Reviewing themes*:** This step involves searching for whether your themes are linked or interrelated. I had to revert to the themes that I had identified in phase three, and then analyse them to see if they made sense. I gathered all the data from the questionnaires, and then I put it under its different themes. I then read the data (excerpts) and reviewed the themes. I then had to analyse whether the data that I had selected for the themes supported the themes. Also, in cases where the themes were too broad, I had

to think about the fact that it was better off to merge the smaller themes with the larger ones as they spoke to the same idea.

Phase 5- Defining and naming themes: According to Braun & Clarke (2006: 92) this step aims to "identify what the essence of each theme is about". I had to analyse if the main themes were related to each other, and also if the subthemes under each theme supported the nature of the theme on which it was based.

Phase 6- Producing the report: This phase involves reporting the findings of the analysis that was done and writing it up in such a way that it is clear and understandable to the individual that will read the report. This was done and is discussed it in Chapter 4.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.5.1 Introduction

Ethical considerations refer to the code of ethics that a researcher must abide by when they are conducting research (Beauchamp & Childress, 2001). The ethical guidelines that I adhered to in conducting the current study included permission to utilise existing data sources as a co-researcher, informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity, no harm to participants and voluntary participation.

3.5.2 Permission to utilize existing data sources

Project ethical clearance was already established for this study. Permission was also obtained from the Dean of the Faculty of Education to be able to conduct this study. The ethical clearance for this project is UP 16/11/03. I have completed a Personal Declaration of Responsibility form which was submitted along with a Section E form to the Ethics Committee. The latter was done by my supervisor and I obtained permission as co-researcher to access the secondary data sets and to analyse it.

3.5.3 Informed consent

Before participants can engage in a research project, they need to obtain informed consent (Creswell, 2012). Information on the consent form needs to give enough information to the participant about the study and the contribution to the body of knowledge that the study aims to contribute towards, as well as an explanation of how the results of the study will be disseminated. In most cases, the way in which participants can give their consent to participating in the research is through them signing a written/ typed out consent form.

A consent form was provided and those students who wanted to participate in the study voluntarily had to complete the consent form and sign it (See Appendix A).

3.5.4 Anonymity

Strictly speaking, anonymity implies that the participants in the study cannot later be identified by third parties or the researcher from material generated in the study. This means that no personally identifying information can be collected in an anonymous study (Allen, 2017). Personally, identifying information includes, but is not limited to, names, addresses, e-mail addresses, phone numbers, government-issued ID numbers (e.g., social security numbers), photographs, and IP addresses (Research Ethics Board, 2017). The implication is that any study involving face-to-face contact, whether in person or over the phone cannot be considered anonymous; this rule out virtually all qualitative research that involves interviews. Anonymity was ensured in this study through the questionnaires that the participants filled out anonymously, and no information that could reveal their identity was required in filling out the questionnaire. I, therefore, could not identify any of the participants that participated in this study.

3.5.5 No harm to participants

It is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that no harm befalls any of the participants that participate in his/her study (Rubin & Babbie, 2005; Strydom, 2011a). The researchers that collected the data for this study had to make sure that the participants of his study were not exposed to any physical or psychological harm through them participating in the study. Even though the setting in which this study was conducted in

posed no danger to the participants. No harm was done to the participants since there was no sensitive information requested from them in participating in this study.

3.5.6 Voluntary participation

The ethic of voluntary participation aims at informing the participants of a study that they have the right at any time of the research to withdraw their participation from the research. Abiding by this ethical requirement in research ensures that participants that are participating in a study participate voluntarily and that they are in no way coerced to participate in the study out against their wishes. (Maree, 2013). The consent form that was given to the participants notified them of their voluntary participation in the study and their right to withdraw in the study if they felt the need to do so.

3.6 QUALITY CRITERIA

According to Hammersley (2007), when one assesses the quality of research (quantitative/qualitative) the aim of the assessment is based on implicit judgment, which is guided by methodological principles. The criteria used to judge research is solely used for purposes of judging whether the research conducted is of good or poor research quality (Moon et al., 2016).

According to Ferreira (in Maree, 2012), the aim of quality criteria in qualitative research is to ensure that the study is rigorous, and that it will provide findings that are scholarly as well as scientific which will add a contribution to the body of knowledge on the research topic. I will now discuss the quality criteria and then also discuss how I applied this criterion during my data analysis and interpretation.

The criteria are as follows:

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the research conducted represents the truth and actual meanings of the research participants (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2011). While I was transcribing the data, I made sure that I captured the participant's responses

as they were on the questionnaires that I completed. I did not fill in any missing information from these responses. I ensured that I portrayed the viewpoints of the participants clearly, according to their given responses, so that the findings of this research could be trusted. All the data was kept safe; it was password protected. When I analysed the data, I read and re-read the data to ensure that I did not miss anything from the data. As already indicated in Chapter 1 the participants of this study were purposefully selected based on the fact that they were final year student-teachers at the university, what this means is that the participants were selected based on this knowledge, and the unique characteristics which they have. This strategy thus renders this research as credible (Carpenter & Suto, 2008). The credibility of research can also be checked in several ways, such as member checking, triangulation, peer review, and through reflexivity. I used a reflexive journal, and I was in constant contact with my supervisor with analysing the data of this study. This study is also credible because the 2016 and 2017 cohort data for this study aligned with each other.

3.6.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the findings of a study remaining the same or rather stable over time. This is to assess whether the same study can be repeated and still yield the same results (Kumar, 2014). Dependability also focuses on how the findings of a study are determined by the participants of the study and are not influenced by the biases or interests of the researcher that is conducting the study. Dependability can be promoted through reflexivity, auditing and triangulation (Chilisa, 2012). In the context of this study, dependability was enhanced through triangulation which I did with my supervisor, and reflexivity was done using a reflective journal.

As it has already been mentioned that this study was based on two cohorts (2016 and 2017), therefore through analysing both data sets I was able to evaluate the findings from both data sets and I came to the conclusion that the results of the analysis in both data sets didn't identify any differences between them, that the results were the same for the two consecutive years that the study was conducted. There was a link between the data of the study and the reported findings, as there was a match between the literature of this

study and the theory that it was guided by, which is Hudson's five-factor model of mentoring.

3.6.3 Confirmability

Refers to the extent to which other researchers can confirm the results of a study conducted by another researcher. Confirmability aims to confirm that the conclusions that the researcher of a study comes to are based on the data, and do not come from the researchers own bias and imagination (Kumar, 2014; Tobin & Begley, 2004). I was able to adhere to the criteria of confirmability through working with my supervisor. I had meetings that were specifically scheduled for data analysis with my supervisor whereby I had to analyse the data first on my own, and then meet with my supervisor so that she could see how I analysed the data, and then also help me with the other parts of the data analysis. This process ensured that the way in which I analysed the data was not simply based on my own biases, as my researcher was there to understand, confirm and at some point, even change the analyses that I had made. This then ensured that in analysing the data, I remained objective and neutral to the findings of the data. I also had a researcher's reflective journal, which I used to gather my perspectives about the data as I was analysing it. I was therefore very disciplined in subjectivity and reflectivity.

3.6.4 Transferability

Transferability aims at investigating if the results of the study conducted can be transferred to other contexts using other participants. It is a concept that closely resembles that of generalisability, whereby it wants to understand that a particular study/research can be applied to different contexts either than the one that it was initially applied to at the onset of the research (Bitsch, 2005; Rule & John, 2011). As this study used the descriptive case study design I was not able to transfer the results of this study to other contexts and other participants because this study focused specifically on the case of student-teachers at the University of Pretoria (Groenkloof campus), therefore the setting was the same for the years 2016 and 2017 in which the study was conducted, and as such the study is not generalisable to other contexts, but is only applicable to the

participants and context that it focused on (Erikson, 2012). The transferability of the findings of qualitative research can also be seen through the researcher providing thick descriptions of the research setting (Chilisa, 2012).

3.6.5 Authenticity

Authenticity refers to the researcher being honest, truthful and transparent about the goals, expectations, and biases that he/she holds towards their study, and how these have contributed towards the methods that were selected for the study, as well as the mistakes that the researcher made while conducting their study (Tracy, 2010). Authenticity also refers to how fairly the researcher presented the different perspectives which were shared by the participants of his study towards the topic that the study focused on (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011). I ensured the criterion of authenticity by engaging with my supervisor and discussing the different results I had expected to gather from analysing the data. I was also able to discuss with my supervisor the different challenges that I encountered when I was analysing the data, and she guided me in ensuring that I represented the findings of the data in a fair and truthful way, that was free from any bias that I initially held about the findings from the data.

The above criteria are used in qualitative research to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. According to Lincoln and Guba (1999: 398), “The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: how can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of what arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive on this issue?”.

It is important to note that this quality criterion does not work independently when it comes to one conducting a study. Researchers conducting a qualitative study need to follow this criterion, and they also need to adhere to the ethical considerations (as already discussed) when conducting research. Both the ethical considerations and the quality criteria, therefore, need to exist in a study for it to be a well-grounded and secure study.

3.7 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

McMillan and Schumacher (2014), state that when one conducts research qualitatively, they (researchers) have to be the instrument used in which the data is collected for the research. The role that I played in this research is that I came in as co-researcher because this was an already existing project. I was responsible for analysing both data sets of this study. I had to analyse them individually, and then I also had to identify the different themes and sub-themes that existed in the data set, name them based on the general concepts that were identified in the data, and then categorise the data according to each theme and sub-theme.

3.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter 3 discussed the paradigmatic approaches that directed this study. The reasoning behind the choice of the research site and the representative participants were elucidated, and I explained the strategy behind the data analysis and interpretation procedures I utilised. I also discussed the role of the trustworthiness of the study, including credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, and authenticity. Finally, I elaborated on my role as the researcher and discussed the ethical guidelines I followed.

In Chapter 4 I will discuss the results and findings of the study. The results are presented according to the themes and sub-themes identified during the process of inductive thematic analysis of the data sets. I will then compare the identified themes with existing literature and conclude the chapter by presenting the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

> *If [a teacher] supports what she does as an occupation, if she supports education in general, if she supports essentially all students beyond the ones she has to care for, then I feel that she would have an obligation to help teachers in training understand the classroom and understand what it means to be a teacher.* (David, pre-service teacher 1 as cited in Graves, 2010:1)

In this chapter, I am going to discuss the findings of my study. I will report these findings through tables that will indicate the themes as well as the sub-themes that emanated from the data through the inductive thematic analysis method, which I utilised to analyse my data. I will also include excerpts from the data set in each theme and sub-theme that I discuss. These excerpts will be the exact answers that participants of this study gave to the questionnaires that they completed. Lastly, I will discuss the findings of this study which will then be linked to the current literature on my research topic, which is found in the literature review (Chapter 2).

4.2 RESULTS OF THE STUDY

In this section, I will discuss the three main themes and sub-themes that I identified from analysing the data using an inductive thematic analysis.

Table 4-1**:** Overview of themes and sub-themes

THEMES	**SUB-THEMES**
Theme 1: The ideal characteristics of a mentor lecturer	**1.1:** Personality traits relating to the mentor lecturer **1.2:** Mentor lecturers' professionalism
Theme 2: Mentor lecturer support during teaching practice	**2.1:** Academic support (PRO 400 related) **2.2:** Pedagogical knowledge support **2.3:** Emotional support
Theme 3: Recommendations by students	**3.1:** Any recommendations towards the teaching practicum and the mentoring process, which were made by the student-teachers.

4.3 THEME 1**: THE IDEAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A MENTOR LECTURER (ML)**

Theme 1 captures the responses that the participants of this study gave with reference to the personality traits that they would like the mentor lecturers that mentor them during their teaching practicum to possess. This theme then gave rise to two sub-themes. Table 4.2 gives an overview of the criteria that I used in identifying the data relevant for each theme and sub-theme.

Table 4-2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria for Theme 1

Theme 1: The ideal characteristics of a Mentor Lecturer		
Identified Sub-theme	**Inclusion criteria**	**Exclusion criteria**
Sub-theme 1.1: Personality traits	This sub-theme includes any data that refers to the mentor lecturers' personality traits.	This sub-theme excludes any data that focuses on anything beyond the personality traits of the mentor lecturer, and it excludes the professionalism of the mentor lecturer.
Sub-theme 1.2: Mentor lecturer professionalism	This sub-theme focuses on data that speaks to the mentor lecturer conducting themselves in a professional manner.	This sub-theme excludes any data that refers to anything else about the mentor lecturer that does not speak about them conducting themselves in a professional manner.

4.3.1 Sub-theme 1.1: personality traits

Student-teachers indicated that mentoring would be more effective during their teaching practicum if the mentor lecturers that mentored them, held positive personality traits. These would be traits that the mentor lecturers would portray, especially during the teaching practicum period.

Student-teachers expressed that they wanted their mentor lecturer to possess the traits of being compassionate and understanding as revealed by Participant 211 who stated that *"the ideal mentor lecturer would be compassionate and understanding. We should feel comfortable to contact the lecturer at any time and perhaps meet the lecturer before they come to crit us" (Participant 211).* Student-teachers wanted their mentor lecturer to be patient and understanding. The mentor lecturers' personality traits play a very significant role in how the student-teacher experiences their teaching practicum. It is also important to remember that the student-teachers were conducting their first teaching practicum in their final year of study as Participant 8 stated that he/she wanted his/her mentor lecturer to *"be involved and understanding. Be patient with student as we are still learning" (Participant 8)*, while Participant 23 elaborated that *"patience, and an*

understanding of the fact that this is our first time experiencing a school environment in the role of a possible teacher". Participant 34 further reported that mentor lecturers must:

> *be patient and help you as a student-teacher to reach your best potential. Must not get tired if you don't get things right; must not expect more than you can give especially on the first visit because you are scared and not sure about many things. Mentor lecturer should be more understanding when student-teacher asks for assistance*

For other student-teachers guidance was of the essence. Participant 21 was of the opinion that "*I believe the ideal role of the mentor lecturer is to assist a student in understanding what is expected of them and to be a friend as well as a guide through this time"*. Participant 9 stated that mentor lecturers must *"give guidance and be critical in a way that will motivate the student-teacher to do well throughout his/her teaching experience"*, while Participant 162 expressed that the mentor lecturer "*must be fully committed to guiding a student-teacher*".

