PERCEPTIONS OF IN-SERVICE TRAINING NEEDS
OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AS MENTOR TEACHERS
IN SUPERVISING PRACTICUM

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A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
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Dedicated to my loving husband, Ling
and my two lovely sons Jonah and Joel
for the sacrifice, understanding, and unfailing support.
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The aim of this study was to find out the perceptions of the primary school teachers on the in-service training needs as mentor teachers. This study was conducted on 111 primary school teachers in the Kuching and Samarahan Divisions of Sarawak. These teachers were mentor teachers to the trainee teachers undertaking Malaysian Teaching Diploma, during Stage 3 of the practicum from 9 February to 20 March 1998. A survey questionnaire consisting of 12 items on demographic data and 47 items on training needs was distributed to all the 132 mentor teachers involved in supervising the practicum mentioned. The response rate was 84.1%. Results showed that these mentor teachers perceived a high need for training in all the dependent variables, with the mean for the need for training ranging from 3.41 to 4.12. There were significant differences in the perceptions of these training needs across gender, academic qualification, teaching experience, and experience as mentor teacher. These significant differences did not follow a particular trend. There was however no significant differences in these perceptions across the subjects supervised by the mentor teachers. On the delivery system of such in-service programme, the mentor teachers preferred it to be delivered at the nearest teachers' college, and least preferred the course to be conducted during semester break. These teachers (80.2%) also opted for 4-weeks duration of in-service course. These mentor teachers also suggested that proper training be given for them to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. They found the task challenging, their quest for training should be further developed.
ABSTRAK

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter lays out the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and objectives of the study, and the conceptual framework. Statement of hypotheses are given, this is followed by the definition of operational terms used in the study, the significance of the study and finally its scope and delimitations.

1.1 Background of the Study

The Teacher Education Division of Malaysia conducts two types of programmes in teacher education, namely the pre-service programme and the in-service programme. The pre-service teacher education programme includes courses such as Post-graduate teaching course; Post-diploma Teaching Course; Malaysian Teaching Diploma; Basic Teaching Course of five semesters; and Teaching Course during Holidays for untrained teachers. These courses are conducted in 31 teachers colleges throughout Malaysia.

In the pre-service teacher education programme, practicum or teaching practice is an important component. Studies (Teacher Education Division, 1993 & 1995, as cited in Sistem mentor, 1996; Odman, 1995, as cited in Sistem mentor, 1996) showed that changes were necessary to improve the teachers' training programmes in colleges and institutes. There were weaknesses in the aspects of guiding the trainee teachers by both lecturers and cooperating teachers. The majority of the cooperating teachers were not clear of their roles, and hence were unable to bring about effective guidance on the trainee teachers. The Mentoring System was thus introduced in the Malaysian Teaching Diploma, starting from the first intake of August 1996. School teachers who supervise the trainee teachers during practicum are called mentor teachers.

The concept of partnership between colleges and schools is important in carrying out the practicum programme. This concept of partnership has been introduced formally in the colleges and schools since the year 1989. During a recent practicum seminar held at Century Mahkota Hotel, Melaka on 19-21 June 1997, a paper entitled "Mentoring Trainee Teachers in the Context of Partnership between Training Institutes and Schools" was presented by Norani Mohd. Salleh and Chang. The speakers, Noraini Mohd. Salleh and Chang (1997) stressed that from their recent study, school teachers were willing to take up the role as mentor teachers, but "they all unanimously stressed the importance of getting training or exposure and clarification on what are expected from them" (p. 25).

Many studies also support that training should be provided for school teachers who assume the role of mentor teachers (Furlong, Hirst, Pocklington, & Miles, 1988; Monaghan & Lunt, 1992; Shaw, 1992; Turner, 1993; Hargreaves, 1994; Dormer, 1994; and Ng, 1994).

Thus there is a need to conduct a study on identifying the in-service training needs of the mentor teachers, especially in the aspects of Orientation, Areas of Supervision,
Supervisory skills, Evaluation Procedures, General Areas, Delivery System of in-service course, and duration of in-service course.

This study is focused on the Malaysian Teaching Diploma, a pre-service programme in one of the teachers' colleges in Sarawak. The first intake of the Malaysian Teaching Diploma was in August, 1996. The new teaching practice programme consists of four stages of practicum (see Table 1). It is developmental in nature and follows the mentor system. At the time the research is carried out, these trainee teachers of Batu Lintang Teachers' College are in the fourth semester of the course, and they are at Stage 3 of their practicum. The primary school teachers who supervised the trainee teachers during the practicum are the subjects in this study.

