Equality of mentoring and coaching opportunity: making both available to pre-service teachers

Tina Salter

Equality of mentoring and coaching opportunity: making both available to pre-service teachers

Tina Salter
YMCA George Williams College, London, UK

Received 12 August 2014
Revised 14 November 2014
3 December 2014
9 December 2014
Accepted 16 December 2014

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore why mentoring is preferred over coaching when supporting pre-service teachers, compared with other stages in a teacher's career where coaching is more readily available.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper first draws upon pre-existing literature which addresses the ways in which mentoring is used for pre-service teachers; followed by a discussion of the place and use of coaching within education. It then focuses on data generated from interviews with senior teachers responsible for the induction of pre-service teachers within three UK-based secondary schools and compares this to findings about mentor and coach approaches used in other sectors or contexts.

Findings – Findings point towards an imbalance in the use of mentoring and coaching within education, with a particular underuse of coaching for pre-service teachers. Some mentoring (and indeed coaching) interventions are founded on a deficit model; therefore mentors of pre-service teachers could be helped and supported to make greater use of a mentor-coach integrated asset-based approach, which encourages the use of reflection and self-directed learning.

Practical implications – Schools using internal mentors for pre-service teachers, or internal coaches for post-qualified teachers, could benefit from understanding what a mentor-coach integrated approach might look like, founded on an asset-based model.

Originality/value – The literature is limited with regards to the use of coaching for pre-service teachers. This paper examines the use of mentoring and coaching within schools in a more balanced way; questioning the underlying beliefs about the purpose of mentoring and coaching and whether or not these are based on deficit or asset-based models.

Keywords Mentoring in education, Learning and development, Coaching,
Beginning teachers in elementary/secondary schools

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Education has a rich history of utilising mentoring in many parts of the world, particularly as an induction and training strategy. In 1972 in the UK the James Report on Teacher Education and Training recommended that qualified teachers should be involved in the process of inducting teachers. Teacher tutors were used as supervisors in the 1970s and 1980s, until the term "mentor" was introduced by Goodman in 1987 (Turner and Bash, 1999). In the early 1990s, this became formalised into the teaching profession within the UK as an established element of the induction and training process (Bleach, 1999). According to Aladejana *et al.* (2006, p. 20), "the mentor is usually an experienced, knowledgeable, respected, competent and professionally mature person who guides and provides opportunities for the professional growth of protégée(s)". This somewhat broad overview of a mentor's function helps underline the purpose of mentoring as a way of supporting pre-service teachers as they embark on a new professional journey.

More recently, coaching has also become a popular intervention in schools, particularly as a way of offering on-going staff development (Burley and Pomphrey, 2011)

International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education
Vol. 4 No. 1, 2015
pp. 69-82

2046-6854
DOI 10.1108/IJMCE-08-2014-0031

or developing senior managers and leaders (Forde *et al.*, 2013). Garvey (2004, p. 7) describes coaching as "a skilled activity and its focus is on performance and skill enhancement". However, there is little discussion about the place and use of coaching for pre-service teachers – although this is starting to change as some emerging evidence shows how a handful of coaching programmes have been trialled aimed specifically for those embarking on a teaching career (Black, 2013; Carney *et al.*, 2013; Hooker, 2014; Lee and Choi, 2013; Loeschen, 2013; Rock *et al.*, 2013; Yalcin Arslan and Ilin, 2013). However, the overwhelming picture suggests that mentoring is still predominantly ear-marked for those new to the profession; whilst coaching (and sometimes additional mentoring opportunities) become more available as teachers develop their practice and move up the career ladder. It is not altogether clear why these interventions are separated out in this way and this paper proposes that exposing pre-service teachers to coaching as well as mentoring may enable them to get off to a better start.