The personality trait of approachability is a very important attribute that mentor lecturers should hold, and it was also expressed as a personality trait the student-teachers required from their mentor lecturer as illustrated by Participant 191 when he/she expressed that:

> *the mentor lecturer should be someone approachable and comfortable to be around. As this is an extremely stressful time for the students, the mentor needs to be very understanding, sympathetic and give the student the support and encouragement they need*.

Participant 182 further added on to this statement by noting that "*the mentor lecturer should be friendly and approachable as well as confident in her field of profession as a lecturer"*.

Being supportive and encouraging was yet another personality trait that the student-teachers required from their mentor lecturers as revealed by the statement of a student-teacher "*I believe mentor lectures should provide support, as well as encouragement to students"* (Participant 62). Participant 335 commented *"a mentor lecturer needs to be*

more supportive of us. They have to understand that it is our very first time in a classroom, and we cannot be able to practice everything required of us in just a week or two. This applies specially to phase 1 of the teaching practicum". Participant 333 expressed that *"for me, an ideal mentor lecturer should manifest the role that is based on supporting the student-teacher's needs. The mentor lecturer should only be a phone call away"*. Support for Participant 375 was expressed as the mentor lecturer's ability to *"be a shoulder to cry on at all times"*.

Participant 158 further elaborated and said that mentor lecturers must *"encourage a student to be creative, not expect them to teach like mentor lecturer would. Understand the student-teachers lack experience in teaching at the time of crit 1"*.

Some student-teachers stated that they wanted their mentor lecturer to have the personality trait of being honest and transparent as expressed by Participant 192 when he/she mentioned that *"the mentor lecturer must be honest and transparent, he or she must tell you when you make mistakes but must not criticize you; instead he must provide you with ways to correct your mistakes"*. Participant 199 further stated that *"an ideal mentor lecturer would be honest with the student-teacher, indicating progress made as well as areas for improvement"*.

The student-teachers also revealed that they wanted a mentor lecturer that was respectful, humble and sincere. Participant 35 voiced that he/she wanted a mentor lecturer that *"treats us as peers with mutual respect"*, and Participant 187 further commented that *"there should be an equal amount of respect between one mentor lecturer and student"*. Participant 1 noted that what he/she wants in a mentor lecturer is someone who *"treats us as peers with mutual respect"*. Another personality trait that student-teachers required that their mentor lecturers possess was that of being professional parents towards them during the teaching practicum. Participant 133 stated that *"she/he must help the student-teacher on this journey she is in. She must mentor her in a way become a professional parent. Shout at him/her when she's wrong; tell her, her mistakes and how to fix them"*. Participant 210 elaborated through stating that *"the mentor lecturer should serve as an "older sister"- guiding and moulding the student-teacher throughout the whole teacher development process"*, while Participant 298

revealed that *"they should fulfil a parental role being genuinely interested in the growth and development of the student"*.

In Sub-theme 1.1, which is on the mentor lecturers' personality traits revealed that some student-teachers were exposed to mentor lecturers that possessed positive personality traits which contributed to how they were mentored. This is illustrated by these following positive experiences pertaining to the mentor lecturers' personality traits that the following student-teachers were exposed to:

Participant 50 expressed:

> *my mentor lecturer was very sensitive to specific incidents that occurred during my teaching practice. I appreciate how understanding she was, for example my second CRIT was postponed due to the taxi strikes. I was in an absolute state and my mentor lecturer reassured me that my safety came first, and she knew how hard I've worked.*

While Participant 125 noted:

> *she was open and honest and what I liked most was that in as much as she had to adhere to the requirements of the assessment procedure, she was considerate and realistic. Everything that was faulty she would give me a chance to explain to see if it is valid or not then score me on that.*

Participant 165 expressed that his/her mentor lecturer *"was pretty human. He was someone that you can be socially open to and understands what you are going through as another person"*. Participant 176 *commented that: "My mentor lecturer was extremely helpful and motivating. Always commented on positive aspects and told me that I have great potential to be an outstanding teacher."* The positive personality traits that these student-teachers were exposed to from their mentor lecturer contributed positively to the mentoring experiences that these student-teachers encountered.

While transcribing the data, I noted the following in my reflection journal

> *Student-teachers at the University of Pretoria are in desperate need of a mentor lecturer that will make them feel like they matter. They need a mentor lecturer that is concerned about their well-being; someone that cares for them, someone that is willing to guide them, listen to them, and someone that will treat them with respect*". (Reflective Journal, 29 June 2018).

4.3.2 SUB-THEME 1.2: Mentor lecturer professionalism

This sub-theme focuses on how the mentor lecturers conduct themselves as professionals within their workspace as they mentor student-teachers during the teaching practicum. In this regard, the student-teachers indicated what they needed from their mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum period about constructive feedback. When mentor lecturers provide student-teachers with feedback, the purpose is surely to assist the student-teachers to improve on their teaching, and not to belittle them in any way. Participant 5 was of the opinion that: *"they should provide constructive criticism to the students on areas where they can improve and areas they should focus on"*. While Participant 60 commented *"constant feedback, advice and support should be given throughout the whole practical. The Lecturer should help build the students confidence and give them constructive criticism which will help them develop their teacher identity".* Participant 130 noted that mentor lecturers must *"give critical feedback to improve teaching. Be available to discuss scenarios that happened at school",* and they must *"give positive feedback to the student to improve on teaching*. Participant 103 added that mentor lecturers should *"be willing to help the student"*. Participant 28 noted that:

> *mentor lecturer's need to state positive comments when assessing a lesson so that learners can get confidence. They should give feedback after a student's lesson. Give advice; perhaps even provide a practical example to enhance understanding and use other students as examples.*

Participant 121 reported, *"they should ensure to write lots of feedback after a lesson and engage in a substantial focused and enriching reflection after a crit lesson"*.

The need for critical feedback and criticism is paired with the need of a mentor that engages in reflective practices with them during the teaching practicum. Mentor lecturers providing student-teachers with frequent, constructive feedback is cited as the most important action a mentor can take. Not only does it allow the student-teacher to critically reflect on strategies for strengthening their own teaching towards the improvement of their learner's academic success, but it also assists them to develop as an independent, self-reflective practitioner.

According to Participant 319:

> *the mentor lecturer is supposed to guide the student-teachers by giving enough feedback after an assessment, either good or positive feedback and constructive feedback on short fallings that need to be improved. They also are supposed to ensure that learners are fulfilling all their obligations at school but also ensure they are not being overloaded so they can complete their profiles.*

Participant 361 reported that:

> *the ideal role of a mentor lecturer is someone that gives you tips on what went well and what didn't work, after watching/assessing a lesson. A mentor lecturer should also help the student if they are struggling with the school or mentor teacher.*

Participant 150 elaborated and said that:

> *the mentor lecturer has to reflect on the presented lessons of the student. The reflection should be both positive and negative. They must point out areas where the student needs to improve. They must suggest improvement strategies to the student as well.*

Participant 193 further commented that *"A mentor lecturer should not just give you marks but must reflect with you. Stating reasons why he or she gave you that mark"*. According to Participant 45, mentor lecturers *"should help their students work through their*

experiences & reflections even when they do not assess their lessons". Participant 304 expressed:

> *To me a mentor lecturer should be able and willing to assist a student at all times and be able to help and answer all questions. They should be able to point out if the student has any faults openly and in a professional way, but also be able and willing to tell the student why they point out the mistakes and then it should be a high priority to give them advice and tell them clearly what they can do to improve as well as give them options.*

Student-teachers regard communication from their mentor lecturers as an extremely important aspect. They stated that what they are also in need of from a mentor lecturer is someone with good communication skills. Participant 33 respectively expressed:

> *I feel that the lecturers should be actively involved in doing a follow up of the student-teacher's progress and to always avail themselves to the learners. For instance, have a sort of a group chat whereby there is everyday communication.*

Participant 220 noted, *"The mentor lecturer should constantly keep in contact with the student-teacher and regularly check if they are on the right track"*. Participant 317 elaborated:

> *A mentor lecturer should be willing to communicate freely with the student-teachers so that expectations from both sides of one another are known. These clear expectations help the student-teacher identify in which areas he/she needs help with, and the mentor lecturer can identify where the student-teacher needs more guidance with. It also allows both parties to anticipate any problems that may arise".*

According to Participant 161 *"the ideal mentor lecturer should be in constant contact and communication and should help teachers develop on all fronts".* Participant 4 reported *"A mentor lecturer has to communicate with students on a more regular basis not just when they are coming to mark and motivate students to be more"*. Participant 44 noted that

mentor lecturer's need to *"keep in contact and respond to messages and emails. Be available, as sometimes, they need to get involved to sort out problems that could be faced at school"*.

It is through good communication that a mentor lecturer reveals their professionalism, and it is through constant communication with a mentor lecturer that the student-teacher will also be able to develop a professional teaching identity. It is for these reasons that these student-teachers need a mentor lecturer that has good communication skills.

Some student-teachers felt that they needed mentor lecturers that would share their own teaching experiences with them. Participant 92 indicated:

my expectations are to have a mentor lecturer that is willing to spend time and effort with me as the student to discuss where I could improve and how I could do this; as well as to have a mentor lecturer that is ready to share experiences that he/she has experienced and how they dealt with these experiences.

Participant 190 reported *"The mentor lecturer should share past teacher experiences to help give the students examples of different teacher situations"*. Participant 197 expressed that:

> *a mentor lecturer should be able to sit with a student-teacher and give advice to the student-teacher regarding her own experiences that have built her identity e.g. being able to put own emotions aside and act in the best interest of the child regardless of being angry at the child.*

Participant 283 commented "*I believe a mentor lecturer should be an honest person to a student-teacher. They must be someone who shares their knowledge and experience. A mentor lecturer should also be someone who extends their contribution and stays on top of the field"*.

According to Participant 137 mentor lecturers need *"to be able to give sincere advice from the lessons which they have learnt throughout their teaching experience"*. Participant 43 then noted *"it is thus necessary that mentor lecturer's share their experiences; what the mentor lecturer had experienced and how we as beginner teachers can improve"*.

Mentor lecturers can only be able to have time to share their own teaching experiences with their student-teachers during their teaching practicum when they make time, and they thus make themselves available to their student-teachers. According to Participant 19 *"a mentor lecturer should be always available for discussion and give advice on how to tackle everyday experience in schools"*.

While Participant 46 noted "*I think the mentor lecturer, should be available and respond to messages in order to guide the students. The mentor lecturers should also take into account that the teaching practice is difficult to adjust to, and they should take that into account when assessing learners"*.

Participant 17 reported, "*They also need to make time for us when we set appointments and not be inconsiderate and inconvenience us"*. Participant 101 elaborated further and noted *"I think ML's should be available for "consultations", especially at the beginning of the term when we were feeling a bit lost. I think it helps us as students to know someone has our backs, especially for those whose MT's are MIA"*.

Participant 175 expressed that:

> *the mentor lecturer should be available to student when student needs assistance. Mentor lecturer should guide student and let student know what is expected and why student need to follow rules and steps. The mentor is like a helper to help student when problems arise.*

Participant 42 noted that:

> *the mentor lecturer should visit more than once and should also visit mentor teachers to check if they are capable of mentoring. They should avail themselves to reflect face to face with together the mentor teacher and student-teachers.*

Participant 334 commented that: "*mentor lecturer is one that is easily accessible. It is his or her duty to make regular check-ups on the student-teacher in helping to monitor progress or improve on areas that need more effort*. According to Participant 339 *"the mentor lecturer should also be informed and available for contact sessions before the*

1st crit is done in order to know what the expectations are for the lessons and lesson plans".

Participant 341 added *"The mentor lecturer also needs to be available to answer questions and address concerns of the student, regarding teaching practice requirements and the TP File".* Participant 362 expressed that *"the mentor lecturer should also be available for the first meeting at the school, as the first day at the school is very overwhelming"*.

Participant 76 similarly noted:

> *a mentor lecturer should always be available to us as student-teachers. He/ she should be fair in judging our abilities as a teacher. The mentor lecturer should always give back feedback, advice or constructive criticism to guide us on our journey as student-teachers. I also feel as though the mentor lecturer should stand by our side through tough things (problems with school or teachers etc.)*

Some student-teachers revealed that what they wanted from their mentor lecturer is professional guidance. Participant 36 further expressed this by stating that:

> *the role of the mentor lecturer plays the role of supporting the student in all possible ways during teaching practical's, by means of providing adequate advice to build the students' self-esteem and attitude towards the teaching profession.*

Participant 314 commented that:

> *the ideal role of a mentor lecture in assisting a student would be to consistently be available and provide guidance from the step by step process of a student-teacher developing his or her own teacher identity. To create an environment in which a student can freely discover him or herself. The mentor lecture should be there to assist the student not to assess the student.*

While Participant 186 indicated that:

> *mentor lecturers must have more involvement in the student-teacher's lives. It should never be student-teachers' running after these lecturers. It should be that both parties are willing. Lecturers should not act like they are forced to do this mentoring business. Student-teachers should have not to stress about teaching prac and lecturers.*

Participant 83 expressed that:

> the ideal role of a mentor lecturer would have to be a professional person *with loads of experience and understanding. I would say that the lecturer should be willing to guide and help students develop their teacher identity. The role of the mentor lecturer should fulfil the following roles: To encourage, guide, help, support, teach, share experiences and to be available when help is needed as well as to be an assessor and give constructive criticism.*

Some student-teachers stated that they need mentor lecturers that would play the role of a mediator between themselves and the schools at which they conducted their teaching practicum. This is illustrated by what Participant 86 commented:

> *mentor lecturer's needs to be more involved with the school as they do not communicate with the school and only with the learners. The school also wants to know what is happening. In this way lecturers can help mentor teachers assist students more.*

Participant 205 reported:

> *The mentor lecturer should ask and make sure that student-teachers are well suited/ gets along with the school staff". Participant 59 lastly noted that "the role of a mentor lecturer is to give guidance on how to overcome unforeseen circumstances because people from teaching practice schools might have negative perception about student-teachers, so the mentor lecturer connects the school with the student.*

Some student-teachers also noted that what they needed from their mentor lecturer was someone that could help develop them into a teacher. This is illustrated by the following statements made by the student-teachers.

According to Participant 100:

the ideal role that the mentor lecturer should play in helping student-teachers to develop a professional teacher identity, is that he/she must lead by example, assess the student on the ability of handling the class, preparing well for lessons, and give a valuable and honest feedback.