1.2 Teaching Practice Programme

Teaching Practice programme is a continuum starting from the moment the trainee teacher enters the college as a trainee in the teachers college. It is divided into two sections, prepracticum and practicum (Bahagian Pendidikan Guru, 1996).

1.2.1 Prepracticum and Practicum

Prepracticum consists of micro and macro teaching which serves as preparation for the trainee teacher before carrying out practicum. Practicum consists of practical teaching and experience inside and outside the classroom. It can be shown as in the diagram below:

![Diagram of Teaching Practice Programme]

Figure 1. Teaching Practice Programme

1.2.2 Development of the Practicum Programme from 1973 until 1998

There have been many changes in the practicum programme in the past 25 years to suit current needs. The focus of this study is the three-year Malaysian Teaching Diploma, with the first intake in August 1996, replacing the two and half-year Certificate in Education. In the next section, a brief summary of the development of the practicum programme from the year 1973 onwards will be described (Bahagian Pendidikan Guru, 1989; Bahagian Pendidikan Guru, 1990; Bahagian Pendidikan Guru, 1992; Bahagian
Starting from the year 1973, the duration of the practicum was only 12 weeks; then it was increased to 18 weeks in view of the fact that the duration of 12 weeks was not enough for the trainee teachers to gain enough practical experience in schools during their practicum. In 1986, there was another slight change. Two weeks of School Orientation Programme was added to the practicum programme in order to let the trainee teachers get familiar with the school environment before any formal evaluation was carried out by the training college supervisors. From 1990 to 1995, two stages of practicum were introduced in the programme. Starting from the year 1996, this was increased to four stages of practicum. The changes in the practicum programme, starting from the year 1990 required the school teachers to help out in the supervision of the trainee teachers during their teaching practice, including giving formal assessment. The collaborative supervision between school and college had been introduced since 1989, with the formal implementation of cooperating teacher concept in June 1993. Before this, the supervision of practicum was completely done by the college supervisors. This raised the question: Are the school teachers ready for the new role of supervising the trainee teachers? Are the school teachers provided with enough training? Below is a summary of the changes the practicum programme had undergone from the year 1973 to 1998.

Table 1
Duration of the Practicum Programme from 1973 to 1998

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Duration of Practicum Programme</th>
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<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>18 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>17 weeks plus 2 weeks School Orientation Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>4 weeks School Orientation Programme 17 weeks practicum in Semester V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2 Stages of Practicum Practicum I: 9 weeks (end of Semester 3) Practicum II: 10 weeks (beginning of Semester 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>2 Stages of Practicum Practicum I: 9 weeks (end of Semester 3) Practicum II: 17 weeks (whole Semester 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>4 Stages of Practicum Practicum I: 1 week (Semester 1) Practicum II: 4 weeks (Semester 2) Practicum III: 8 weeks (Semester 4) Practicum IV: 12 weeks (Semester 6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.2.3 Course Structure of Malaysian Teaching Diploma

The course structure of Malaysian Teaching Diploma (Bahagian Pendidikan Guru, 1996) consists of six semesters and four stages of practicum of different durations as shown in Table 2.

Table 2
Course Structure of Malaysian Teaching Diploma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practicum Stage</th>
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<th>Interaction</th>
<th>Practicum</th>
<th>Examination</th>
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<td>Stage 1</td>
<td>I (21 weeks)</td>
<td>19 weeks</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>II (20 weeks)</td>
<td>15 weeks</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>IV (20 weeks)</td>
<td>11 weeks</td>
<td>8 weeks</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>VI (20 weeks)</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>1 week</td>
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1.3 Statement of Problem

There have been many changes in the practicum programme conducted in the teachers' training colleges throughout Malaysia. Starting from the year 1989, the concept of collaborative supervision between school and college was introduced. This concept of collaboration involves the participation of school teachers to assess the trainee teachers' performance in teaching practice in the schools besides the supervision of teaching practice by the college supervisors.