Mentoring for pre-service teachers

Within an educational context, mentoring in the UK is a standard intervention for those entering the teaching profession (Aladejana *et al.*, 2006; Hudson and Hudson, 2010; St George and Robinson, 2011). Wynn *et al.* (2007, p. 213) argue that "two types of mentoring *support* are necessary: psychological support and instruction-related support". Offering the right kind of support to pre-service teachers preparing themselves for a demanding and challenging role, therefore, needs to be pitched right. Members of the senior management team, heads of department or leads on specific areas of work usually act as mentors to pre-service teachers (www.education.gov.uk). Mentees are therefore given access to key people within the school who have a significant amount of expertise and knowledge (Ligadu, 2012), knowing that the returns on investment will be high. However, Aladejana *et al.* (2006) acknowledge that the mentor's position is not a prerequisite for possessing empathy and good interpersonal skills which are needed to complement educational knowledge and experience (Delaney, 2012). Akbar and Jackson (2010) also warn that having one mentor can be limiting as the mentee is not exposed to a range of teaching styles. It is therefore important that the mentor is able to teach to a high standard as they will be acting as a role model to pre-service teachers observing them in the classroom (Delaney, 2012; Rikard and Banville, 2010; Russell and Russell, 2011).

Existing research shows that reflective skills are identified as important tools for the mentor to equip the mentee with (Akbar and Jackson, 2012; Delaney, 2012; Ligadu, 2012; Sempowicz and Hudson, 2012; Wynn *et al.*, 2007) so that they can help themselves to bring about change. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) add that this is a mutual by-product of the mentoring relationship. However, Akbar and Jackson (2012) suggest that some mentors are more inclined to focus on performance rather than reflection. Delaney (2012) argues that the mentor needs to work collaboratively with the mentee in a way that encourages reflection.

There are some opposing views with regard to the relevance of how much the mentor and mentee have in common. Parker (2010), Wynn *et al.* (2007) and St George and Robinson (2011) propose that a certain amount of common ground can go a long way, where mentors and mentees teach the same subject area, age range or are part of the same department. This implies that their joint understanding can aid the transfer of knowledge (Hudson and Hudson, 2010). Conversely, Shapira-Lishchinksky's (2009) quantitative study argues that mentors can evoke much more change where their style of working differs from a particular team culture. This enables the mentor to have some

level of objectivity and can help the mentee to think critically about the way in which they work. This in turn can enable the mentee to develop their confidence as they find their own way, rather than look to emulate someone else's teaching style. Lishchinksky's point echoes a common understanding of coaching: that it tends to shy away from role-modelling and focuses instead on supporting the coachee to set their own agenda and find their own solutions – this theme will be revisited later.

Some mentors carry out observations of their mentees in the classroom so that they can offer feedback (Akbar and Jackson, 2012; Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005; Ligadu, 2012; Parker, 2010; Rikard and Banville, 2010; Sempowicz and Hudson, 2012), although the ability to do this will vary considerably (Delaney, 2012). Ambrosetti (2010) considered whether or not the observations carried out by a mentor should be formalised as part of the assessment process. She concluded that this would have a negative impact upon the equality of the relationship because both can learn from one another. Fransson (2010) reiterates this point based on difficulties that the mentee might find in discussing their weaknesses or looking for support when the mentor is also responsible for assessing their practice. An evaluative function would inhibit trust and communication (Delaney, 2012; Hudson and Hudson, 2010) although this can be overcome if the assessment is formative rather than evaluative (Rikard and Banville, 2010).

Overall, the benefits of mentoring pre-service teachers seem to be that it contributes to the retention of teachers in their first school as a qualified professional (Delaney, 2012; Parker, 2010; St George and Robinson, 2011; Wynn *et al.*, 2007). Akbar and Jackson (2012) also found in their mixed-methods study that mentoring played a key role in helping the student teacher feel welcomed and settled into the school. These findings highlight how the initial stages of teaching practice are formative and a significant contributing factor to each pre-service teacher's development.