Participant 38 noted: *"Mentor lecturers need to help grow and develop an upcoming teacher to know the ropes of being a teacher*". Participant 146 reported that mentor lecturers need to, *"Help the student-teacher develop his/her teacher identity. Guide, mentor and help the ST, in reflecting on their teaching identity"*, while Participant 239 expressed that:

> *the role of the mentor-lecturer is to guide the student-teacher in developing a professional teaching persona. The mentor-lecturer needs to guide you during your teaching practice to ensure that you are a well-rounded professional teacher by the time you are done with your studies.*

Participant 86 indicated that a mentor lecturer should be *"a person that would feed into my growing teacher identity. A person that would give me support and scaffolding as I navigated teaching practice"*. Participant 237 expressed that *"A mentor lecturer plays a role in shaping your teacher identity because they provide you with experience and knowledge and criticism that allows you to develop a teacher identity"*. Participant 93 revealed that they *"expected to learn a lot from my mentor and for him to guide me towards developing my teacher identity and becoming a better teacher"*.

Some student-teachers stated that they wanted to build a professional relationship with their mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum. Participant 345 reported that mentor lecturers need to *"Work together as a team to help improve the student-teacher"*. Participant 242 mentioned that *"They should come closer to student-teachers, meaning*

the relationship between these two parties must connect. The most effect should come from both parties". Participant 167 indicated *"To build a relationship with the student; to help the student beyond just practical e.g. guidance with looking for a job"*. Participant 354 noted *"the mentor lecturers need to be assigned at an earlier stage. As the relationship can be built and the student can understand what is needed from them"*. Lastly, Participant 233 stated that mentor lecturers should *"help students get their professional CV requirements in order to get the proper qualifications (SACE)"*.

In Sub-theme 1.2, the student-teachers shared both positive and negative experiences pertaining to the professionalism that their mentor lecturers displayed during their teaching practicum. I will firstly focus on the negative experiences that some of the student-teachers shared about their mentor lecturer's professionalism during the teaching practicum. Participant 57 had a negative experience with their mentor lecturers when it came to how they conducted themselves and behaved in a professional way. He/she stated that:

> *my lecturers never contributed to my teaching practical; they weren't available when needed – contact was minimal (almost non-existent); it was the mentor teacher who filled that role. They weren't approachable + never shared any ideas; they were not even understanding*.

Participant 97 expressed *"My ml [mentor lecturer] was very critical and did not really give me good productive advice. She was more critical about the way I taught instead of what I taught*", while Participant 47 shared that *"my mentor lecturer did not help or guide me when it came to the subject I was teaching. I did not get guidance from him"*.
Participant 243 expressed *"My mentor lecturer played no other role in my practical other than that of an assessor. A mentor lecturer should be active throughout your experience, not just when you need to be marked"*. The statements made by these student-teachers indicate the fact that the mentor lecturers that were assigned to mentor them during their teaching practicum lacked the ability to show their professionalism through providing professional guidance towards them. However, although I have highlighted the negative experiences as revealed by the student-teachers that participated in this study, some positive experiences stood out on this sub-theme which were also expressed by some of

the student-teachers. These experiences were based on the aspect of the mentor lecturer building a relationship with these participants. Participant 68 revealed:

> *my mentor lecturer took the time to build a relationship with each one of us and this made such a difference as we as the students felt comfortable and therefore, we could approach the lecturer with any problem or situation we faced.*

Participant 78 reported *"my mentor lecturer was amazing. He wanted to learn more about myself and what my goals are. He gave great advice for my future as a teacher. He was extremely considerate and very helpful"*.

In my reflective journal I noted that:

> *the student-teachers are concerned about their mentor lecturers behaving in a professional manner. They hold the idea that it will be easier for them to emulate the professional way of behaving as a teacher if they saw someone that mentors them behave in that way. Student-teachers think highly of their mentor lecturers, and they hold them accountable for behaving professionally.* (Reflective Journal, 1 July 2018).

4.4 THEME 2: KINDS OF MENTORING SUPPORT NEEDED BY STUDENT-TEACHERS

Theme 2 refers to the support that the student-teachers needed to receive from their mentor lecturer's during their first teaching practicum, which occurred in their final year of study. This support was divided into three forms of support which formed the sub-themes for this theme.

Table 4-3: Kind of Mentoring Support needed by student teachers

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub theme 2.1: Academically related support that is based on the PRO 400 module (Teaching Practice module)	Any form of support that is related to the PRO 400 (Teaching Practice) module at the University of Pretoria.	Any form of support that goes beyond the scope of the PRO 400 module.
Sub theme 2.2: Pedagogical knowledge support	Any form of support that is related to teaching in the classroom.	Any form of support that goes beyond how teaching is conducted, in the classroom.
Sub theme 3.3: Emotional support	Any form of support that is related to emotional well-being of student-teachers.	Any form of support that focuses on anything else besides the emotional well-being of the student-teacher.

4.4.1 Sub-theme 2.1: Academic support

Academic support in this study refers to support that is about the PR0 400 teaching practice module at the University of Pretoria. This includes the two assessments done by mentor lecturers (28 lesson plans; portfolio compilation which includes short and long lesson plans, reflections, a teaching philosophy, and extramural activities; lesson plan designs; involvement at schools; compilation of tests and memo's).

The data has already indicated that student-teachers need their mentor lecturers to be available for them because they need the mentor lecturers to share what it is that they expect from the student-teacher during the teaching practicum.

Participant 183 stated that *"They must tell us what they expect from a student-teacher and meet with the student-teachers, maybe make a PowerPoint presentation to show us what they want from the crit lesson and arrange everything on time"*.

According to Participant 212 *"he/she should make meeting with the students he/she is mentoring and tell them what is expected of them in the real field"*.

Participant 308 reported that:

> *The role of the mentor lecturer should be to state clearly to the student what is expected of them and what need to achieve [sic]. Mentor lecturer should furthermore give honest but fair critic to the student-teacher and provide feedback that will guide the student-teacher to become well rounded'*

while Participant 259 commented that:

> *I believe that the mentor lecturer should discuss with students before teaching practice the realities of what to expect in the teaching practice [sic]. Also discussing the student's perception of what kind of teachers they want to be. Also, I believe it is the role of the mentor lecturers to so constant correspondence with the student.*

Participant 178 mentioned that:

> *The mentor lecturer should meet with the student-teachers beforehand explaining to them what she expects from them. She should give advice as well and mentor the student-teachers. Her role should not just be to mark, but to mentor us.*

According to Participant 3 mentor lecturers, *should have a session with us before practical's and communicate the expectations with us"*, and Participant 27 added that *"the lecturer should be able to at the end of a lesson tell you exactly what they expect in terms of the next lesson and the file"*. Participant 235 elaborated *"See them at least 4 times during the teaching prac term to help them prepare and guide them on what the lecturer expects of the student-teacher".*

The student-teachers mentioned that they needed mentor lecturers to help them plan their lessons for their teaching practicum. This is illustrated by the following statements made by these student-teachers. According to Participant 140, mentor lecturers should *"give advice on lesson planning and preparation. They should visit us beforehand just to give advice, and they should explain thoroughly what they expect from the teaching practicum file".* Participant 217 reported *"The role of the mentor lecturer should be to*

guide the student-teacher because in terms of their lesson planning and classroom conduct. Participant 330 elaborates on the importance of a practicum file by expressing that mentor lecturers must *"look through the entire portfolio not just skim and mark properly. Look at the teaching aids made and actually appreciate effort made by student-teacher"*.

Participant 262 reported *"An ideal role of a mentor lecture is the one that help the student on choosing the correct content for the learner, and also helping student with how to plan lesson plans"*. According to Participant 96, mentor lecturers need *"to help with lesson plans, to help improve practice.* Participant 147 mentioned that mentor lecturers are responsible for "*Guiding students through the lesson Plans (step-by-step). Guide students on how to properly prepare for the lessons*". Participant 88 stated that mentor lecturers' need to *"help with lesson plans and administrative responsibilities like helping with setting up tests"*. Participant 106 elaborated on this statement and said that *"at least assist in the formation of a lesson and then to assist and teach the learner how to present the lesson at his/her optimal best (that assist all kinds of learners)"*.

The student-teachers also indicated that they need their mentor lecturers to help them with compiling their teaching portfolio. According to Participant 69:

> *it is crucial for the mentor lecturer to support the student with any crisis at school. They are there to guide the learners in their lessons when assessed and what is expected of them in terms of the teaching prac file and check that they are on the right direction on a regular basis.*

Participant 94 reported that mentor lecturers:

> *should be able to point out if the student has any faults openly and in a professional way, but also be able and willing to tell the student why they point out the mistake and then it should be a high priority to give them advice and tell them clearly what they can do to improve as well as give them options.*

Participant 218 noted, *"I feel the mentor lecturer should regularly meet with the student and discuss on a friendly manner the mistake the mentor lecturer found and provide the student with more professional alternatives which will help the student"*.

Participant 52 commented that mentor lecturers need to *"help work on the strengths and weakness of the student-teacher so that the student can prepare and present a lesson that is best. Go into a deeper explanation of the lesson plan"*. Participant 295 elaborated:

> *The mentor lecturer should guide the student through the teaching practice and offer useful tips. They should always encourage the student and give constructive criticism and meaningful reflection. They should share the knowledge and skill that they have acquired through their experience.*

Participant 258 expressed:

> *The mentor teacher must assess the student-teacher to the best of their ability and then have a complete in-depth reflection with the student, so they know what they need to improve on in their lesson planning and lesson itself.*

Participant 248 expressed that *"the ideal role of a mentor lecturer would be someone who guides and helps a student. Someone who is able to effectively assess, and constructively criticize my teaching methods so that I can better improve"* while Participant 249 indicated that:

> *an ideal mentor lecturer is one who guides the student-teacher through their practical's by giving positive criticism instead of judging them on their abilities- we are still learning and not as experienced as them. A mentor lecturer should keep their expectations realistic (maybe by sitting in on lessons other than the crit- obviously we are nervous for crit, and this affects our performance).*

Participant 300 commented *"The mentor lecturer should be able to provide practical contributions such as constructive criticism in order for her mentee to grow as a teacher as well as to push herself to accomplish her greatest achievements"*.

In addition to receiving constructive criticism and feedback from a mentor lecturer, some student-teachers stated that they wanted their mentor to observe them while teaching during their teaching practicum, and not only when they are assessed. Participant 194 suggested that *the mentor lecturer can observe the student-teachers and reflect with them thoroughly and give suggestions on how to improve"*. Participant 342 reported:

> *A mentor lecturer has many ideal roles to play but personally I would suggest that the one ideal and most important role of a mentor lecturer is to be the driving force of academic monitoring. To closely observe what learning students are doing and to maintain a good standard of teaching.*

Participant 229 indicated *"The mentor lecturer should watch you teach a class and give you constructive criticism in how to improve your manner of teaching".*

In providing constructive criticism and feedback for the student-teacher, some student-teachers stated that they needed their mentor lecturer to model the best teaching practices for them during the teaching practicum period. This can be seen through the statements below.

Participant 181 stated *"A mentor lecture must help a student-teacher, if he or she have question and show the student-teacher the way things are supposed to be done"*. According to Participant 18, mentor lecturers *"should be able to show you how to deal with learners that have a multitude of problems. Also, they need to be professional themselves so you can copy that behaviour"*. Participant 328 commented *"Show learner's better ways to complete the lesson and reach the outcomes"*. According to Participant 329 mentor lecturers also need to *"show students how to set up, worksheets, assessments and rubrics"*. Participant 331 reported that they need to *"show students how to do long-term planning using Caps and time management, help me packing my file and giving me tips to get better marks"*. Participant 107 stated that mentor lecturers need to *"show me how to better teach or present a topic after crit"*. Participant 38 noted, *"be punctual so that the student-teacher learns from you"*.

Participant 56 elaborated:

> *The lecturer should do an example lesson during the first three weeks (Phase 1) where we can see another teaching style. The lecturer could also have the lesson plan done, so we can see how thoroughly they would like it to be filled out;*

, and according to Participant 85 they must also *"do model lessons (present) in order for student to observe mentor lecturer teach"*.

Participant 227 then emphasised the points made on modelling by stating that *"a mentor lecturer should be a role model as well as a form of guidance to their mentee "monkey see; monkey do"*, while Participant 265 elaborated by stating that:

> *Sy/hy kan byvoorbeeld `n moontlike les aanbied vir die student om te demonstreer hoe `n goeie inleiding, inhoud en slot is. Sy/hy kan nadat 'n' student `n les aangebied het (nie net as student gekrit word nie) voorstelle maak van wat beter kon gewerk het vir die les (He/she can for example present a lesson for the student to demonstrate how a good introduction, content and end is. She/he can, after a student presented a lesson (not only when student is assessed) make suggestions of what could have worked better for the lesson).*

Participant 75 commented:

> *Die rol van n Mentor Lektor om `n Onderwysstudente te help `n profesionele Onderwyseridentiteit te ontwikkel, is om die student heeltyd by te staan deur sy/haar daaglikse ervaring binne n klaskamer, deur om altyd beskikbaar te wees om raad te gee aan die student oor hoe om sekere kwessies binne die klaskamerpraktyk op te los" (The role of a Mentor Lecturer is to assist a student-teacher with the development of a professional teacher identity; To continuously support him/her on a daily basis through their experiences in the classroom, by being available all the time with advice and to guide the student with matters relating to classroom practice and how to solve these).*

For mentor lecturers to be able to provide constructive feedback and criticism, as well as model the correct teaching practices for their student-teachers, they need to be subject

specialists. Therefore, the student-teachers need to have a mentor lecturer that specialises in the subject in which they are expected to conduct their teaching practicum. According to Participant 322, an:

> *ideal role that I assume would be a subject specialist. Mentor lecturers are the ones that impart knowledge in us, and they teach us the content of the subject because we cannot teach well without knowing the subject.*

Participant 120 commented that mentor lecturers *"need to know the school system well. Need to know the subject the student is teaching*." Participant 102 also stated that "*a mentor teacher should be an expert in the content knowledge*", while Participant 389 added that *"they should also be someone that specialises in that specific field. Example, ECD lecturer with an ECD student"*. Participant 340 elaborated *"The mentor lecturer should be in the same field as to allow for professional growth"*.