Studies carried out (Teacher Education Division, 1993 & 1995, as cited in Sistem mentor, 1996; Othman, 1995, as cited in Sistem mentor, 1996) called for changes that were necessary to improve the teaching practice. Since 1996, starting with the first intake of Malaysian Teaching Diploma Course, the training colleges adopted the Mentoring System in the supervision of practicum. How well prepared are our school teachers to take up this role? Does everyone who teaches know how to train a teacher (Fish, 1989)? Noraini Mohd. Salleh and Chang (1997) in their study found out that the school teachers were willing to take up the role as mentor teachers, but these school teachers stressed the importance of getting training or exposure and clarification on what are expected from them. There is thus the need to find out the training needs of these mentor teachers. Are there any differences in the training needs across gender, academic qualification, teaching experience, experience as mentor teacher, and the first major subject supervised? What are the mentor teachers' preference for the delivery system of in-service course and what is the duration of such in-service course? This study will look into these questions.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the in-service training needs of primary school teachers involved as mentor teachers in supervising practicum. The focus will be on

1.4.1 the in-service training needs of primary school teachers involved as mentor teachers in supervising practicum, specifically in the aspects on Orientation, Areas of Supervision, Supervisory Skills, Evaluation Procedures, and General Areas;
1.4.2 the difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across gender, academic qualification, teaching experience, experience as mentor teacher, subject supervised by the mentor teacher; and

1.4.3 the mentor teachers' preference for the delivery system and duration of such in-service course to address their in-service training needs.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are

1.5.1 to find out which areas of knowledge or skills that the mentor teachers need training;

1.5.2 to determine if there are any significant differences in the training needs across gender, academic qualification, number of years of teaching experience, experience as mentor teacher, and the first major subject supervised;

1.5.3 to determine where the differences exist among the categories, if there are any significant differences;

1.5.4 to find out which type of delivery system of in-service programme the mentor teachers prefer; and

1.5.5 to find out which duration of the in-service course the mentor teachers prefer.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

This study attempts to find out what are the perceptions of primary school teachers on in-service training needs as mentor teachers in supervising practicum. The in-service training needs are listed as different categories in relation to the aspects of Orientation, Areas of Supervision, Skills of Supervision, Evaluation Procedures, and General Areas. Based on these categories of training needs, the study aims to find out if there are significant differences in the training needs across demographic factors such as gender, academic qualification, teaching experience, experience as mentor teacher, and subject supervised. In this case, the demographic factors are the independent variables and the categories of training needs are the dependent variables as shown in Figure 2.

The study also seeks to find out which type of delivery system the mentor teachers prefer, and the duration of such an in-service course. In this context, the five types of delivery systems are: In-service programmes conducted at the national level; within the state; in clusters of schools in each district; within the school during semester break; and at the nearest teachers' college. The different durations of the in-service course are one-year; fourteen weeks; and four weeks.
1.7 Statement of Hypotheses

The null hypotheses of the study are:

1.7.1 There is no significant difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across gender.

1.7.2 There is no significant difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across academic qualification.

1.7.3 There is no significant difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across number of years of teaching experience.

1.7.4 There is no significant difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across number of years of experience as mentor teacher.

1.7.5 There is no significant difference in the in-service training needs of mentor teachers across the first major subject supervised.
1.8 Definition of Operational Terms

1.8.1 Perceptions of In-service Training Needs

The perceptions of in-service training needs refer to the mentor teachers' recognition and understanding of the in-service training needs to help them develop the knowledge and skills that are necessary to be qualified mentor teachers. The perceptions could be critically needed, highly needed, moderately needed, lowly needed or not needed at all.

1.8.2 Mentor Teachers

The mentor teachers are experienced primary school teachers appointed by the respective headmaster of schools. They are trained teachers with at least three years of teaching experience. These mentor teachers have to work collaboratively with the trainee teachers by giving them guidance, advice, support, and they also have to carry out evaluation during the practicum.

A variety of terms is used to describe the school teachers guiding the trainee teachers during teaching practice. In this study, these school teachers are referred to as mentor teachers. The term "mentor" is used in a number of studies: Anderson and Shannon (1995); Bey and Holmes (1990); Brooks and Sikes (1997); Calderhead and Shorrock (1997); Dunne and Bennett (1997); Elliot and Calderhead (1993); McIntyre (1990); Odell (1990); Yeomans and Sampson (1994); Wilkin and Sankey (1994); and Williams (1993). Some researchers refer to these school teachers as mentor teachers: Bey and Holmes (1990); Narayanasamy (1995); and Odell (1990). Cooperating teacher is used in some studies such as: Borko and Mayfield (1995); Choo, Lopez and Tan (1996); Koster (1996); Ng (1994); Marimuthu (1991); and Wong (1997).

1.8.3 Trainee Teachers

Trainee teachers are trainee teachers of Batu Lintang Teachers' College who are engaged in a formal teacher training programme before becoming certified teachers. They are from the first intake of the Malaysian Teaching Diploma. They are placed in selected primary schools in the Kuching and Samarahan Divisions of Sarawak for Stage 3 of their practicum.

