

Contribution of Strategies Used by Teachers as Mentors to the Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Hai District, Tanzania

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Abstract

This study examined the contribution of strategies used by teachers as mentors to the students' academic performance in Hai District in Kilimanjaro Region. The study used mixed methods employing convergent parallel research design. The target population of the study was 29 public secondary schools, 2674 students in public secondary schools, 600 teachers, 29 head of schools and 1 District Education Officer in Hai District. Both probability and non-probability sampling procedures were used to sample the target groups. The instruments for data collection were interview guide and questionnaire. The instruments were piloted in two schools. Reliability was tested using cronbach's alpha. Quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed through frequencies, percentages, means, direct quotations and narrations. Hypothesis was tested by using independent sample t-test. The findings from the study revealed that teachers from public secondary schools in Hai District employ the following strategies: active listening of students, motivating students who show good efforts in academic issues, spending more time with low achievers, guidance of students on academic issues and showing love and care to students. Mentoring strategies have positive contribution towards students' academic performances: some of the contributions include: students have developed positive perceptions towards their teachers and subjects which give them room to perform better in their exams. Mentoring also has helped students to have respects for teachers, developed good discipline in school, have also strengthened interpersonal relationship with teachers. The study therefore concluded that the strategies employed by the teachers in the sampled public secondary schools in Hai District helped students to have good discipline which in turn improve their academic performance. The study found no significant difference in the perception mean scores of male and female students on mentoring strategies used by teachers. The study recommends that mentoring should be used by teachers as an adjunct to normal classroom teaching for bringing up slow and weak students to improve level of performance.

Keywords: Strategies used by teacher as mentors, Student's academic performance, Perceptions of students and Mentoring

1. Introduction

Mentoring is a tool that organizations use to nurture their people. It is a fundamental part of educational and professional development. Mentoring relationships has long been utilized to provide a framework in which either formal or informal relationships are structured so that one individual supports, encourages, and advises another (Freedman, 2008). Different authorities describe the practice of mentoring and the role of the mentor in various ways.

According to Kutilek and Earnest (2001), a mentor is an individual, usually older, always more experienced, who helps and guides another individual to develop. Kreitner and Kinicki, (2004) describe mentoring as a phenomenon of using carefully chosen and assigned individuals to guide and advise a certain person so as to help him or her in their professional development. Mentoring is the process of improving individual skills, knowledge and behavior of a person in order to be an acceptable member of the society (Jonson, 2008). In propounding the desired attributes of mentors and their roles, Robertson (2010) suggest that “mentoring consists of a set of skills that have to be learnt” and that good practitioners should acquire all skills and ability of using various strategies to mentor students.

Mentoring should be a basic need just as health care is. Having that consistent support is essential if we want to see the decrease in dropout rates. Experts agree that mentors can help to shape a student’s outcome. According to a report published in January 2014 by The National Mentoring Partnership in America, mentoring improves relations among schools and adults, lowers dropout rates, improves student attendance, inspires more students to go to school and helps students to have higher self-esteem and better behavior. It can be noted that soon after mentoring students can change their behavior as they feel that they are supported by their mentors. They realized that people want them to succeed, although it may not be clear at the beginning.

In America as well as elsewhere in the world, mentoring has been documented over the past 200 years in a variety of structures and organizations. Formal mentoring programs in the United States were established in the mid to late 1800s to assist individuals with daily trials related to joblessness, poverty, and immigration (Freedman, 2008). Although the type, format, purpose, length, and nature of the type of relationship may vary, mentoring can be found in the literature from many disciplines: art, music, business, community service, education, and science (Freedman, 2008). In the field of education, mentors have been used to support beginning teachers, college freshmen, gifted students, at risk students, and special needs students (Brown, 1995). Surveys conducted in United States of America have revealed that positive relationships with teachers are important suppliers of social interactions (Mae, 2009). It can be noted that students who perform poorly in their academic performance lack this social interaction and feel unengaged in the classroom and disconnected from the school environments. When a student encounters social or academic difficulty in school the presence of a supportive school figure can play a critical role in determining their success or failure (Mae, 2009).

In schools, individuals such as teachers and non-teaching staff tend to perform a critical role in preparing positive emotion of learners’ educational achievement (Patrick, 2005). The important role of the teachers in the learning is unquestionable. Teachers have a lot of influence on their

students' performance (Bogler, 2015). For students to be able to make connection between what is taught in school and its application in problem solving in real life, the teacher has to be effective in their mentoring (Bogler, 2015). In particular, positive mentoring relationships are thought to facilitate emotional regulation and to improve students' discipline that lead to good performance. (Hamilton, 2012).