Some student-teachers also reported that they need their mentor lecturers to provide them with supporting materials during their teaching practicum. According to Participant 51 *"mentor lecturers' should also help with the provision of textbooks and provision of extra reading material relevant to the subject area"*. Participant 10 elaborated and stated that mentor lecturers should also *"explain teaching styles or strategies and refer to materials one can use to assist me"*. Participant 92 reported that what he/she needs from their mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum is "*provision of textbooks; provision of extra reading material relevant to the subject area".*

Some student-teachers stated that they need their mentor lecturer to assist them with the subject methodology. This is illustrated by the following statements made by the student-teachers. Participant 278 reported:

> *They should help you apply the methodology that you have learnt and allow you to prepare a mock lesson for them before you even go to the schools so they can give you advice and tips and you can also have a better idea of what is expected of you.*

In this sub-theme on academic support, the student-teachers did not report having had positive experiences when it came to them being offered this kind of support during their teaching practicum.

Participant 105 revealed that:

> *ten opsigte van vakinhoud was daar nie werklik hulp vanaf die mentor-lektor nie en eerder van die mentor-onderwyser. My mentor-lektor het slegs met een besoek 'n vraag beantwoord wat ek nie self kon beantwoord het nie. (With regards to the subject content, there were not really assistance from the mentor lecturer, but rather from the mentor teacher. My mentor lecturer only answered one question I could not answer during one visit).*

Participant 144 also did not receive academic support that would've contributed towards his teaching practicum. He/she revealed that *"the mentor lecturer did not know things (forms/ how to complete forms/what needs to be written down)"*. This contributed towards this student-teacher being disadvantaged because there is a lot of forms such as lesson plans and administrative duties that form part of the PRO 400 (teaching practice) module. Due to these participants, mentor lecturers not knowing how to perform any of the academic work, could not provide this form of support to this student-teacher. Participant 94 also was not provided with the opportunity for their mentor lecturer to share his/her subject knowledge. He/she revealed:

> *I never had a relationship with my mentor lecturer and the only time we communicate would be during assessments only or when I would send an sms. Then that would be the beginning and end of the relationship*

These student-teachers, therefore, did not have mentor lecturers that contributed towards their academic knowledge, and this was a great disservice because they did not have the opportunity to learn from their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum. No positive experiences relating to academic support stood out in the data.

In my reflective journal, I noted that:

the participants of this study are very concerned about receiving proper academic support from their mentor lecturers during their teaching practicum. They feel that if they are supported very well in the academic aspects of teaching by their mentor lecturers, then they will be at a level in which they feel competent as prospective teachers. This which will then make them have the confidence to teach because they will be teaching based on the instruction and support of their mentor lecturer, and as such they will be providing teaching that is of a good standard to the learners that they teach during their teaching practicum. (Reflective Journal, 6 July 2018).

4.4.2 Sub-theme 2.2: pedagogical knowledge support

Pedagogical knowledge refers to knowledge that focuses on how teaching must be conducted. It provides practical knowledge that student-teachers can use in the classroom to teach learners.

The student-teachers that participated in this study indicated that they would like their mentor lecturers to provide them with teaching strategies during the teaching practicum period. This is illustrated by the statements that they made:

According to Participant 70:

a lecturer is someone who assists the student-teacher with everything they should do, e.g. Give points on how to conduct yourself, how to manage those ill-disciplined learners and how to score good marks in terms of presentation.

Participant 228 added, *"A mentor lecturer should actually show us practically what is expected, instead of bombarding us with theory then expecting us to be professional teachers"*. Participant 202 noted, *"The lecturer could show us an example of how they conduct themselves in the classroom so that we can understand what they expect from us because each teacher is different"*.

Participant 223 commented, *"a mentor lecturer should aid the student with guidelines on how to become a professional teacher; they should also help a student apply theory to*

practice". Participant 222 reported, *"They should firstly prepare us for school, like giving us teaching strategies that used to work for them the time they used to teach".* Participant 83 added that:

> *I believe that the mentor lecturer should help student-teachers to come up with exciting ways to teach theoretical work and help get the student-teachers out of using the normal teacher centred way that everyone is used to.*

Participant 7 supported this and elaborated that *"the mentor lecturer can help student-teachers mostly in the teaching strategies and pedagogical academic content from university, specifically in applying it"*. Participant 256 further elaborated on this and said that mentor lecturers need to *"be more involved with the student-teachers, teach the students more practical teaching skills such as how to be more involved in moderation; how to mark; giving advice on discipline; doing what they say they will do"*. However, Participant 309 notes that for them the role of a mentor lecturer is to *"provide ways in which one can improve their teaching style"*, whereas Participant 312 noted that they needed mentor lecturers that would *"provide examples of multiple intelligences and teaching theories"*.

The student-teachers also stated that they needed mentor lecturers that would help them with managing a classroom as well as applying different disciplining strategies in the classroom. This is illustrated by the following statements.

According to Participant 209, mentor lecturers need *"to provide practical advice on how to improve problem areas of teaching, give practical suggestions for classroom management, lesson planning, and the use of resources.* Participant 279 commented *"Give you different discipline techniques"*, while Participant 309 reported that mentor lecturer's need to also provide *"practical discipline techniques in a high school"*. Some student-teachers also added a further element on to this, and that element is that of time management. They expressed that they needed their mentor lecturers to help them with time management during their teaching practicum as illustrated by Participant 323 when he/she expressed *"I think they should help us with discipline techniques, creative teaching*

strategies and how to approach/plan lessons in terms of time management". Participant 327 mentioned, *"A mentor lecturer should lead and be an example with regards to time management and management as a whole"*.

The student-teachers then also revealed that they needed their mentor lecturer to show them how to use their teaching resources. According to Participant 324:

> *they should show you how to use your resources in the most effective way or if you were weak in a particular area in your lesson they should show you what you should have done differently so that you can practically see how it should be done.*

Participant 401 further elaborated *"They can help us with different teaching methods and classroom management for student-teachers and also guide them on how to present lessons in a way that it accommodates all learners".* Participant 404 mentioned that mentor lecturers need to *"provide student with ideas on how to approach your class when teaching for the first time and other practical contributions such as classroom management strategies and discipline in the classroom".*

In this sub-theme on pedagogical knowledge support, there were some negative and positive responses regarding the sub-theme of pedagogical knowledge from the student-teachers that participated in this study. I will first identify the positive experiences as shared by the student-teachers. Participant 11 shared:

> *my mentor lecturer gave us as the student's ideas on how to apply the methodology in a creative manner and how to teach in a way where the learners are providing the answers and constructing their own knowledge and how you facilitate this process.*

Participant 185 reported *"My mentor lecturer shared ideas, advice and examples of classroom practice. We also had group meetings where all the students could also share their ideas and experiences on classroom practice"*.

These two student-teachers had a positive experience of being provided with pedagogical knowledge from their mentor lecturer, which in the future will contribute to them having

vast teaching skills, and the ability to handle a classroom. However, some student-teachers had negative experiences when it came to them being provided with pedagogical support by their mentor lecturers during their teaching practicum. Participant 50 stated that *"my mentor lecturer is not a lecturer at the university; there were definite connections between what we learned at the university and his advice".* It is evident from this statement that this participant did not receive the kind of pedagogical knowledge support that they were hoping for during their teaching practicum. This contributed negatively towards them gaining pedagogical knowledge support from their mentor lecturer because there was a discrepancy between how a lecturer at a university teaches, and the lecturer that was appointed as an external lecturer for their teaching practicum, who was not from the university that the participant was from. Participant 82 reported, *"my mentor lecturer was an expert on subject knowledge but was not used to E-learning and how it worked, and she preferred the traditional method of teaching".*

According to the statement made by this participant it is thus clear that the mentor lecturer of this participant was not able to offer the participant pedagogical knowledge support that was focused on teaching strategies. This contributed negatively towards the growth and the ability of the participant to learn current teaching strategies because the mentor lecturer used traditional methods of teaching. This served as a great disadvantage to this participant because they did not get the opportunity to experience being given support and knowledge on how to use contemporary teaching strategies that applied to the 21st century classroom.

In my reflective journal, I made a note which stated that:

> *the student-teachers seem to be very cautious about their practical knowledge when they have to teach in the classroom. Some of their comments make it sound like they are afraid of making mistakes during their teaching practicum, and I feel that they are putting a lot of pressure on themselves to teach perfectly during the practicum. The student-teachers seem to be neglecting the fact that this is the first time that they are being exposed to teaching practice. I therefore feel that the student-teachers should allow the process of the teaching practicum to help them grow; it*

> *should allow them to make mistakes, and to learn from them. No one expects them to be perfect teachers, especially since they are still student-teachers, and they have only been exposed to teaching practice in their final year of studies. The student-teachers should then be less hard on themselves, and they should take the teaching practicum process as a learning stage, and therefore they should not put pressure on themselves to execute perfect teaching during this period.* (Reflective Journal, 13 July 2018).

4.4.3 Sub-theme 2.3: emotional support

When it came to the kind of emotional support that student-teachers needed from their mentor lecturer's during the teaching practicum period, the following was revealed by the student-teachers:

Participant 15 expressed that *"mentor lecturers should help student-teachers to feel at ease"*. Participant 81 mentioned that:

> *the mentor lecturer should make contributions that will be useful to students in the future. Mentor lecturers should encourage learners to do well, they should be enthusiastic about their duties and mentor students in the right direction.*

According to Participant 73, mentor lecturers should offer student-teachers *"more practical exercises and guidance concerning self-reflection and personal growth to ensure enhancement of oneself as a teacher".* Participant 338 mentioned that *"Mentor lecturers should help us believe in ourselves",* whereas Participant 173 stated that the role of a mentor lecturer is *"to always encourage and motivate no matter what situations so that the student-teacher can do better next time"*. Participant 234 added that mentor lecturers should "*motivate student-teachers to be the best that they can be".*

Participant 350 expressed:

> *For first time teachers, it is hard to understand some things. They need emotional support most of the time. Therefore, the mentor lecturer should not appear only when they have to assess the student. A mentor lecturer should know what is going on in their mentees' lives, academic life I mean.*

With that said, it is thus the role of the mentor lecturer, according to Participant 99, to *"find out about our progress. If we are coping and if we are fine".* Therefore, Participant 13 expressed *"mentor lecturers should help student-teachers to feel at ease"*. Participant 76 elaborated and revealed that *"mentor lecturers can offer emotional support through also suggesting coping strategies for us as student-teachers that we can use during the teaching practicum"*. Participant 24 mentioned that what they require from their mentor lecturer is *"Ondersteuning, kommunikasie, empatie" (support, communication, and empathy).*

In this sub-theme on emotional support, the student-teachers have also revealed both positive and negative responses to it. I will first identify the negative experiences that the student-teachers shared about the lack of emotional support that they received from their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum. Participant 18 experienced teaching practicum negatively as he/she revealed that "*I was very stressed out and had no social life due to the amount of work and extra assignments that varsity gave us were ridiculous"*, and Participant 20 also had a negative experience with their mentor lecturer which could not have allowed for their mentor lecturer to support them emotionally during the teaching practicum. He/she stated that *"die lektor was nooit in 'n skool opset nie so sy verstaan nie die possisie van die student nie" (The lecturer has never been in a school environment and did not understand the student's position)*.

Participant 87 noted, *"my mentor lecturers showed favouritism, which made me less confident and I was very confused about how the system worked which made me feel uneasy"*.

The student-teachers' inability to be given emotional support during the teaching practicum contributed to them not having a fulfilling teaching practicum experience

because their mentor lecturers did not provide the kind of emotional support that would have made their teaching practicum experience a pleasant one.

Some student-teachers received emotional support, and thus had positive experiences of it. Participant 54 noted that his/her mentor lecturer:

> *was wonderful and considerate. Always caring not just about how/what I'm doing in class, but how I am doing as a person. I felt so cared for by this lecturer and will always remember her words and advice and will recommend her to anyone.*

Participant 62 reported, *"I experienced a personal problem during the TP period that made it very difficult for me to be at the school, but my mentor was supportive, understanding and flexible, which helped a lot"*.

In my reflective journal I wrote that:

> *the teaching practicum process is structured in such a way that it does not regard the emotional well-being of student-teachers as an important aspect as the student-teachers engage in their practicum. It is as if the student-teachers are expected to be ready emotionally to deal with the different challenges that come with the teaching practicum process. Student-teachers face even deeper emotional problems during the teaching practicum if they are paired to a mentor lecturer that is not concerned about how they are doing emotionally.* (Reflective Journal, 17 July 2018).

4.5 THEME 3: RECOMMENDATIONS BY STUDENTS TOWARDS THE TEACHING PRACTICUM AND MENTORING PROCESS

Table 4-4: Recommendations by students towards teaching practicum and mentoring

Sub-theme	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Sub theme 3.1: Ways in which the mentoring process may be improved during the teaching practicum period.	Any recommendations that the student-teachers make towards the improvement of the mentoring process during the teaching practicum process at the University of Pretoria.	Any recommendations on mentoring during the teaching practicum period that go beyond those that can be implemented by the University of Pretoria.

4.5.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Ways in which the mentoring process may be improved during the teaching practicum period.

Some student-teachers mentioned that they had mentor lecturers that focused more on assessing them for marks instead of mentoring them into becoming the best possible teachers that they could possibly be. Participant 297 expressed that *"the focus should be on how to teach and how we should develop not the focus of just getting marked. ML should have less students in total so that they can help all students overall and not be rushed"*. In support of this Participant 14 suggested that *"teaching practice become more about helping the student become a valuable asset to the teaching profession in order to contribute to the success and advancement of the educational system in S.A rather than a theoretical based opportunity to practice teaching for marks"*.

Student-teachers also recommended that mentor lecturers should be trained to mentor them. According to Participant 55 *"mentor lecturers should not be outsourced since there seems to be a lack of training as to the mentoring and marketing process"*. Participant 80 added *"I would also suggest that the university sends out lecturers who have had experience in the classroom"*. This idea of sending out more experienced mentor lecturers is further elaborated on by Participant 16 when they stated that *"someone that has*

experience in teaching is preferable", with that said, Participant 184 reported that *"mentor lecturers should be trained appropriately to mentor students"*.

Participant 54 reported:

> *The university needs to ensure that there is a set standard between all mentor lecturers. If everyone had a similar mentor lecturer as me there would be excellent, knowledgeable teachers in our country; however, in saying so, it would be great if all mentor lecturers were trained in their student's subjects.*

The student-teachers also felt that the university bombarded them with extra academic assignments for the methodology module, on top of the work related to their teaching practicum. This is because they were still required to complete and submit assignments on top of having to conduct their teaching practicum. Participant 77 expressed that "*I don't think that it is fair to give us other assignments during our practical times at the school because it comes in the way of our practical period and lesson planning"*. The amount of work that student-teachers were expected to do on top of their teaching practicum work left the student-teachers feeling stressed and overworked, which then made them feel completely overwhelmed with the amount of work that they were expected to do.