These trainee teachers are referred to as student teachers in the studies by Ng (1994); Marimuthu (1991); Furlong, et al (1988); Anderson and Shannon (1995); Dunne and Bennett (1997); Elliot and Calderhead (1993); McIntyre (1990); and Wilkin and Sankey (1994). There are researchers who referred the trainee teachers as proteges (Odell, 1990; Narayanasamy, 1995); whereas in some studies, they are referred to as teacher trainees (Ting, 1997; Choo, et al, 1996).

1.8.4 Practicum

This term is interchangeably used with 'teaching practice'. It is a component in the Malaysian teaching diploma programme whereby trainee teachers are placed in primary schools to enable them to undergo practical training, and supervision by classroom
teachers playing the role of mentor teachers. The trainee teachers are also evaluated by the college lecturers.

1.8.5 Mentoring

Mentoring refers to the interaction between the mentor teachers and the trainee teachers. It is the professional support given to the trainee teachers in training during the practicum.

1.9 Significance of the Study

Mentoring is a new approach towards supervision of practicum under the newly introduced Malaysian Teaching Diploma Course which had its first intake in August 1996. Mayes (1996) argued that mentor teachers who are explicitly provided with a conceptual framework for their role within a programme-wide support framework are more secure in carrying out these roles. Fish (1989) questions whether everyone who teaches knows how to train a teacher. There is thus a need to identify the training needs of the mentor teachers as a means of quality control of the training programme as well as the quality of mentor teachers. There is also a need to identify areas of weaknesses in order to improve the programme of training for mentor teachers from primary schools. This will help in developing the potential of the school teachers as mentor teachers in a move to bring about improvement to the educational organisation.

1.10 Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The findings of this study can only be generalized to all the mentor teachers who are primary school teachers involved as mentor teachers in supervising the teaching practice under Malaysian Teaching Diploma Course in the teachers' training colleges in Sarawak, Sabah and Semenanjung Malaysia. The findings are generalizable provided that the mentor teachers have similar academic qualifications and social background. The primary school teachers involved are mentor teachers to the trainee teachers of Malaysian Teaching Diploma, August 1996 Intake during the practicum. The findings are not generalized to the mentor teachers who are secondary school teachers supervising the practicum of trainee teachers undertaking Post-graduate teaching course, and Post-diploma Teaching Course.

1.11 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher has described the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose and objectives of the study. This was followed by the conceptual framework, statement of hypotheses, definition of operational terms, significance of the study and finally the scope and delimitation of the study.

In the next chapter, the researcher will discuss the review of literature based on inservice education, needs assessment, mentor teachers, and related studies.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter starts off with the purpose of in-service education, followed by training needs assessment. The focus then shifts to the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers, clinical supervision, mentoring models, studies related to mentor teachers, and finally the delivery system and duration of the in-service course.

2.1 In-Service Education

Much have been said about the good practice of in-service education which aims for the effective professional development of the teachers (Harland & Kinder, 1997) but were the outcomes achieved? Lee (1997) argued that teachers should be viewed as a crucial determinant of success in all in-service activities.

In a study to assess the effectiveness of in-service teacher training programme, Sabri (1997) reported that in-service teacher programmes should place more emphasis on class applications and teaching techniques. This is supported by Pennington (1994) that there were few opportunities available for teachers to take part in professional development addressing their own personal knowledge. Expertise in subject knowledge is considered as an important competence. Bolam, Clark, Harper-Jones, Timbrell, Jones & Thorpe (1995) shared the similar opinion that in-service programmes such as mentoring and competences for new teachers were at a very early stage of implementation.

Gallegos (1979) raised an important question on whether in-service education for the practising teachers should be considered remedial or developmental. If the practising teachers are deficient in basic teaching skills, then additional training in competencies related to initial certification is necessary; otherwise the in-service education should relate to emerging needs in distinct settings, focusing on new areas of training and development. Esu (1991) supported that in-service education should be for the purpose of maintaining knowledge and skills for effective classroom practice.

Thies-Sprinthall (1984) cautioned that it would be more beneficial to focus in-service programmes for cooperating teachers based partly on their initial developmental level, then proceed with development for teachers who function at different cognitive levels.