Murphy and Thornton (2015), affirm that mentoring is a fundamental part of educational and professional development in Aotearoa New Zealand. The current interest in mentoring for professional development stems from the belief that mentoring is a way in which individuals and institutions can learn and develop (Murphy and Thornton, 2015). Mentoring can also be, and is often viewed as a means for assisting students behavior which result into their educational performance. School-based mentors, for example, may focus teachers' attention on particular students and help realign the youngsters' attitudes toward teachers (Cavell &Henrie, 2010). The fact that many matches complete schoolwork during their time together can also help promote more positive interactions between teachers and youth. Improvements in students' perceptions of teacher support, in turn, can influence students' motivation to achieve in their studies in school (Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami & Lun, 2011).

Mentoring is seen as proactive process which in one way reduces stress, anxiety as well as enhancing good participation of students in the academic community and adds value to students' outcomes (Snowden and Hardy, 2012). From this argument, it can be said that there is an increasing demand for teachers to mentor students in their schools as a way of ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of the overall objective of the school. Collier, (2015) noted that the process of mentoring can be done by peer group with the help of mentors. In education system peer mentoring is regarded as an effective intervention that ensures the success and retention of vulnerable students. Collier, (2015) also noted that many secondary schools have implemented some form of mentoring such as the use of peer mentoring to mentor students with different problems as a result academic performance of students increased.

Furthermore it can be noted that mentoring program helps students to perform better in their studies than students who were not exposed to mentorship. In many schools students are not exposed to mentorship process hence, some students isolate themselves because they do not want to share their problems with others. This isolation has been a causal factor for poor academic performance of some students in different schools (Leidenfrost, Strassnig, Schabmann, Carbon, & Spiel, 2011)

Mentoring also reduced indiscipline cases in secondary schools. The study by Mestry, Moloji and Mahomed (2007) stated that discipline in public schools ranks high as one of the major concerns expressed by all stake holders. There is a perception that student indiscipline is emerging as a serious problem that is making many schools ineffective institutions of learning and teaching (Mestry et al, (2007). Mestry et al (2007) further point out that in some instances disciplinary policy is either ineffective, or not implemented and managed properly. Mestry et al (2007), further revealed that students who display disruptive behavior are academically weak and often perform at their worst when they had to demonstrate learning output.

In many African countries, particularly in Tanzania there are also scholars that conducted different studies about mentoring process in the educational sectors. For example, the study by Vumilia and Semali (2016) on how mentoring and socialization can improve pre-service teachers' education revealed that mentoring and socialization improve quality of education especially for teachers. From their study it can be noted that the process of mentoring benefited both teachers and students. This is due to the fact that mentoring strengthened students' confidence, self-control and good management of the class.

Vumilia and Semali (2016) also noted that a mentor provides the mentee knowledge, advice, challenge, counsel and support in different situations in order to become an acceptable member of the society. In order to achieve academic goals there must be a meaningful social communication, interaction and practices between mentors and mentees. Also the mentees were expected to observe mentor teachers and watching them teach; interacting with students, parents and other staff. The mentee is also expected to engage in discussions that focused on teaching strategies as well as reflecting on learning experience. This shows that teachers have a big role to play during mentorship process in order to improve students' academic performance.

Again in Tanzania, Joyce, Galloway, Mollel, Mgoma, Pima and Deogratias, (2017) carried out a study on Successful Transition to Secondary School in Tanzania: What Are the Barriers? They revealed that most students started secondary school with high expectations but they were faced with many challenges during the transition from Swahili primary school to English secondary schools. Challenges in school make students to lose hope as a result increase the rate of truancy. It can be noted that lack of resources and the strategies to address the problems that pupils faced can be the factors for students losing hope. However, peer mentoring may be potentially a way of addressing different challenges during transition, but most of the teachers lack skills and strategies used in mentoring. (Joyce, et al, 2017).

In most cases peer mentoring has been shown to have a beneficial impact in Western countries in comparison with low income countries such as Tanzania (Joyce, et al., 2017). It can be noted that peer mentoring require an approach to pedagogy and interpersonal relations that is firmly grounded in Western education and psychology but this was not the case. Throughout Africa, older children still look after their younger siblings. By looking after them, they also teach them and that can be seen as an informal peer mentoring. They also recommend on systematic and structured form of peer mentoring, with benefits for teachers as well as for students as a long standing solution of transition to secondary schools in Tanzania. Joyce, et al., (2017).