Participant 364 directed their opinion to the research problem of this study when they expressed that *"teaching prac must definitely start at first year of B.Ed. because it is quite challenging and most unrealistic for us to be perfect in teaching in a period of 10 weeks and be crited at the same time. We have never taught since we started with this course"*. Participant 48 focused on the procedures that mentor lecturers follow when it comes to marking the student-teachers and revealed:

> *I believe that mentor lecturers should standardize their marking because it appears to be an issue. It is also important that a lecturer should not mark someone down because they disagree with their teaching styles. We are still experimenting, and a lot of growth needs to occur as this is just the beginning of our teaching careers.*

According to Participant 103*, "the teaching practice program is not realistic, and the assessments are not a true reflection on the student-teachers' abilities as teachers. The program must be improved and be more realistic"*. In support of this Participant 65 suggested that:

> *teaching practice become more about helping the student become a valuable asset to the teaching profession in order to contribute to the success and advancement of the educational system in S.A rather than a theoretical based opportunity to practice teaching for marks.*

Participant 196 reported that "*I think it would be better in the future that Mentor lecturers and the student are for the same subject"*, while Participant 363 added that *"the University should put younger people in lecturer places. The old people do not understand the new subject content"*. Participant 30 commented, "*I feel the platforms of communication should be encouraged or the teaching practice could give a workshop to our mentor lecturers so that they can be aware of their role towards grooming us"*. Participant 125 mentioned that *"Mentor lecturers also need to be trained on the TP guidelines"*.

The sub-theme of ways in which the mentoring process may be improved during the teaching practicum period were made with the intention of improving the mentoring and teaching practicum process at the University of Pretoria. was done so that the needs of student-teachers would be met during this period. It is paramount that the needs of the student-teachers are made known, because it is through having knowledge of what it is that student-teachers would like to be exposed to through the recommendations that they have made about mentoring during teaching practice that will help the university, along with the teaching practice office, and the mentors to structure the mentoring program in such a way that it will meet the needs of the student-teachers. The recommendations made by the student-teachers are also very important to take note of because they will inform the university that the student-teachers need more from their mentoring programme during the teaching practicum, and once the university is aware that student-teachers are in need of more than what they are currently receiving in mentoring during their teaching practicum, they can then work on strategies on how to implement the recommendations made by the student-teachers.

Therefore, these recommendations were in no way made to highlight the negative aspects of teaching practice at the university, but they were made so that there is an awareness of what it is that student-teachers believe needs to change about the teaching practicum process, what needs to be improved, and to also highlight what they need from their mentor lecturers during the teaching practicum period. These opinions expressed under the sub-theme of recommendations made by student-teachers, were based on the experiences that they had during their teaching practicum, and because they are based on experience are very important to take into consideration when coming up with a mentoring programme that will be effective, and cater to the mentoring needs of student-teachers during the teaching practicum period.

In my reflective journal, I noted that:

> *I admire the participants of this study in giving recommendations that could help the university as well as the teaching practicum office in terms of what they liked and did not like about the mentoring during the teaching practicum. I really admire that they used the voice that they have because the recommendations that they made are very relevant, and they will be of assistance to the future of the mentoring program during teaching practicum at the university.* (Reflective Journal, 21 July 2018).

4.6 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

In this section, I relate the identified themes and sub-themes to existing literature. I focus on the contradictions and correlations in the existing literature with the results produced in this study.

4.6.1 The ideal characteristics of a mentor lecturer

4.6.1.1 Personality traits

To be effective and good mentor lecturers, they need to possess positive characteristics such as being compassionate, understanding, patient, caring approachable, friendly, honest, encouraging, supportive and showing mutual respect. These are the characteristics which they will make use of as they mentor a student-teacher, especially during the teaching practicum of the student-teacher. Positive personality traits create a safe and nurturing environment for effective mentoring (see Section 2.8.1).

Mentor lecturers need to have strong interpersonal skills, and they also need to be academically competent (Moir, 2009; Udelhofen & Larson, 2002). Student-teachers need constant encouragement and support (see Section 2.5 and 2.8.1) during their teaching practicum (Izadinia, 2016). They need a mentor lecturer that will show them compassion, and someone that will make them feel like they are cared for.

The data indicates that the mentor lecturer's personality traits play a significant role in the mentoring relationship that will exist between the mentor lecturer and the student-teacher (see Section 2.5). It is how the mentor lecturer presents him/herself, and how they treat the student-teacher that shapes the mentoring relationship and comes to have an effect on the success of the mentoring during the teaching practicum period, as discussed by Trout (2010) (see Section 2.5), and it also contributes significantly to the professional development of a student-teacher because it assures a strong and trusting relationship between the two parties (Moir, 2009; Moir, Berlin, Gless & Miles, 2009; Udelhofen & Larson, 2002). The data revealed that student-teachers require their mentor lecturer to express themselves as people that can be empathetic and able to guide them beyond their roles as professionals (see Section 2.5 and 2.6). This is revealed by Mahomed and Singh (2011), (see Section 2.5). Student-teachers need mentoring that focuses on more than the academic aspects of the teaching practicum.

In this sub-theme, the student-teachers are interested in experiencing a side of the mentor lecturer that transcends beyond them just being mentor lecturers that have been tasked with the role of assessing the student-teacher during the practicum, but they want their mentor lecturers to possess and portray human traits that focus on guiding, caring, and understanding the student-teacher as it has been discussed by Hennissen et al., (2011), (see Section 2.6). Student-teachers also want mutual respect to exist between

themselves and their mentor lecturers (see Section 2.5). It is thus very important that mentor lecturers express personality traits such as those of being patient because it is the patience of the mentor lecturer towards the student-teacher during this challenging time of teaching practice that is very necessary for the survival of the student-teacher as they navigate their way through this new environment (see Section 2.5).

Based on the data presented above it is evident that mentor lecturers need to provide a lot of guidance for their student-teachers (see Section 2.5 and 2.6) so that the student-teachers may feel that they are supported by their mentor lecturer during the teaching practicum period. This agrees with what was revealed by Graves (2010) (see Section 2.6). With a limited amount of support from the mentor lecturer, the student-teachers' teaching experiences during their practicum will be very limited (Glenn, 2006), and they will experience the challenges that were identified and discussed (see Section 2.3). Although there were some negative personality traits that were displayed by some mentor lecturers that were highlighted by the student-teachers when it comes to how they were mentored during their teaching practicum, the data does reveal that some student-teachers had positive mentoring experiences during their teaching practicum. Some student-teachers were fortunate enough to be exposed to mentor lecturers that had a passion for mentoring, and those that were genuinely interested in equipping them with many teaching skills, as well as making sure that the student-teacher had a positive teaching practice experience.

4.6.1.2 Mentor lecturer professionalism

The findings of this study indicated that student-teachers need mentor lecturers that are role models; offer professional guidance; are mediators; supportive; share their own teaching experiences; are available for consultations; offer constructive criticism, and those that are reflective practitioners (see Section 2.4 and 2.6), and to also discuss issues that are related to the curriculum and planning of lessons. The student-teachers also needed their mentor lecturers to do reflections with them; they needed their mentor lecturers to communicate effectively with them, to set clear expectations for them, have frequent visits to the schools where the teaching practicum was being conducted. They

should to also check up on the student-teacher, and also be involved at these teaching practicum schools.

Student-teachers also need time with their mentor lecturers to debrief them about their teaching practice and to discuss any changes and future plans that may be implemented in their teaching practice and mentoring process (Ganser, 2002; Maphalala, 2013) (see Section 2.6). Time invested by the mentor lecturer is of a very important factor especially to student-teachers that are struggling and therefore require their mentor lecturer to assist them in a deep and detailed way. This was discussed through a form of support by Tardy's (1985) hierarchical model of social support called "Instructional support" which has been discussed (see Section 2.6). Therefore, mentor lecturers need to set out enough time that will be for consulting with their student-teacher, so that effective and productive mentoring takes place (Hudson, Usak, & Genser, 2009).

The data revealed that when mentor lecturers make time, and are accessible to their student-teachers, it makes the student-teacher feel that they actually matter to the mentor lecturer, and this is an important feeling to the student-teacher as they conduct their teaching practice for then they feel like they actually have someone that makes time for them, so that they can discuss the concerns that they have about their teaching practicum (Hyde & Edwards, 2013). Alongside the needs of time and accessibility, some student-teachers also stated that they needed more communication from their mentor lecturer. It is thus seen that student-teachers feel that communication lies at the centre of building a solid and reliable relationship with their mentor lecturer (see Section 2.4, 2.5 and 2.8.1).

4.6.2 Kinds of mentoring support needed by student-teachers

4.6.2.1 Academic support

Academic support refers to any kind of support that is provided to the student-teacher that will help them advance their learning and teaching during their teaching practicum. This could be instructional support, such as how student-teachers can create and structure their lesson plans (Brady & Broadbent, 2007*;* Merç & Subaşi, 2015*)* with

reference to the PRO 400 (Teaching Practice) module presented at the University of Pretoria in the Faculty of Education (see Section 2.8.1).

The data indicated that student-teachers rely on their mentor lecturer to be their guide and to help them during their teaching practicum. Student-teachers indicated that they need advice on lesson plans, and the portfolio (teaching practice file) (see Section 2.3.1.1, 2.3.2, 2.6, and 2.8.5). They also need mentor lecturers that are subject specialists, as well as mentor lecturers that will provide constructive feedback to them about their teaching practicum.

Academic support is a very important part of the support that student-teachers need to receive during their teaching practicum training. It is in this aspect of support that student-teachers will receive support from their mentor lecturer that specifically focuses on the academic aspects of teaching (Hinchey, 2010; Zepeda, 2012). Student-teachers need to develop knowledge of the subject that they will be teaching, the necessary tools and strategies that they can employ when they teach (Wasango, Wanzare & Dawo, 2015), and in order for student-teachers to receive academic support that meets their needs, they need to be paired to a mentor lecturer that is an expert in the same subject/s as they will be teaching (see Section 4.4.1). The data indicated that some student-teachers agreed with this because in some cases they were paired with mentor lecturers that were not experts in the subjects that they were teaching. Thus, the student-teachers felt that this put them at a disadvantage because they could not gather all the knowledge on instructional practices, and the content of the subject. This was a great disadvantage, especially because they also needed advice on how to apply subject knowledge because their mentor lecturers had expertise in another subject, and not that of the student-teacher (Amadi, 2013).

A frequent need from student-teachers pertaining to their mentor lecturer as identified in the data was that of them receiving feedback (see Section 2.2, 2.8.5, and 2.9) from their mentor lecturer during their teaching practicum. Student-teachers need to be guided by a competent mentor lecturer that has knowledge on effective and relevant teaching practices, so that when providing feedback (see Section 4.5.1.1) to the student-teacher on his/her teaching during their practicum, they do so with enough knowledge on the

expected standard of teaching required in the teaching field (Ligadu, 2012). However, as the literature (see Section 2.3.2.4) has revealed, some mentor lecturers are not trained (Beutel & Spooner-Lane, 2009), and with the lack of training they may not be at a professional level to fulfil their mentoring duties and therefore meet the mentoring needs of student-teachers during their teaching practicum (Hall, Draper, et al., 2008; Simpson, Hastings & Hill, 2007) (see Section 2.5).

With that said, giving and receiving feedback in a mentoring relationship is an important factor that can come to determine the success or failure of the mentoring relationship and teaching practicum. Giving and receiving feedback is an aspect which has been discussed (see Section 2.6) as instructional support under the hierarchical model of social support designed by Tardy (1985). Therefore, a mentor lecturer, through the feedback that they provide to a student-teacher, can enhance the student-teachers' learning. They can also help student-teachers to develop a professional teacher identity during their teaching practicum as the data has indicated. Giving and receiving feedback has been identified by the student-teachers as something that they need from their mentor lecturers during their teaching practicum period (Du Plessis, 2013; Nillas, 2010) (see Section 2.5 and 2.6).

Feedback given to mentees needs to be constructive in such a way that it should focus on issues of pedagogical knowledge such as how to deal with different classroom behaviours that may arise in classrooms from learners. The struggle with discipline in the classroom is a serious challenge that student-teachers face according to Ababneh (2012) and Dicke, Elling, Schmeck, and Leutner (2015) (see Section 2.3.2.1). Because discipline is a challenge for student-teachers, they have a need to receive feedback from their mentor lecturer that will provide information on how to handle discipline issues that may arise in the classroom.

Feedback should also focus on lesson planning, and any other aspects that are important to the student-teacher and their mentor lecturer (Evans-Andris & Carini, 2006; Tillema, Van der Westhuizen & Smith, 2015). The data of this study reveals the same when it comes to the feedback that the student-teachers receive. The student-teachers preferred to get feedback that was personalised for them because such feedback focuses on the

student-teachers themselves and the areas that they need to improve on for their teaching practicum, instead of feedback that is in the form of ticks and numbers, because such feedback does not provide any further explanation of which areas it is that the student-teacher needs to focus on and improve on, and this kind of feedback is also very general and not specific to the student-teacher themselves (Al Sohbani, 2012; Ferguson, 2011; Green, 2010). However, the studies conducted by Paker (2005) and Kuter and Koc (2009) as discussed (see Section 2.3.1.3) reveal that there also exists a challenge when it comes to student-teachers receiving feedback from their mentor lecturers.

Academic support will help student-teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the content of the subject, which will help them to understand the history and organisation of the subject, its body of knowledge, how to construct and structure lesson plans and how to run and manage an effective classroom. They need to learn how to plan lessons as has been discussed (see Section 2.3.1.1 and 2.3.2.1). This is because student-teachers during their teaching practicum are required to plan lessons which should indicate the expected outcome of the lesson to be presented, as well as indicate the different ways in which they can manage the classroom (Hudson, 2013). The data revealed that the student-teachers place their utmost trust in the knowledge that their mentor lecturers possess, but with that said, the student-teachers also state that they would appreciate it if their mentor lecturers gave them the freedom to structure lessons and teach in their own way, and not to exactly follow the mentor lecturers methods of teaching.

4.6.2.2 Pedagogical knowledge support

Pedagogical knowledge refers to teaching strategies, classroom management and discipline, as well as teaching resources, among others. These are practices that are related to classrooms in a school (see Section 2.8.3).