Ingersoll (1976) listed several evaluations of most in-service teacher training, including:
(a) teachers' professional growth via in-service teacher education had not been taken seriously;
(b) teachers felt totally left out of a decision-making process that had direct impact on their professional welfare;
(c) teacher attitudes reflected a general feeling that most in-service training was not responsive to their own needs; and
(d) elementary school teachers through a study using open-ended questionnaire and a structured interview argued that the response to those needs through in-service education was very low.
This study will be focused on the aspect that the in-service will be related to emerging needs in the current setting of being mentor teachers to trainee teachers, focusing on new areas of training and development as mentor teachers. Serious consideration will have to be given to delivering in-service education based on emergent and distinct needs within distinct learning environments, particularly in classroom situations and the professional development of the teachers.

2.2 Training Needs Assessment

According to Peterson (1992:14), "a training need is a need for human performance improvement that can best be met by training of some kind". Training needs identification is the process required to detect and specify training needs at the individual or organisational levels. It is a process which will gather information to distinguish between needs and wants, and then to clarify which of the needs discovered are actually "training needs". The complete process of training needs analysis according to Peterson (1992:14) involves all those activities and skills necessary to identify and analyse training needs accurately. This means specifying those gaps or discrepancies in performance that actually exist between what people are doing now, what they should be doing, and what you want them to do in the future. Wilson and Easen (1995) stressed that curriculum teachers should be given serious consideration what "teachers' needs" actually mean and what it might imply for them.

Stufflebeam (1977), as cited in Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) list four approaches which are used in assessing needs. These approaches are:

(a) Diagnostic View where a need is defined as something whose absence or deficiency proves harmful, or whose presence is beneficial;

(b) Discrepancy View where a need is defined as a discrepancy between perceptions of desired performance and observed or actual performance;

(c) Democratic View where a need is defined as a change or direction desired by a majority of some groups; and

(d) Analytical View where a need is defined as the direction in which improvement can be interpreted to occur, provided that information on the current status is available.

The approach used in this study is based on the analytical view, since this study is focused on the perceived training needs, which is at an elementary level. This study does not follow Peterson's approach, neither does it follow the diagnostic, discrepancy, or democratic approach.

Some form of assessment is necessary prior to any training programme to help determine the training content (Silberman, 1990; and Esu, 1991). Without such assessment, it will be difficult to gear the programme to the participants' needs. Therefore teachers in the schools should be given this opportunity in order to determine the content of the in-service programme on training as mentor teachers.

2.3 Why Should School Teachers be Involved in Supervising Practicum?

Ng (1994) cited the rationale of involving school teachers in helping out in the supervision of trainee teachers during practicum as due to shortage of lecturers in the

Furlong, et al (1988:132) distinguished between four different levels or dimensions of training which, they argued, went on in all forms of teacher training course. These levels include:

(a) Level (i) direct practice: Practical training through direct experience in schools and classrooms.
(b) Level (ii) indirect practice: Detached training in practical matters usually conducted in classes or workshops within training institutions.
(c) Level (iii) practical principles: Critical study of the principles of study and their use.
(d) Level (iv) disciplinary theory: Critical study of practice and its principles in the light of fundamental theory and research.

Furlong and his associates' argument was that professional training demands the trainees in their courses to be exposed to all of these different dimensions of professional knowledge. Trainees need to be systematically prepared at level (i) because this is a distinctive form of professional knowledge and training cannot be left to chance. It is only school teachers who have access to that level of knowledge; it is only they who know about particular children working on a particular curriculum in a particular school. Lecturers can visit schools and give generalized advice. Furlong, et al (1988) also argued that although individual teachers might be in a position to prepare trainees at the levels (ii), (iii) and (iv), the nature of their job meant that their greatest strength was at level (i). Where necessary, appropriate forms of in-service training should be established so that teachers have the necessary expertise to carry out such training in a systematic professional manner.

Booth (1993) also stressed the importance of the school and the practising teacher in teacher training, whereas McIntyre (1990) agrees that trainee teachers need access to different forms of professional knowledge and that the practical knowledge of teachers must be a central part of the training process. Tann (1994) discovered that trainee teachers found the practical advice from cooperating teachers more helpful, while college supervisors' comments were unspecific.