The data given by URT, (2014) indicates that students' academic performance in national examinations country wise has been continued to decline from one year to another 2005 to 2015. Data from URT indicated that pass rates were particularly poorer when taking into account only absolute pass levels (division I-III) whereby the pass rates at these divisions fall to more than triple from 34% in 2005 to 10% in 2012 (HakiElimu, 2015; URT, 2014).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

A critical review of form four academic achievement in national examination in Hai District in the past four years has shown a steadily decline, with majority of students scoring divisions four and zero. Mkumbo (2013) public secondary schools tend to perform worse than private schools. This trend has raised anxiety among parents, students, civil society and government on what

could be the cause of the low performance. Student's low performance has impact on man power. Thus, if students' academic performance continues to be low, Tanzania will not achieve its 2025 national development goals which accord high priority to the education sector.

A study conducted by Musa (2015) on the role of school discipline on students' academic performance reveal that poor performance is caused by poor strategies used by teachers as mentors in their schools. In many situations students engaged in indiscipline cases because they lack mentoring and care from their teachers. His study recommend that, due to poor performance in secondary schools there should be mentoring programme necessary for students so as to shape their behavior.

Again, Anita (2012) carried out a study on the influence of teacher characteristics in student academic achievement and revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers behavior and pupils performance. She noted that in most cases a teacher is a role model for his or her students. A teacher is responsible for improving academic performance of students in his or her school. Students observe what their teachers are doing and imitate them.

Most of studies reviewed did not adequately address the contributions of strategies used by teachers as mentors in improving academic performance of students. The existing gap in the study and current situation in Hai District encouraged the researcher to come up with this study on the contribution of strategies used by teachers as mentors for students' academic performance in secondary schools in Hai District.

1.2 Research Question

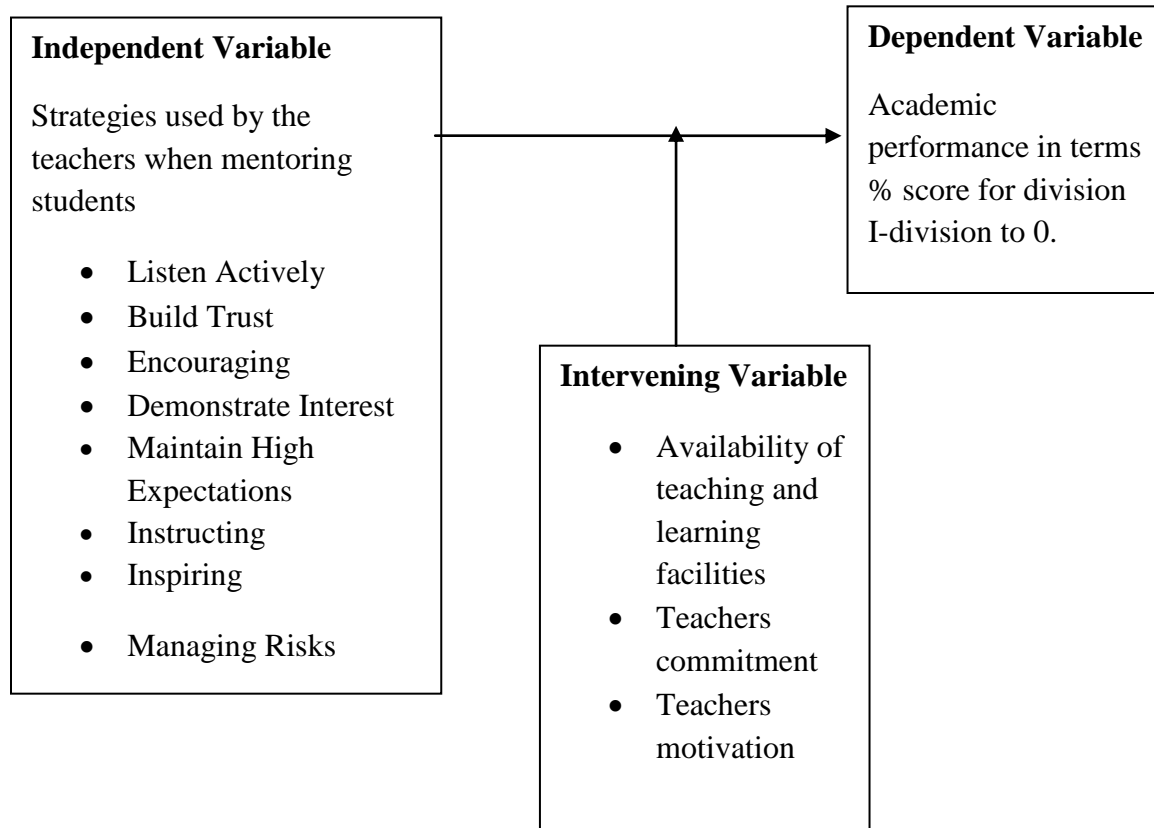
The research was guided by the following questions