Metaphorically speaking when it comes to teaching practice, the student-teachers are expected to “pilot their boats” in order not to “sink”, “fall”, or “lose direction” (Percara, 2014:10). What this means is that they must successfully take the theory that they learnt in the lecture room at their university and apply it to the school context that they are placed in during their teaching practicum (Starkey & Rawlins, 2011). However, it is this

transforming of theory into practice that seems to be a challenge for student-teachers during their teaching practice as the data also signifies (Allen, 2011). The literature also states that student-teachers have pedagogical challenges during teaching practice (see Section 2.3.2). This is where the mentor lecturer is needed, so that he/she can help the student-teacher navigate their teaching practice “boat” from learning the theory of teaching, to applying it in a school, in the classroom to be specific (Bates, 2002; Kwenda, Adendorff & Mosito, 2017).

Mentors that have been assigned the role of mentoring student-teachers during their teaching practicum have the responsibility to help the student-teacher develop the pedagogical practices of teaching during this teaching practicum, (see Section 2.8.3). Through learning about the pedagogical skills of teaching, student-teachers are also taught how to become reflective practitioners who are able to reflect on their teaching during their practicum and then link it to the feedback that they have been given by their mentors about how they have performed during their teaching practicum (Sempowicz & Hudson, 2011).

Student-teachers also need to develop subject knowledge of the subject/s that they will be teaching. For this need to be fulfilled, student-teachers need to be paired with lecturer mentors that are experts in the same subject/s as they will be teaching. This will help the student-teacher to develop a deeper understanding of the content of the subject, which will help him/her understand the history and organisation of the subject, its body of knowledge, and the ways in which it must be taught (Baeten & Simons, 2016; Meyer, 2004; Schulman, 1986). To be an effective teacher one day, student-teachers need to be well-trained and mentored on how to plan lessons; how to use classroom resources such as the blackboard and the size of the classroom to articulate the lesson (see Section 2.3.2.1). Student-teachers should also have knowledge of questions related to what to prepare for a class, when to prepare it, and how to go about this preparation (Tankersley, 2016). This is because there are a lot of school subjects that form a part of the curriculum to be taught in schools, and as such careful knowledge of how to teach each subject should be made available to the student-teacher during their teaching practicum.

How well a teacher knows the subject they are teaching can also have an impact on how well the learners of that teacher perform academically in that teachers' subject. Therefore, mentor lecturers, as they mentor student-teachers, need to make sure that the student-teacher gains proficient knowledge of the subject/s that they teach (Azure, 2016; Perry, Hutchinson & Thauberger, 2007) An effective mentor lecturer also needs to show the student-teacher that there is always a connection between the lessons, assessments and teaching of a subject (Tankersley, 2010). Mentor lecturers should also not be shy to share their own teaching experiences with their student-teacher, as some student-teachers have stated this as a requirement in the data of this study. The student-teachers have stated that they think that if mentor lecturers share their teaching experiences with them, they may provide some form of insight for the student-teacher on how to teach in particular contexts, and how to handle content for the different subjects (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, Tomlinson, 2009).

Under the sub-theme of pedagogical knowledge support the data revealed that student-teachers would also like mentor lecturers to model the best teaching practices for them during their teaching practicum period, and as discussed by Moir (2009), (see Section 2.3.2.3) modelling is to improve the components of teaching practice. The factor of modelling has also been discussed in Section 2.8 under the theoretical model that this study is based on, which is Hudson's five-factor model of mentoring. The process of modelling is of utmost importance during teaching practice because it allows for the student-teacher to observe their mentor lecturer, and as the data has revealed, this could be very beneficial for the student-teacher, especially when they are observing their mentor lecturer deal with complex issues that may arise in the classroom (see Section 2.8.4) (such as how to deal with difficult behaviour displayed by learners in the classroom) (Abongdia & Foncha, 2015). Therefore, by observing their mentor lecturer, the student-teachers have stated that they will have some form of knowledge on how to deal with any issues should they encounter them during their teaching practicum or in their future as qualified teachers (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Therefore, the data reveals that modelling is a very important factor (see Section 2.3.2.3 and 2.8.4) when mentoring student-teachers because it allows the student-teacher to

practically view lessons, and classroom management skills. This could really be of assistance to student-teachers, especially since discipline is a very challenging phenomenon in South African schools, and there are not a lot of disciplinary measures that can be put in place in order to curb this (Levin & Nolan; Kepe, 2014). Through modelling then, mentor lecturers should be able to teach the student-teachers the right skills that can help them deal with discipline issues that may arise in the contexts (school/classroom) that the student-teacher has been placed in (see Section 2.3.2.3 and 2.8.4). With that said mentor lecturers are viewed by student-teachers as the best tools in which they can use to see instructional practices being put into practice within the classroom as indicated by the data from the student-teachers (Moir, 2009). Effective modelling not only contributes to the successful development of pedagogical knowledge, which may be implemented by the student-teachers themselves, (Darling-Hammond, 2006) but also enhances student-teachers' self-confidence.

4.6.2.3 Emotional support

Kram and Isabella (1985) as well as Hennissen et., al (2011) are of the opinion that the greater and more efficient emotional support that is provided by the mentor to the student-teacher, the more beneficial the mentoring relationship will be. Without emotional support, student-teachers tend to be *"more apt to have anxiety, insecurity and a lack of confidence"* (Kilburg, 2007, p. 297) (see Section 2.6).

Abell et al., (1995) and Awaya, Mc Ewan et al. (2003) as well as Deng, Zhu, et al. (2018) state that the major form of support that is neglected when it comes to mentoring student-teachers is that of emotional support from their mentor lecturers (see Section 2.6). Gratch (2010) continues to state that the emotions of a student-teacher play a very important role in how they experience their teaching practice, this which is also evident from the data of this study. Student-teachers need to feel at ease; they need to feel encouraged; they need to experience personal growth. They also need to feel like they are being understood by their mentor lecturers. The emotions of student-teachers are very important during their teaching practicum period. This is illustrated (see Section 2.6) as "emotional challenges". Student-teachers' emotional wellness during their teaching practicum can

affect the entire teaching practicum experience for the student-teacher. Student-teachers, therefore, need constant encouragement and support during their teaching practicum, as the data has revealed (Izadinia, 2016), and as the literature has also discussed (see Section 2.6) (Hennissen et., al, 2011; Nasser-Abu Alhija, & Fresko, 2014).

This form of support focuses on building the confidence of the student-teacher during their teaching practicum as well as making sure that the student-teacher is not overwhelmed with all that they are experiencing during this period (Mutemuri & Tirivanhu, 2014; Owusu-Mensah, 2014).

The process of learning to teach can be a daunting experience for student-teachers, as we have seen through the data. The profession of teaching requires a lot of emotional labour (Marais, & Du Plessis, 2013; Zembylas, 2009). This was also discussed (see Section 2.6). (Durksen & Klassen, 2012). This is because it is a profession that works with a diverse range of people from the learners, mentor lecturers, mentor teachers, fellow teachers, and parents of the learners and the principals of the school. When student-teachers can express their emotions to their mentor lecturer it may also help them with their pedagogical development within the teaching profession, as the data has illustrated. It is thus very important that student-teachers receive support, guidance and nurturing during their teaching practicum, as this will help them towards their professional growth as teachers (Graves, 2010; Ngara & Ngwarai, 2012). The emotions of the student-teacher during their teaching practice may affect such things as their beliefs about the profession of teaching, and they can also affect the decisions that student-teachers make during their teaching practice. The same emotions can also affect and shape the kind of relationship that the student-teacher may have with their mentor lecturer (Marais, & Du Plessis, 2013) (see Section 2.6).

4.6.3 Recommendations made by student-teachers

4.6.3.1 Ways in which the mentoring process may be improved during the teaching practicum period.

The sub-theme of the ways in which the mentoring process may be improved during the teaching practicum period were based on what the student-teachers thought could be improved about the process of mentoring during the teaching practicum period. These recommendations did not only refer to the mentor lecturers that were responsible for mentoring these student-teachers' during the teaching practicum, but they were also made in relation to the university in terms of how the university can improve the teaching practicum process.

The data revealed that student-teachers were concerned about the fact that their mentor lecturers focused more on the assessment part of the teaching practicum (see Section 2.2 and 2.4), instead of working on building their teaching skills, and addressing the different challenges that the student-teachers faced during their teaching practicum (see 2.3). This made the student-teachers feel like the goal of teaching practice is to get assessed for marks, rather than it is to get practical teaching knowledge (see Section 2.2). Being assessed during teaching practice made the student-teachers feel like they had supervisors instead of mentor lecturers, this thus made them feel like there was no direct focus on mentoring, but the focus was on marking (see Section 2.2). The student-teachers also recommended that there be a set standard for marking them during their teaching practicum. This was because mentor lecturers were not marking them based on a set standard of marking, and as such there was no fairness in how they were marked for their performance during their teaching practicum.

Student-teachers, as the data has revealed, also stated that the same mentor lecturers that they were exposed to during their teaching practicum were not able to mentor them (see Section 2.3.2.4). This was because these mentor lecturers were not trained well enough to be mentors (see 2.3.2.4), and as such this affected the quality of mentoring that they received during the practicum. The student-teachers also felt that the university did not prepare them well enough for their teaching practicum period. This was because they were only exposed to teaching practice in their final year of studies, for a set period of time (20 weeks), which was not enough, and as such the student-teachers felt like they were exposed to more theory than they were exposed to practice, since they spent most of their time in a lecturer room as opposed to being in a classroom and practising how to

teach (see Section 2.3.1.2). Therefore, the student-teachers recommended that teaching practice should begin in the first year of the Bachelor of Education degree (B.Ed.) (see Section 2.2), that mentor lecturers be trained (see Section 2.3.2.4), and that there should be more practice of teaching than only the theory of it (see Section 2.3.1.2).

4.7 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 4, I presented the results of the study through three themes which I identified through analysing the data using inductive thematic analysis. These themes alongside their sub-themes were discussed in detail, and I included extracts from the data. After that, I then contextualised the results that I gathered from conducting this study to existing literature on the topic of this study, as well as the theory underpinning the study in the existing literature by identifying any similarities and differences between the results that I obtained and the results that were reflected in the existing literature.

I will then conclude this study in Chapter 5 whereby I will be addressing the research questions that I had formulated in Chapter 1. I will also discuss any limitations that I came across in conducting this study, make recommendations and then lastly conclude on this study.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will provide an overview of the preceding chapters. I will also discuss the findings of this study on how they answer the primary, as well as the secondary research questions that guided this study. I will discuss the limitations and challenges of this study, and I will discuss the contribution that I believe that this study made to the field of teacher training, and mentoring. I will make recommendations which can be used for any future research that may be conducted on the topic of student-teachers, and their mentoring needs during their teaching practicum as well as on the aspect of developing a mentoring intervention. I will then lastly conclude on the entire study.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS

In Chapter 1, I introduced the study by providing background information about this study. I also explained the rationale, and purpose that guided this study which was to explore and describe the mentoring needs of final year student-teachers in the 2016 (July-September) and 2017 (April-June) cohort at the University of Pretoria during their first exposure to teaching practice. I formulated a primary, as well as three secondary research questions; explained the important concepts that relate to this study, and I also clarified my working assumptions. I presented the paradigmatic perspectives which I utilised for this study, presented the research design, as well as the sampling technique that the study used to select the participants of this study. I furthermore presented the data collection and data analysis techniques which were used in this study. Lastly, I concluded the study by briefly discussing the ethical considerations as well as the quality criteria that I adhered to in undertaking the study.

In Chapter 2, I discussed teaching practice as well as the importance thereof in the training of student-teachers. I explored the different challenges that student-teachers face

when they embark on their first teaching practice, which leaves them with high levels of anxiety, stress and uncertainty.

Due to these challenges, literature indicated that student-teachers need to be mentored properly, especially by their mentor lecturers. I conceptualised mentoring and the value of it during this challenging teaching practice period. I further investigated the personality traits of an ideal mentor lecturer that will contribute to student-teacher support during teaching practice, and that will secure a caring and nurturing mentoring relationship. Lastly, I explored the latter by investigating the kinds of support student-teachers need especially from their mentor lecturers. I concluded the chapter with a discussion on Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring as the theory that guided the study.

In Chapter 3, I explained the research methodology of this study that assisted me to answer my research questions. I explained the epistemological paradigm that was utilised which is the Interpretivist paradigm. The methodological approach that this study utilised was a qualitative research approach. I discussed the descriptive case study as a research design. I furthermore elaborated on the sampling technique, which was purposeful sampling for selecting the participants, and convenience sampling for the research site and the case of this study. I then discussed the data collection method, which was a semi-structured qualitative questionnaire with open-ended questions. The data analysis was conducted according to Braun and Clarke's (2006) steps to conducting a thematic analysis. Lastly, I discussed the ethical considerations that were employed in conducting the study and the quality criteria that I adhered to in conducting this study. In conclusion I clarified my role as co-researcher in this study.

In Chapter 4, I presented the findings of this study in terms of three main themes that emanated from the study, as well as their respective sub-themes. I then discussed the findings of this study based on the data, and indicated how it aligned and, in some cases, contradicted the existing literature on the topic of this study. I also brought to light new findings from this study that did not appear in the literature but emanated from the data set. I presented the readers with thick and rich descriptions of the transcribed data.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

In this chapter I summarised my findings on the research that I have conducted. The findings are presented by firstly addressing the secondary research questions formulated in Chapter 1, and then tying it together by referring it to the primary research question that guided this study.

5.3.1 Secondary research question 1

Why do student-teachers need mentoring, especially from their mentor lecturers, during their first teaching practice?

Student-teachers need mentoring from their mentor lecturers because teaching practice is a new experience for them, the process of being trained may be psychologically demanding for them. This may place huge amounts of stress on the student-teachers, causing them to feel vulnerable (Durksen & Klassen, 2012) (see Section 2.6). In the process of teaching practice, student-teachers experience intense feelings and emotions such as worry, fear and anxiety (Bloomfield, 2010; Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010) (see Section 2.6). It is for this reason that they need to be guided and supported by their mentor lecturers because learning to teach can be a daunting experience for the student-teacher (Graves, 2010) (see Section 2.6). Therefore the guidance and support that the student-teacher will receive from their mentor lecturer will help the student-teacher to familiarise themselves with the culture of teaching, and the different demands, and rules that come with the profession (Hyde & Edwards, 2013; Rusznyak, 2016) (see Section 2.5 and 2.6).