Training must therefore be a partnership between training institutions and schools. All school teachers working with trainee teachers should have the opportunity, through some form of in-service training, to develop the explicit use of the necessary and critical skills of working with trainee teachers.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Mentor Teachers

The term mentor has its origin in Homer's epic poem The Odyssey, wherein Odysseus gave the responsibility of nurturing his son Telemachus to his loyal friend Mentor (Odell, 1990). In all historic and literary contexts, mentor figures exhibit the characteristics of advisors, helpers, or sponsors who offer insight and guidance to their proteges. A mentor, historically and traditionally defined, is an older, more experienced person who is committed to helping a younger, less experienced person become prepared
for all aspects of life. The protege benefits from the guidance of the mentor and attributes successes in life to the influence of the mentor (Odell, 1990). To Levinson (1978), as cited in Odell (1990), a comprehensive mentor is one who fulfills the role of teacher, sponsor, host, counsellor, supporter and advisor.

There were five essential components which included nurturing, role modeling, functioning (as teacher, sponsor, encourager, counsellor and friend), focussing on the professional development of the mentee, and sustaining a caring relationship over time (Anderson & Shannon, 1995).

The roles of mentor teachers are complex and multifaceted (Yeomans & Sampson, 1994). Different authors described different roles, which ranged from a friend (Anderson & Shannon, 1995) to a trainer (Yeomans & Sampson, 1994; Wilkin, 1992).

Mentor teachers have a key role in preparing the way for trainee teachers in the school during the teaching practice. The different role elements within each role dimension (Yeomans & Sampson, 1994) are listed in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Dimension</th>
<th>Role Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural</td>
<td>Planner, organizer, negotiator, inductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive</td>
<td>Host, friend, counsellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Trainer, educator, assessor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4.1 The Structural Dimension

Within the structural role dimension, the mentor teachers help trainee teachers establish and modify social and organizational structures as the trainee teachers make adjustments to the schools.

2.4.2 The Supportive Dimension

The mentor teacher playing the role as a host in helping the trainee teachers to get accustomed to the school environment are suggested by Brooks and Sikes (1997); and Levinson (1978), as cited in Odell (1990). Elliot and Calderhead (1993) included the role of nurture and support, whereas Dormer (1994) referred to the role as a model of support and challenge.

A mutually open and trusting relationship is essential for the outcome of effective support. Mentor teachers recognise that trainee teachers' time in school could be stressful in several ways. Brooks and Sikes (1997) include the role of mentor teacher as the trainee teacher's professional friend. Anderson and Shannon (1995) similarly describe this role as important.
The role as a counsellor has been put forward by Anderson and Shannon (1995); Hamilton (1994); Levinson (1978), as cited in Odell (1990); Shaw (1992); Fish (1995); Tomlinson (1995); and Calderhead and Shorrock (1997).

2.4.3 The Professional Dimension

This dimension is to help trainee teachers to become effective teachers. There are three main role elements:

(a) Trainer
Mentor teachers act as trainers when they take steps which enable students to respond more effectively to current teaching needs. This notion of trainer is also included in Wilkin (1992); but Hamilton (1994) used the term "coach". The emphasis in training is on successful implementation of the mentors' solutions.

(b) Educator
To play this role, the mentor teacher have to provide opportunities to enable trainee teachers to become autonomous, capable of objectively analysing their own and others' professional practice. Kerry and Mayes (1995) describe the role of experienced teachers as mentor teachers important in helping the trainee teachers to develop professionally in the classroom practice, focussing on subject specific skills; and this is supported by Koster (1996), and Brooks and Sikes (1997).

(c) Assessor
The mentor teachers have daily access to trainee teachers' work in school, thus they are well-placed to make assessments of the trainee teachers' progress. Formative assessment at an informal level is a continuous process in all forms of mentorship. Other authors who also suggest this role include Brooks and Sikes (1997); Shaw (1992); Hargreaves (1994); Dormer (1994); Watt (1995); Galvez-Hjornevik (1986); Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (1988), as cited in Shaw (1992); Hagger, Burn, & McIntyre (1995); and Tomlinson (1995).

2.4.4 Other Roles and Responsibilities of Mentor Teachers

The role of a mentor teacher as a role model is described by Anderson and Shannon (1995); and Hamilton (1994). Allemann (1986, cited in Anderson & Shannon, 1995) has suggested nine analytical categories through which the task as a mentor is achieved. It is suggested that a mentor: gives information; sets challenging tasks, counsels, helps with career development, provides a climate of trust, publicizes proteges' achievements, protects and develops besides sustaining personal relationship. Mentors who are explicitly provided with a conceptual framework for their role within a programme-wide support framework are more secure in carrying out these roles (Mayes, 1996).

Below are some citations in Shaw (1992) regarding mentors:

(a) Mentors in the USA are also variously known as 'school supervisor', 'cooperating teacher', 'role model' and 'coach' (DES, 1989g, cited in Shaw, 1992).