1. What are the strategies used by teachers to mentor students in academic issues in public secondary schools in Hai District?
2. What is the contribution of mentoring activities by teachers to students' academic performance in Hai district?
3. What are the perceptions of students towards academic mentorship in Public Secondary schools in Hai District?

1.3 Research Hypothesis

Hi: There is a significant difference in the mean score perception scores of male and female students on mentoring strategies used by teachers

1.4 Conceptual Framework



2. Research Methodology

The study employed the convergent parallel design, focusing on collecting, analyzing, and merging qualitative and quantitative data and results at one time. In this case, the quantitative and qualitative strands were conducted concurrently but independently. The quantitative strand was used to collect data from teachers, strategies used in mentoring. Qualitative on the other hand was employed to understand the reality of head schools, on mentorship in schools. The target population of the study was all public secondary schools, students in public secondary schools, teachers, Heads of schools and District Education Officer in Hai District. The sample included 6 public secondary schools, 132 students, 60 teachers, 6 head of schools and the District Secondary Education Office. Both probability and non-probability sampling procedures were used to select participants of the study. The study utilized questionnaires, interview guide, and document analysis guide for data collection. The instrument was subjected to internal consistency using Cronbach Alpha to get the reliability index. The estimated reliability for student's questionnaire was 0.81 while teacher's questionnaire was 0.78. In qualitative paradigm, peer briefing and methodological triangulation was used to determine reliability of items from interview guide. Quantitative data was analyzed by the use of Descriptive statistics and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analyzed through direct quotations and narrations.

3. Discussions

3.1 Various Strategies used by Teachers to Mentor Students in Academic Issues

The first research question sought to find out strategies used by teachers to mentor students in academic issues in public secondary schools in Hai district. Teachers, students and heads of school were asked to mention various strategies used by teachers to mentor students. The information obtained were summarized in Table 1 and 2 respectively.

Table 1. Responses on Strategies Used by Teachers for Mentoring Students on Academic issues (n=132)

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
I. Teachers use different mentoring styles to improve students' performance in academics	64	48.1	35	26.3	8	6.0	23	27.3	2	1.5	132	100
II. Teachers listen actively to students with problem	33	24.8	46	34.6	5	3.8	41	30.8	7	5.3	132	100
III. Teachers motivate me when I perform well	53	39.8	58	43.6	12	9.0	8	6.0	1	0.8	132	100
IV. Teachers do not care about my performance in school	16	12	15	11.3	17	12.8	56	42.1	28	21.1	132	100
V. Teachers encourage students to seek for assistance when faced with a certain problem.	49	36.8	40	30.1	5	3.8	35	26.3	1	0.8	132	100
VI. Teachers teach student new knowledge and skills	42	31.6	80	60.2	4	3.0	4	3.0	2	1.5	132	100
VII. Teachers waste a lot of time interacting with the students	18	13.5	42	31.6	6	4.5	39	29.3	27	20.3	132	100
VIII. Teachers help students to observe others who inspired them	50	37.6	62	46.6	11	8.3	7	5.3	1	0.8	132	100
IX. Teacher give punishment when I do wrong	50	37.6	60	45.1	13	9.8	6	4.5	1	0.8	132	100
X. Teacher checks my class work daily	29	21.8	37	27.7	7	5.3	32	24.1	27	20.3	132	100

Source: Field Data 2018

3.2 Students' Responses on Strategies Used by Teachers for Mentoring in Students Academic Issues

This question was responded by students in order to obtain information on how mentoring strategies used by their teachers help to improve their academic performance. The responses were rated Strongly Agree, Agree, and Undecided, Disagree and Strong Disagree. The table 1 presents the findings from the students who participated in the study.