Mentor lecturers have knowledge on the different issues that exist in the educational context, and it is such knowledge that is needed by student-teachers as they conduct their teaching practicum. Therefore, student-teachers need mentoring from their mentor lecturer because they are the right sources of knowledge regarding the profession of teaching (Maphalala, 2013) (see Section 2.5). Being mentored specifically by mentor lecturers is a need for student-teachers during their teaching practicum because student-teachers have a challenge when it comes to applying the teaching theory that they have learnt in their universities, into practical knowledge during their teaching practicum, and

as such mentor lecturers can help them with this transition, among other (Gan, 2013), (see Section 2.3.1.2 and 2.3.2.1).

5.3.2 Secondary research question 2

What kind of support do student-teachers need, especially from their mentor lecturers during teaching practice?

During teaching practice, student-teachers need emotional support from their mentor lecturers (Booth, 1993; Bradbury, 2010; Huffman & Leak, 1986; Rajuan, Beijaard and Verloop, 2007) (see Section 2.5 and 2.6). This is because they experience a lot of emotions that may influence their teaching practicum (Grudnoff, 2011; Izadinia, 2016)). During teaching practice, the mental health of student-teachers is often neglected (Abell et al., 1995; Awaya, Mc Ewan, et al., 2003, Deng et al., 2018) (see Section 2.6), because the aim of teaching practice is to equip student-teachers with the practical abilities of how to teach (Mehdinezhad, 2012) (see Section 2.8.3). Therefore, the emotional aspects of teaching practice in terms of how the process of teaching practice is affecting student-teachers emotionally, is often not addressed, and more attention is focused on the practical aspects of the teaching practicum, on the student-teacher.

Student-teachers are also in need of a form of support known as instructional support, this is the kind of support that focuses on giving student-teachers information, knowledge and skills on how to effectively teach in a classroom (Suldo et al., 2009) (see Section 2.6). Instructional support also includes the aspect of mentor lecturers offering student-teachers feedback on their teaching practicum (Zeru, 2014) (see Section 2.6, 2.8.1 and 2.8.5). The aim of the feedback being to bring awareness to the student-teacher on their strengths and weaknesses in relation to how they have been conducting their teaching practicum (Range, Hvidston & Young, 2013) (see Section 2.6). The feedback that student-teachers get from their mentor lecturers during their teaching practicum, could be on aspects such as how they have managed a classroom and lesson planning (to name a few) Azure, 2015, Evans- Andris, Kyle & Carini, 2006) (see Section 2.8.5).

Student-teachers have also identified that they need instrumental support which is the kind of support that aims to improve how the student-teachers will learn, during their teaching practicum (Tennant et al., 2015) (see Section 2.6). Instrumental support can be given to student-teachers by their mentor lecturers, through the mentor lecturer offering the student-teacher feedback on their teaching attempts during their teaching practicum, as well as the mentor lecturer setting out time to debrief with the student-teacher on how they have experienced the teaching practicum (Ganser, 2002) (see Section 2.8.5).

Lastly, student-teachers need appraisal support. This is the kind of support that is about giving praise and encouragement to student-teachers during their teaching practicum, to motivate them (Kelly & Antonio, 2016). When student-teachers receive appraisal support, they will be encouraged to do better during their teaching practicum, and they will also gain confidence on their teaching attempts (Sempowicz & Hudson, 2011) (see Section 2.6).

5.3.3 Secondary research question 3

How may the findings and recommendations of the envisaged study inform the possible development of a mentorship intervention for mentor lecturers to support student-teachers during their first encounter with teaching practice?

Mentoring of student-teachers, especially from the side of lecturers, did not exist at the University of Pretoria. Lecturers who “mentored” student-teachers during teaching practice merely monitored and supervised students. The latter comprised of two school visits where students were assessed on the lessons they presented and where they got feedback on the lessons they presented. A mentoring relationship did not exist up to now and student-teachers longed for a personal relationship with mentor lecturers where they could feel safe to make mistakes and to learn from a caring mentor who not only assess and monitor, but who provided them with emotional support, academic support etc.

Findings from this study supports the assumptions that a proper mentoring intervention should be developed for the following reasons:

1. To assist lecturers in the development of their mentoring skills to enhance the holistic development of student-teachers.

2. The specified mentoring needs and kinds of support student-teachers are in need of, should be addressed in the envisaged mentoring intervention.

5.3.4 Primary research question:

What kind of mentorship will assist student-teachers with their teaching practicum?

The data revealed that student-teachers need mentorship that is known for the following. Firstly, student-teachers needed a safe, nurturing relationship with their mentor lecturer (Graves, 2010), which transcended beyond their academic needs for their practicum, and that the mentors' personal attributes needed to be positive (Moir et al., 2009). so that the student-teachers could be able to connect with their mentor lecturer and therefore thrive during their practicum (see Section 2.6 and 2.8.1).

Secondly, student-teachers needed their mentor lecturers to possess positive personality traits, these will instil trust, encouragement and personal growth of the student-teacher. The student-teachers stated this as a mentoring need because they are of the opinion that if their mentor lecturers possess positive personality attributes or traits then they will mentor them with empathy, passion, understanding, and respect (to mention a few). Student-teachers thus feel that these positive personal attributes will contribute to how well they will do in their teaching practicum and the relationship that will develop between them and their mentor lecturer (see Section 2.5).

The student-teachers needed mentoring conducted by a mentor with positive personal attributes and professionalism. Lastly, they needed mentorship that provided holistic support which included emotional support (see Section 2.5 and 2.6), academic support (see Section 2.8.1) and pedagogical knowledge support (see Section 2.6 and 2.8.3). The themes that were more dominant than the others were those of positive personal attributes of the mentor lecturer as well as the theme of constructive guidance and feedback on pedagogical support. The dominance of these themes signifies the idea that student-teachers needed mentors that they could relate to and ones with whom they could

communicate. It was also very important for the student-teachers to get feedback from their mentor lecturers about their performance during the teaching practicum as this would help them identify the areas that they needed to improve on in their practicum (see Section 2.8.5).

5.4 POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

This study contributed to theory in the sense that it explored and described the mentoring roles of specifically the lecturers involved in teaching practice. There is ample research conducted on the support that mentor teachers provide student-teachers during their first teaching practice, however, I found an extreme scarcity of literature addressing the mentoring roles of mentor lecturers to assist student-teachers during their first teaching practice.

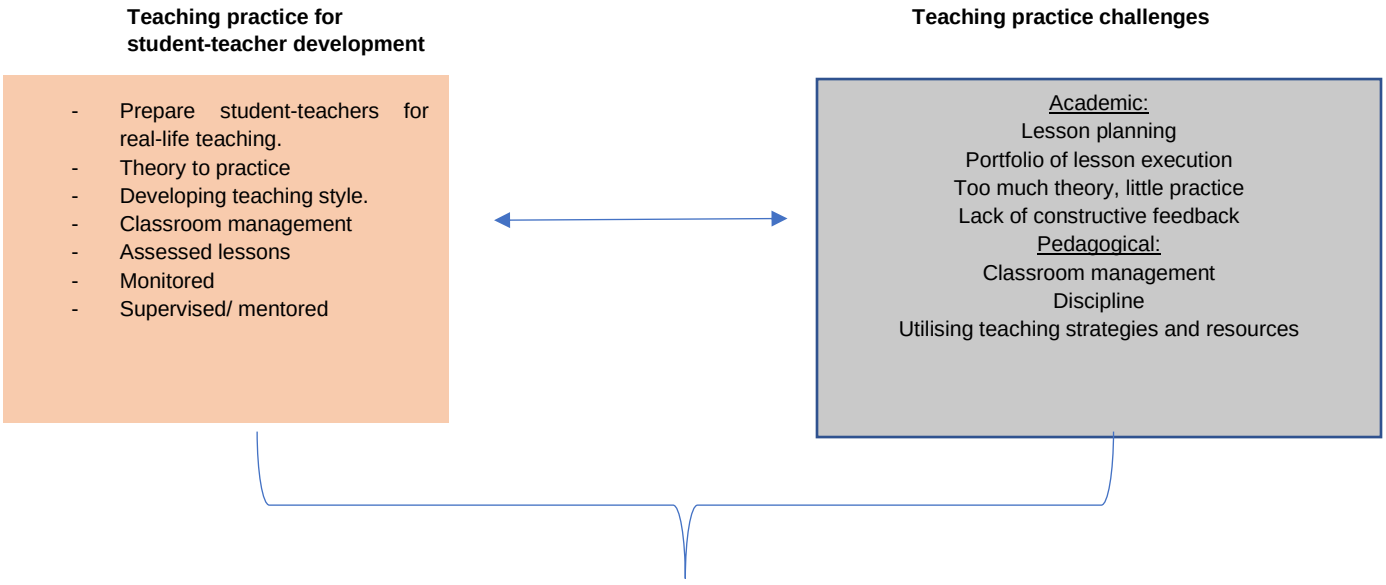
5.4.1 Theoretical contributions

In theory, this study contributed to the following:

1. This study contributed to the theory in the sense that it explored and described the mentoring roles of specifically the lecturers involved in teaching practice. There is ample research conducted on the support that mentor teachers provide student-teachers during their first teaching practice, however, I found an extreme scarcity of literature addressing the mentoring roles of mentor lecturers to assist student-teachers during their first teaching practice.
2. The results of this study based on the data gathered, have identified a sixth factor that can be added onto the five-factor model of mentoring by Hudson. This sixth factor is known as professionalism. This factor focuses on how mentor lecturers need to act in a professional manner in fulfilling their role as mentor lecturers, as they mentor student-teachers during their teaching practicum. This factor was identified as a need by student-teachers that participated in this study (see Section 4.2.2). The student-teachers stated that they need mentor lecturers that are professional, and those that will offer them professional guidance, and constructive criticism and feedback. They particularly need

their mentor lecturers to display professionalism, because they need to physically see how teachers should behave and carry out their mentoring duties as they mentor them during the teaching practicum. It is thus my opinion that this factor is important, and since it is not a part of Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring, I am of the opinion that it should be added on to it, so that the model for mentoring by Hudson also represents a holistic account of mentoring that encompasses how mentor lecturers can display professionalism in their role as mentors.

SYNTHESIS OF THIS STUDY



Hudson 5 factor model for mentoring and additional factor	Findings from data
1. Personal Attributes →	Supportive; caring; guider; respectful; parent; approachable; friendly; honest; transparent; compassionate; understanding; patient…
2. System Requirements →	Policies; curriculum; objectives…
3. Pedagogical Knowledge →	Planning; timetable; teaching strategies; teaching aids; classroom management; discipline….
4. Feedback →	Constructive criticism; feedback on evaluation; oral feedback; advice; written feedback; expert on subject content
5. Modelling →	Role model; teaching practices; demonstrator; class management; practically viewing lessons; how to present; caps; time management…
6. Professionalism →	Critical feedback; build student's confidence; reflection on lessons; constant communication; spend time with student-teacher; help student to gain a teacher identity…

Figure 5.1: An adapted conceptual framework and added factor to the theoretical framework.

5.4.2 Contributions to practice

In practice this study contributed to the following:

1. For the first time, the University of Pretoria investigated the mentoring needs and challenges faced by student-teachers during their first teaching practicum.

2. The University of Pretoria is now familiar with the kinds of mentoring support student-teachers really need during the teaching practice process and will address the mentioned support in the proposed mentoring intervention.

The University of Pretoria can now develop a mentoring intervention for mentor lecturers (the first of its kind at the university, and other Higher Education Institutions in South Africa), not only to enhance the mentoring skills of mentor lecturers but also for the mentors to assist with the holistic development of student-teachers during teaching practice.

This study will further assist the university as well as the Teaching Practice Office to be able to develop a mentorship intervention that student-teachers will benefit from in a positive way. The latter might contribute to the acquiring of necessary teaching skills to become effective teachers whilst also receiving support that transcends beyond academic support during the practicum. Lastly, the practical contribution of this study will assist the university to provide mentor lecturers that will offer a holistic form of support for the student-teacher so that they have a fulfilling teaching practicum experience.

5.5 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS

When I embarked on the study, baseline data was already collected for the study. I perceived this as a limitation since I was not able to take field-notes while the participants of this study were completing the questionnaire. However, I did make use of a researcher reflective journal, where I reflected on the thoughts that I had which were based on the 2016 and 2017 data that I analysed, and how I made sense of the responses that were given by the student-teachers that participated in this study.

The second limitation that I identified was on the fact that the data collection of this study for the 2016 cohort in July-September was interrupted because of the “fees must fall strike” that was happening, and as such there were a limited number of student-teachers that participated in the study (170). Therefore, not all the students that were in their 4th year of their B.Ed. studies in the year 2016 at the university could complete the questionnaire because of this strike.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following sub-sections I make recommendations for training, practice and future research on the findings of this study.

5.6.1 Recommendations for practice

In most cases when there is a discussion on the mentor lecturers’ role in teaching practice, information is left out on why mentor lecturers need to be trained to become mentor lecturers. Based on the literature and the data, I am of the opinion that if the mentor lecturers that this study is based on were trained effectively to mentor the participants of this study, then there would not have been any reasons why the mentor lecturers could not have met the needs of the student-teachers. The data revealed that the student-teachers felt that their mentor lecturers were not trained for their roles as mentor lecturers. It is for this reason, that I recommend that the university’s primary focus, when developing a mentoring intervention, should be on finding suitable people that have mentored student-teachers before. These people could then come and mentor the lecturers that will be responsible for mentoring student-teachers during the teaching practicum.

There should be mentor training sessions especially for external mentor lecturers that will be utilised by the university, so that the mentor lecturers are well prepared for their mentoring role towards the student-teachers during the teaching practicum, and that they mentor according to the standard of the university which they would have been trained on.

I recommend that mentor lecturers that are selected to mentor student-teachers be handpicked by the university so that they only select mentor lecturers with positive

personal attributes, that will help them in mentoring student-teachers during the teaching practicum period. Mentor lecturers should also be selected to mentor student-teachers based on them having teaching experience. Another recommendation that I make is that mentor lecturers should be trained in the holistic development of the student-teacher. Mentor lecturers that have been trained to mentor student-teachers during their teaching practice also need to be more engaged with the mentoring process and the student-teachers, as well as the schools in which the student-teachers have been placed for their teaching practicum. In mentoring student-teachers, I recommend that mentor lecturers should mentor student-teachers, and not monitor or supervise them during the teaching practice. They should mentor to help the student-teachers to develop professionally in their roles as prospective teachers.