Table 1. Shows that 48.1% of students who participated in this study strongly agreed that teachers used different mentorship strategies to improve students' academic performance and 26.3% of students agreed to the same statement. From the findings more than half of the students' responses 24.8% strongly agreed and 34.6% agreed that teachers were actively listening to students' problems. As 39.8% of students were strongly agreed and 43.60% agreed that teachers motivated students who performed better in their subjects and examinations. About caring strategy students were asked whether teachers did not care for their performance majority of 63.3% disagreed this implying that teachers were caring for their academic performance. Interaction was another mentoring strategy which the researcher sought to know from students whether their teachers wasted a lot of time interacting with their students.

More than half of the students disagreed strongly disagreed 29.3% and disagreed 20.3% indicating that teachers were not wasting their time when they were interacting with students. This implies that teachers used different strategies to handle students' difficult situation and help them perform well in their studies.

The information obtained is in agreement with O'Shea, (2014) on informal mentoring by teachers and strategies used to increase student engagement in secondary learners at risk in Indiana University of Pennsylvania in United States. The study indicates that an informal mentoring relationship between teacher and students characterized by using various strategies such as teacher supporting student progress, knowing and caring for the student, promoting open communication, being a listener and advice giver. All these strategies help to improve student academic performance.

Findings from Table 1. Indicate that there was no daily checking of students' class work due to the fairly equal responses from students to agree and disagree on the statement. About 21.8% of students strongly agreed that daily their teachers check up their class work and 27.8% agreed while 20.3 % disagreed and 24.5% strongly disagreed to the same statement. This implies that daily Checkup of all students class work might be difficult especially in public secondary schools where the size of classes is large.

Teachers were reported to help students to observe other people particularly their colleague students who inspired them. In school there are students with different inspirations such as smartness, obedient and respectful students, and bright students, students with different talents such as sports talents, singing and many others. The role of the teacher who is a good mentor is to help other students to develop inspiration to other successful and talented students and not demoralizing them. In other areas inspiration of students to abide to moral and ethical standards is the task of teachers. This information is in line with De Jong (2014) that one of the mandates of the Ontario College of Teachers is to inspire public confidence in Ontario schools by determining a clear set of professional ethical standards. Teachers who fail to abide by such standards are subject to investigation, and possibly loss of membership and certification, which are required to teach in the province.

3.3 Teacher's responses on the strategies used by teachers to mentor Students in Academic issues in Public Secondary Schools in Hai District

The researcher sought to find out strategies which are employed by teachers to mentor students. The information obtained are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Teachers responses on Mentoring Strategies employed by Teachers in Secondary Schools in Hai district (n=60)

strategies employed by teachers	f	%
I Guidance and counseling	20	33.3
Ii Giving immediate feedback to students	13	21.7
Iii Encouraging students	10	16.7
Iv Reserve time to speak with students	13	21.7
v Have trust with students	5	8.3
vi Use calm and friendly language	8	13.3
vii Assisting students to get appropriate learning materials	13	21.7

Source Field Data 2018

Teachers were required to state the mentoring strategies they normally used to help students to overcome the challenges at their school. Table 2. Revealed that strategies they were employed are guidance and counseling (33.3%), giving immediate feedback to students (21.7%), encouraging students (16.7%), reserve time to speak with students (21.7%), have trust with students (8.3%), use calm and friendly language (13.3%) and assisting students to get appropriate learning materials (27.7%). This implies that teachers are familiar with different mentoring strategies which help students to perform their studies.

Similarly heads of schools were interviewed on strategies used to mentor students in their schools and reply that teachers used various strategies to mentor their students. When Heads of school were asked to identify indicators for mentoring activities in their schools to prove that mentoring was practiced by their teachers. They revealed that indicators like improved students conducts, increased students respect to teachers, High commitment of students, High concentration in class, Good relationship with teachers and Spending more time on academic issues. Another indicator which was revealed from this study for having mentoring was the increase of respect and academic friendship between teachers and students. They argued that in the previous times students were running away from teachers and thus academic assistance was very small. This time the rate of students accessing teachers when they have problems has increased indicating there is mentorship.

They added that currently classroom concentration has improved when compared with the past. They argued that in the previous times students were shouting whenever teachers were absent in class, with other students fighting each other. One of the interviewed head of school said that,

Higher classes such as form four have now recognized themselves and have known what brought them in school. Sometimes you might not know if there are students in class because of keeping silent studying, this is the benefit of mentoring in school. (Interview on 5/7/2018)

From interview, students who recognize their value, goals and purposes of being in school are likely to excel not only in their academic performance but also in their life as a result they will be able to acquire more knowledge and skills to run their life. With this situation students from the sample secondary schools are in a good position to excel in the academic issues and in their life.

Heads of school as they were interviewed they further respond that guidance and counseling is the common strategy which is used by teachers for mentorship within their schools. One of the interviewed head of school added that,

In my school I have agreed with my teachers on giving feedback to students on any given test or exams not more than one week in order to help students know their strengths and weaknesses to help them to perform better in their exams. (Interview on 3/7/2018)

Another heads of school added that

Class sizes are large but I encourage my teachers to spend most of their time when at school helping the students. Many students have different needs and problem which need assistance from their teachers. If teachers won't spare their time in disciplinary cases increases and eventually it will lower students' academic performances (.Interview on 4/7/2018)

This implies that heads of school are aware of the strategies to mentor students in their schools. The study findings support the "Role Theory" by Katz and Khan (1978) which stresses that the teacher not only to think about themselves but also about the students, when the student fail in exams teacher as a mentor he/she supposed to motivate the student so as to maintain the high expectation by studying hard, attending the school and answering the exercise provided by teachers. This is another way of mentoring a student because students will grow up knowing what he/she to perform well their academic responsibilities so as to maintain the expectation of a school in term of nation examinations results. The academic performance of students is made effective through the strategies that teachers use like Listen Actively, Build Trust, Encouraging, Demonstrate Interest, Maintain high Expectations, Instructing, Inspiring ,Managing Risks and ensuring that at the end of the day the students have finished their work and submitted them for marking.

3.4 Contributions of Mentoring Activities by Teachers to Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Hai District

The research question two sought to find out the contributions of mentoring activities by teachers to students' academic performance in Hai district. As head of schools were interviewed their

responds revealed that teachers were motivating students to develop good relationship with their teachers and interest with their subjects which in-turn help them to perform better in their academic performances. Teachers involve parents in mentoring of their students' as a way to improve student's academic performances. Involving parents in mentoring services is one of the best things to ensure effectiveness of mentoring. Schools whose parents, guardians, and other caregivers work in concert with mentors it is very likely to see positive changes in students' progress and improved academic outcomes.

Having regular meetings with students has been practiced by the teachers as a way of mentoring students in their academic issues. It is through classroom meetings that a class teacher may have a good chance to know their students in more detailed and find means of solving their problems. The study also revealed that Class meetings were conducted at the beginning of every academic year under the supervision of the class masters/mistresses, before the general school meetings commonly known as "School Baraza" which takes place twice a year in most of the schools where the study was done. The School Baraza is attended by all the students, teachers and other workers where different issues like academic and non-academic are discussed. It was also discovered that students' leaders had the chance to contact teachers and even heads of schools whenever their colleague would want to get clarifications of particular issues instead of waiting for the "School Baraza" which is held twice in each year. One of the interviewed head of school said that:

Among the responsibility of class teachers is to conduct regular meetings with students in order to listen for their problems and guide those ways to go about with some of the academic issues. Interview on 3/7/2018)

This implies that teachers have highly contributed to build good students who can perform well in their studies. The findings agreed with Smith, (2014) on how academic mentoring in two secondary schools in England could support personalized learning. The role of mentor is not viewed in isolation from the other roles a teacher inhabits.

Discipline will persist in school when mentoring activities enlighten students on moral codes of conduct. When students are taught respect to school authority, to observe school rules and regulations and maintain established standard of behavior as stipulated in a proper professional code of conduct concerning maintenance of discipline becomes easier. Mentoring becomes more successful when students discipline in school is well controlled as it will stimulate learning and eventually success in their academic performances. Warnings students during parade was also reported as a strategy which is employed by teachers in mentoring students. Furthermore heads of schools who were asked about teachers mentoring activities reported that every morning before students go to class teachers warn students from indisciplinary issues such as shouting in class, truancy, creating unnecessary love affairs and the like.

Information sought out from the interviewed heads of school revealed benefits of mentoring students towards academic performances. The quantitative findings were provided by the heads of school when they were asked what benefits mentoring have in their schools. According to one of the heads of school respondent, her mentor supervision was very good. Such head of school

believed that encouraging students help them to achieve their goals and increase more efforts in their academic activities’. Another respondent specified that engage students in classroom activities during teaching and learning minimize the inferiority complex to some of the students and make them develop positive attitude towards their teachers and eventually they like all the subjects. Another participant believed that ‘motivation was positive from my teachers whose mentorship to students has changed the students’ relationship with teachers and even their colleagues.

3.5 The Perceptions of Students towards Academic Mentorship in Public Secondary Schools in Hai District

The research question three sought to find out the perceptions of students towards academic mentorship in Public Secondary schools in Hai District. The question was directed to students to indicate their perception towards mentorship in academic performance.