I recommend that student-teachers be exposed to teaching practice from their first year of their B.Ed. degree, so that they will have enough practical experience of teaching in the classroom. I lastly recommend that universities should implement Hudson's five-factor model for mentoring, including professionalism, as a model that can be used when drawing up a mentoring intervention, as this theory is on mentoring, and it provides a holistic view that can be of great use when creating a mentorship intervention for student-teachers.

5.7.2. Recommendations for future research

Based on the findings of this study, I recommend the following for further research:

- Based on the literature that I have read in conducting this study, I have come to the conclusion that there is not a lot of research that has been conducted on mentor lecturers, and the mentoring role that they play in assisting student-teachers during the teaching practice period. A lot of the literature that I found and read focused more on the role of the mentor teacher, and this is rather unfortunate as both the mentor teacher and mentor lecturer are responsible for the student-teacher during the teaching practicum period. I am therefore of the opinion that there needs to be more research conducted on the mentoring roles of mentor lecturers, in mentoring student-teachers during the teaching practicum

period. Mentor lecturers need to mentor student-teachers during the teaching practicum and, not be a tormentor.

- I also recommend that there be an analysis done on the effect of positive, holistic mentoring and the development of the student-teachers.

5.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mentoring plays a vital role in the development of student-teachers during their teaching practicum, and if mentor lecturers are well trained and handpicked, they will be able to mentor and not only monitor, and assess student-teachers, but will build professional relationships with their student-teachers.

I conclude this chapter with the inspirational words from Rohn (2017) “My mentor said, 'Let's go do it', not 'You go do it”, to further highlight the idea that this chapter has been trying to emphasise, which is that mentoring is a process that involves two people working together. It is a journey that both the mentor lecturer, and student-teacher must embark on, for the goal that the mentoring relationship is based on to be achieved.

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Appendix A: Consent Letters

UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Education

24 July 2017

Dear Student teachers

My name is Dr Annelize du Plessis. I am steering a research project which form part of a Teaching and Development Grant. In collaboration with co-researchers we are conducting research on **the mentorship role of mentor lecturers in assisting student teachers in the development of their teacher/professional identities** and would like to invite you to actively participate in the research project. Your participation is however completely voluntary; therefore, you may opt out at any time during the research study without any consequences. Your anonymity is guaranteed at all times.

This project will focus on the development, implementation and evaluation of a mentorship intervention for you as student teachers. The aim is to utilise the underlying principles of effective mentorship in supporting you to develop and gradually grow into the profession of teaching. In this manner a mentorship intervention, more specifically when facilitated by mentor lecturers, may prepare you for your world of work, what you can expect when entering the career they had selected to pursue, and how they could deal with challenges that may potentially arise. Such guided support will entail far more than classroom practice, as it will focus on, *inter alia,* the acquisition of professional knowledge, the development of a teacher identity and competence as future teachers.

In conducting the research, we will utilise a mixed methods design, doing intervention research and following a participatory reflection and action (PRA) approach. The project will broadly entail three phases, namely a pre-intervention phase (October 2016 to February 2017), intervention phase (March to September 2017) and post-intervention phase (October to November 2017). The purpose will not be to address the methodological approaches

of mentor lecturers but to rather focus on the development of so-called soft skills amongst you, student teachers, in support of your learning and professional development during teaching practice.

We foresee that the outcomes of the mentorship intervention that will be developed and implemented will have value for you. You may also gain self-confidence and experience self-efficacy, and gain access to advice and reflections with your mentor lecturer.

Should you agree to participate in the research, you will be expected to participate in the research during the intervention phase where you will be mentored during teaching practice by your mentor lecturer who will utilise the newly developed mentoring intervention. It will be expected of you to keep a reflective journal and during the last phase of the research, you will be invited to participate in a PRA workshop to evaluate the new mentorship intervention, its possible pros and cons and how you think the intervention may be improved.

Please feel free to ask me any questions relating to this research. If you agree to participate, please sign this consent form indicating that you are aware of your rights and wish to take part in the research activities of the study. Thank you for considering participation in this research. If you have any further questions, now or as the research progresses, please feel free to contact me.

All data collected with public funding may be made available in an open repository for public and scientific use

Thank you in advance

Dr Annelize du Plessis

012 420 2498/082 828 0919

Informed Consent

The research study has been explained to me and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I am content with the answers provided. I understand that I can remove myself from the study at any point of time if I wish to do so. I am also aware that the study is being conducted

by co-researchers from the University of Pretoria too and that they will have access to all data. I am satisfied to know that my anonymity is guaranteed at all times since all data will be available on the open resource repository.

Signed_____ by _____ on this _____ day of _____ 2017.

Appendix B: Classification of Themes

THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Theme 1: **Mentor lecturers' personality traits**	**1.1:** **Personality traits relating to the mentor lecturer** **1.2:** **Mentor lecturers' professionalism**
Theme 2: **Mentor lecturer support during teaching practice**	**2.1:** **Academic support (PRO 400 related)** **2.2:** **Pedagogical knowledge support** **2.3:** **Emotional support**
Theme 3: **Recommendations by students**	**3.1:** **Any recommendations towards the teaching practicum and the mentoring process, which were made by the student teachers.**

See chapter 4 for a detailed description of the coding, themes and sub-themes.

COLOR CODING OF DATA FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

Theme 1: Positive attributes (Purple) Sub-theme 1.1: Personality traits relating to the mentor lecturer; Sub theme 1.2: Mentor lecturer professionalism.

Theme 2: Kinds of mentoring support needed by student teachers' (Yellow and Orange)

Sub- theme 2.1: Academic related support; Sub theme 2.2: Pedagogical support; Sub Theme 2.3: emotional support.

Theme 3: Any recommendations towards the teaching practicum and the mentoring process, which were made by the student teachers. (Green)

Participant 110 “The main role of a mentor lecturer is to give constructive criticism – thing includes positive feedback and constructive help for issues that need to change. The mentor lecturer needs to offer support in all aspects of teaching prac and needs to be more accessible” **(SUB THEME 2.1)**.

Participant 5 “They should provide constructive criticism to the students on areas where they can improve and areas they should focus on” **(SUB THEME 1.2).**

Participant 95 “A ML needs to guide the student. They need to be involved and help where they can with lesson planning etc” **(SUB THEME 2.1.)**.

Participant 8 “Be involved and understanding. Be patient with student as we are still learning” **(SUB THEME 1.1)**.

Participant 9 “Give guidance and be critical in a way that will motivate the student teacher to do well throughout his/her teaching experience” **(SUB THEME 1.1)**.

Participant 19 “A mentor lecturer should be always available for discussion and give advice on how to tackle everyday experience in schools” **(SUB THEME 1.2)**.

Participant Constant communication to help build the student’s confidence in their role **(SUB THEME 1.2)**.

Participant 21 “I believe the ideal role of the mentor lecturer is to assist a student in understanding what is expected of them and to be a friend as well as a guide through this time” **(SUB THEME 1.1)**.

Participant 59 “The role of a mentor lecture is to give guidance on how to overcome unforeseen circumstances because people from those school might have negative perception about student teachers, so the mentor lecture connects the school with the student Another role of a mentor lecture is to help develop a professional teacher identity it prepares us to be able to stand for ourselves and become organized teachers”. **(SUB THEME 1.2)**.

Participant 61 “The lecturers should be able to help with lesson ideas and how to improve on your classroom management” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 63 “The mentor lecture can help student teachers mostly in the teaching strategies & pedagogical academic content from university, specifically in applying it” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 90 “Teach few critical skills” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 97 “Giving admin in order to allow the student to experience the real-life of a teacher. Help with marking & the development of worksheets or tests” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 102 “A mentor teacher should be an expert in the content knowledge” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 117 “Assist in developing lesson plans and classroom management. Assist in content knowledge and assessment procedures of subject” **(SUB THEME 2.2)**.

Participant 151 “The mentor lecturer should run through all documents needed to be filled and explain and run through them explaining what needs to be filled out, how and why” **(SUB THEME 2.1)**.

Participant 42 “Mentor lecturer should visit more than once and should also visit mentor teachers to check if they are capable of mentoring. They should avail themselves to reflect face to face with together the mentor teacher and student teachers” **(SUB THEME 1.2)**.

Participant 56 “The lecturer should do an example lesson during the first three weeks (Phase 1) where we can see another teaching style. The lecturer could also have the lesson plan done, so we can see how thoroughly they would like it to be filled out” **(SUB THEME 2.1)**.

Mentor lecturers need to be trained on the TP guidelines **(THEME 3)**.

I would suggest that the university allocates mentors that can avail themselves more frequently **(THEME 3)**.

Participant 55 “Mentor lecturers should not be outsourced since there seems to be a lack of training as to the mentoring & marking process” (**THEME 3)**.

Participant 71 “I think mentor lecturers should stay the same for both terms, as it takes a while to adjust to them and their ways and then by the time you adjust, you are put with another one” **(THEME 3)**.

Participant 297 “The focus should be on how to teach and how we should develop not the focus of just getting marked. ML should have less students in total so they can help all students overall and not be rushed” (**THEME 3)**.

Participant 139 “Allocate lecturers according to subjects or modules so that they can be useful in that regard to their mentees” **(THEME 3)**.

Participant 191 “The mentor lecturer should be someone approachable and comfortable to be around. As this is extremely stressful for the students, the mentor needs to be very

understanding. Sympathetic and give the student the support and encouragement they need" **(SUB-THEME 1.1)**.

Participant 192 "The mentor lecturer must be honest and transparent, he or she must tell you when you make mistakes but must not criticize you; instead he must provide you with ways to correct your mistakes" **(SUB-THEME 1.1)**.

Participant 204 "I believe that the mentor lecturer should be knowledgeable in current issues taking place in classrooms across South Africa. The mentor lecturer should be available 24/7 for his or her students. The mentor lecturer should not only mark his/her students on their ability to teach only 2 lessons (as there are various factors that could allow the student to be unsuccessful), but also mark the student on their development throughout the process. The mentor lecturer should help the student understand concepts pertaining to the lesson plans that the student might be struggling with". **(SUB-THEME 2.1)**.

THEME 1: **Mentor lecturers' personality traits**	
Sub theme 1.1: Personality traits relating to the mentor lecturer	Participant 8 mentioned *"Be involved and understanding. Be patient with student as we are still learning."* Participant 9 stated *"Give guidance and be critical in a way that will motivate the student teacher to do well throughout his/her teaching experience".* Participant 21 noted *"I believe the ideal role of the mentor lecturer is to assist a student in understanding what is expected of them and to be a friend as well as a guide through this time".*

	Participant 191 revealed that *"the mentor lecturer should be someone approachable and comfortable to be around. As this is extremely stressful for the students, the mentor needs to be very understanding. Sympathetic and give the student the support and encouragement they need".* Participant 192 reported *"the mentor lecturer must be honest and transparent, he or she must tell you when you make mistakes but must not criticize you; instead he must provide you with ways to correct your mistakes."*
Sub theme 1.2: Mentor lecturers' professionalism	Participant 42 noted *"mentor lecturer should visit more than once and should also visit mentor teachers to check if they are capable of mentoring".* Participant 59 elaborated *"the role of a mentor lecture is to give guidance on how to overcome unforeseen circumstances because people from those school might have negative perception about student teachers, so the mentor lecture connects the school with the student. Another role of a mentor lecture is to help develop a professional teacher identity it prepares us to be able to stand for ourselves and become organized teachers".*

	Participant 19 said *"a mentor lecturer should be always available for discussion and give advice on how to tackle everyday experience in schools ".* Participant 5 added *"they should provide constructive criticism to the students on areas where they can improve and areas they should focus on".*

THEME 2: **Mentor lecturer support during teaching practice**	
Sub-theme 2.1: Academic related support	Participant 110 expressed that *"the main role of a mentor lecturer is to give constructive criticism – thing includes positive feedback and constructive help for issues that need to change. The mentor lecturer needs to offer support in all aspects of teaching prac and needs to be more accessible".* Participant 95 reported *"a ML needs to guide the student. They need to be involved and help where they can with lesson planning etc".* Participant 151 mentioned *"The mentor lecturer should run through all documents needed to be filled and explain and run through them explaining what needs to be filled out, how and why".*

	Participant 56 expressed *"The lecturer should do an example lesson during the first three weeks (Phase 1) where we can see another teaching style. The lecturer could also have the lesson plan done, so we can see how thoroughly they would like it to be filled out".* Participant 204 said, *"I believe that the mentor lecturer should be knowledgeable in current issues taking place in classrooms across South Africa. The mentor lecturer should be available 24/7 for his or her students. The mentor lecturer should not only mark his/her students on their ability to teach only 2 lessons (as there are various factors that could allow the student to be unsuccessful), but also mark the student on their development throughout the process. The mentor lecturer should help the student understand concepts pertaining to the lesson plans that the student might be struggling with".*
Sub-theme 2.2: Pedagogical knowledge support	Participant 61 was of the opinion that *"the lecturers should be able to help with lesson ideas and how to improve on your classroom management".* Participant 63 noted *"The mentor lecture can help student teachers mostly in the teaching strategies & pedagogical*

	academic content from university, specifically in applying it". Participant 90 said, *"teach few critical skills"*. Participant 37 expressed, *"giving admin in order to allow the student to experience the real-life of a teacher. Help with marking & the development of worksheets or tests"*. Participant 102 was of the opinion that *"a mentor teacher should be an expert in the content knowledge"*. Participant 117 added *"assist in developing lesson plans and classroom management. Assist in content knowledge and assessment procedures of subject"*.
Sub-theme 2.3: Emotional Support	Participant 350 expressed, *"for first time teachers, it is hard to understand some things. They need emotional support most of the time. Therefore, the mentor lecturer should not appear only when they have to assess the student. A mentor lecturer should know what is going on in their mentees' lives, academic life I mean"*.

THEME 3: **Any recommendations towards the teaching practicum and the mentoring process, which were made by the student teachers**.
Participant 245 said *"mentor lecturers need to be trained on the TP guidelines"*. Participant 215 noted *"I would suggest that the university allocates mentors that can avail themselves more frequently"*. Participant 55 added that *"mentor lecturers should not be outsourced since there seems to be a lack of training as to the mentoring & marking process"*. Participant 71 commented *"I think mentor lecturers should stay the same for both terms, as it takes a while to adjust to them and their ways and then by the time you adjust, you are put with another one"*. Participant 297 expressed *"The focus should be on how to teach and how we should develop not the focus of just getting marked. ML should have less students in total so they can help all students overall and not be rushed"*. Participant 139 noted *"Allocate lecturers according to subjects or modules so that they can be useful in that regard to their mentees"*.