Table 3. Distribution of Students’ responses on Students Perception towards Teachers Mentoring strategies in Academic work (n=132)

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
I. My teacher encourages me whenever I face problems	64	48.1	35	26.3	8	6.0	23	27.3	2	1.5	132	100
II. Guiding and counseling is a waste of time	21	15.8	16	12.1	4	3.0	37	27.3	54	40.6	132	100
III. Through group discussion with my colleagues I was able to grasp some important concepts	80	60.2	43	32.6	6	4.5	2	1.5	1	0.8	132	100
IV. Mentoring is an effective way of ensuring students efficiency	76	57.6	44	33.3	6	4.5	4	3.0	2	1.5	132	100
V. Mentoring exercises makes a student to be free with their teachers	80	60.6	44	33.3	2	1.5	4	3.0	2	1.5	132	100
VI. Mentoring builds good relationship with my teachers	83	62.9	47	35.6	-	-	2	1.5	-	-	132	100
VII. Mentoring helps in maintaining discipline of students	66	49.6	60	45.4	4	3.0	-	-	2	1.5	132	100
VIII. Mentoring increases students class attendance	56	42.4	69	51.9	2	1.5	4	3.0	1	0.8	132	100
IX. Mentoring helps to create confidence and self-esteem in students	50	37.8	60	45.4	1	0.8	6	4.5	1	0.8	132	100
X. Mentoring exposes student problems	63	47.7	65	48.9	2	1.5	-	-	2	1.5	132	100

Source: Field Data 2018

Perceptions of students may be positive or negative towards how teacher conduct mentoring activities in school. Knowing students perception is of paramount importance for the sake of discovering its influence on students' academic performance. The researcher sought to find out students perceptions towards mentoring strategies used by teachers and their responses are summarized in Table 3.

Findings from table 3. Indicate variation in students' responses on strategies employed by the teachers in mentoring students in the sampled secondary schools. According to these findings majority of students (48.1%) strongly agreed that teachers were encouraging students especially those who had problems in ordered to help them to improve in their academic performances. The findings in Table 3. Revealed that more than half of the students responses refused (67.6%) disagreed that teachers were wasting time when guiding and counseling students on different academic issues.

The information from Table 3. Implies that students have positive perception on how teachers guide them in their learning. An effective mentoring ensures that it fully understands the circumstances and specific needs of its clients and delivers a service which is geared to serving their best interests and supporting their individual progress. The mentor promotes caring and supportive relationships, encourages individuals to develop to their fullest potential help individuals develop their own vision for the future.

Students also had positive perceptions on how teachers were encouraging and monitoring students to participate in group discussions with their colleagues. Three quarter of the students responses (82.5%) agreed that they were able to grasp important concepts when they discussed with their colleagues. Organizing and developing interest to students to work in groups requires teachers who have skills and time. When students are working in groups for the first time, teachers must supervise them and at the same time tell students the significance of working in groups otherwise students with inferiority can't work in groups. In line to this information are the findings by Jenkinson, & Benson, (2017) who argued that unless teachers have skills to mentor students to work in groups, group discussions may make students feel uncomfortable or shy around academics, intimidated and embarrassed that they don't have anything to discuss or present. This implies that for the case of students from the sampled schools teachers seem to have mentoring skills which made most of students to have positive perceptions towards group discussion which will eventually help to improve students' academic performances.

Students also had positive perception towards mentoring activities by their teachers. 94% agreed that teachers mentoring in schools helped to minimize student's truancy in schools and increase classroom attendance. According to Edward and Collision (1995) mentoring should be a basic need just as health care is. Having that consistent support is essential if we want to see the dropout rates decrease. Experts agree that mentors can help to shape a student's outcome. According to a report published in January 2014 by The National Mentoring Partnership in America, mentoring improves relations among schools and adults, lowers dropout rates, improves student attendance, inspires more students to go on to school and help students to have higher self-esteem and better behavior.

Majority of students (82.7 %) said that mentoring practiced by their teachers has helped to improve students' confidence and self-esteem. Students may do better in academic performance if they develop confidence and high self-esteem on academic matters. Teachers have the task of promoting students confidence and high self-esteem especially to students with low self-esteem. The findings also revealed positive perception of students since majority accepted (90.4% agreed) teacher mentoring helps to make students to be efficient in their schools and life processes. These findings are in line with the previous study by (Al-Qahtani (2005) that mentoring also help students to develop their talents and create confidence as well as their performance. His study also reveals that, there is a need for teachers to mentor their students in every aspect. If teachers help them grow as learners by their individualized intervention, then not only will their learning be more successful but in time our senior students may be able to peer mentor the juniors, thus adding to their skill set. In addition, course and options selection is more likely to be planned better and result in fewer students making poor choices in the senior school. It can be noted that most of students perceived mentoring as an effective way of helping them to perform well in their academic issues. Therefore, there is a need for teachers to create conducive environment for mentoring in their schools in order to help students with difficulties.

4. Hypothesis Testing

This study sought to investigate the relationship between the variables under study. The significant relationships between means were tested by using t-test of independent groups at 0.05 level of significance.

Null hypothesis (Ho): There is no significant difference in the mean score perception of male and female students on mentoring strategies used by teachers

Table 4. Result of Hypothesis Testing

Students gender	N	Mean scores	Df	T	Sig.
Male	69	4.09	132		
Female	67	4.18		-1.529	0.129

Findings in table 4. Show that female students had a higher perception mean score (4.18) than male students with mean score of 4.09. However, the difference was not significant since $t(132) = -1.529$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.129$. Since the $p\text{-value}$ was greater than 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Failing to reject the null hypothesis means that there was no significant difference in the perception means scores of male and female students on mentoring strategies used by teachers. This implies that both male and female students have the same perceptions on different strategies used by their teachers. On the other hand the strategies used by teachers to mentor students were the same for both male and female students of which might be the source of insignificant relationship as observed from the table 4.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Mentoring strategies employed by Teachers

The study revealed that teachers in the public secondary schools in Hai district use different mentoring strategies such as; Guiding students, encouraging, motivation, engaging students in teaching and learning processes. Other strategies used include; active listening to students with problems, having trust and use of friendly language to students, involving parents in mentoring, and conduct classroom meetings with students and sometimes punishing those who repeat mistakes in school.

5.2 Contribution of mentoring activities on Students Academic Performance

The study revealed that mentoring which is practiced by teachers in the sampled secondary schools in Hai district is of significant importance to the academic achievement of students as follows: Mentoring help to convert students into developing positive attitude towards their teachers and subjects which give them room to perform better in their subjects. Mentoring also help students to have respect for teachers, develop good discipline in school, strengthen interpersonal relationship with teachers and also helps students to develop interest in their carrier as well as getting help for the materials they want.

5.3 Students Perceptions on Mentoring Strategies employed by the Teachers

The study also revealed that students have positive perceptions towards mentoring strategies employed by their teachers. Students believe that study groups help them to acquire new concepts from their colleague. They also have positive perceptions on how teachers encourage them, guide them. The study also revealed that truancy in the sampled schools was low, students developed confidence in learning and good discipline in general. The study found no significant difference in the mean scores perception of male and female students on the strategies used by teachers. This means that both male and female students perceived the strategies at a similar basis.

6. Recommendations

Teachers should use skills and methods of mentoring that will help to mentor their students in different aspects. They should realize that students vary in their rate of assimilation; hence they need to adopt different techniques in teaching-learning situation and different ways of mentoring. Also heads of schools should make mentoring strategies more of formal in order to help teachers to have specific time and strategies for helping students with specific problems.

Again, at the school level, the structures of school mentoring programmes may be formalized to allow teachers to involve more students in mentoring program. The sharing of the aims and purpose of mentoring programmes should involve both staff and students. It can be noted that when mentoring relationship stops or is no longer feasible for a number of reasons, there negative consequences that might occur for mentee like lack of confidence among students to expose their problems to their teachers. From the study it can be recommended that some of the skills that would benefit students need to be developed over longer periods of time, therefore it may be advantageous to expand the mentoring programme to include primary school pupils or be part of the curriculum.

It can be noted that if school leader will employ students' mentorship as one of their instructional leadership strategies it would contribute to improve students' achievement in the public schools. Also, teachers should be provided with workshops and seminars to strengthen the positive attitude towards mentoring activities.

At implementation level, schools would benefit from advice and guidance for the development of mentoring programmes within their local education authority as well as national level. At the mentor level, the expansion of outcomes for students would require a more flexible approach to meet the needs of individual students as well as giving students the scope to work as part of a group.

Among the rationale for mentoring process is to enable students to achieve in their academic performances. The government and any other educational stakeholders should provide enough teaching and learning materials in public schools, motivation to both teachers and students, and daily checkup of students' works. Also teachers should have at least one day for consultations with students with academic problems so as to be assisted to overcome their academic challenges

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