Coaching for pre-service teachers

Coaching is predominantly used as a way of continuing professional development (CPD) amongst teachers rather than for those at the beginning of their career. For qualified teachers, coaching is often used as a way of enabling them to focus on a particular skill in order to help them become more effective. One study by Black (2013) explored the use of coaching as a way of helping teachers increase the quality of classroom instruction. In this instance, an on-site coach was used to work with teachers on this aspect of their teaching, and the results were positive. It seems that coaching can be used in targeted ways, with the aim of increasing specific skill sets, beyond the teacher training period.

However, in the last few years some emerging studies reflect the sporadic use of coaching for pre-service teachers. In a qualitative study by Loeschen (2013), four mentors of pre-service teachers were trained in cognitive coaching with the aim of helping new teachers develop their critical reflection skills. The mentors noted how the coach training helped them develop skills in paraphrasing, holding back and giving pre-service teachers time and space to reflect and question their practice. This is interesting because it shows how coaching can help focus in on specific aspects of a teacher's training, and not necessarily reserve this for something to be addressed later on in their development post-qualification.

What has noticeably been on the increase is the use of peer coaching whilst teachers are undergoing training, although the aims and purposes of this vary considerably. In one example, Yalcin Arslan and Ilin's (2013) study involved three pairs of pre-service

teachers who each filmed an hour of their own teaching for their peer to watch and offer feedback as a starting point for discussing strategies for improving classroom management. They repeated the filming several weeks later as a way of feeding back any noticeable improvements. The authors concluded that there was evidence to show that skills had improved, although they were cautious about these findings given the small sample size. Similarly, positive results were cited by Lee and Choi (2013) who used peer coaching specifically to support pre-service physical education teachers. They found that the peer coaching provided a framework which encouraged participants to reflect and collaborate more with peers. They noticeably increased their questioning skills which were the main catalyst for reflection. In another study, Hooker's (2014, p. 116) research of peer coaching using five coaching pairs found that participants felt much more able to ask "silly questions" compared with other training forums. However, of the five pairs, two experienced barriers to their learning due to time constraints or difficulties in building the relationship. Peer coaching inevitably depends upon both parties committing themselves to their own and someone else's learning and development.

Other types of coaching have been used to offer pre-service teachers guidance and support. Carney *et al.* (2013) found that introducing a retired teacher as a "classroom coach" for pre-service teachers already being supported by mentors and supervisors, was complementary and helped them access practical help and advice *in situ*. Similarly, Rock *et al.* (2013) posit that "virtual coaching" can enable the pre-service teacher to access a coach remotely in real time, specifically when finding behaviour management in the classroom a challenge. However, in her (2013) study Heneike has questioned some use of "instructional coaching" as her findings showed that the coaches did most of the talking which in turn made the pre-service teachers feel patronised and assessed. This kind of instructional style can also be located in some directive forms of mentoring – therefore it is important that pre-service teachers are not belittled, whether they are involved in mentoring or coaching.

The use of coaching for pre-service teachers is sporadic and in its infancy stages, therefore it is difficult to say categorically that this kind of intervention is needed alongside mentoring. Indeed many of the attributes and approaches adopted by mentors and coaches are similar, reflecting clear overlaps between the two. The literature suggests that both can be directive and non-directive, engaging in long- or short-term relationships, starting with the experiences of the mentor or coachee, giving advice, using goal-setting, working with transitions and looking for growth (Clutterbuck, 2008). Both are also viewed as confidential relationships, so that the coachee and mentee are assured that information discussed within sessions will not be passed on (Clark *et al.*, 2006). Skills used by a mentor, such as "questioning, listening and clarifying" can also be found in coaching (CIPD, 2010). Garvey *et al.* (2009, p. 223) suggest that in broad terms, mentoring and coaching are essentially "a learning and development activity". However, it appears that the purpose of the coaching used for pre-service teachers has focused on specific skills such as classroom management or self-reflection. Whilst many mentors of pre-service teachers also tackle these areas, it seems that the ways in which coaching have been used has been narrow but specific. This study seeks to look at these issues from another angle, by exploring how coaching is used in other sectors and then comparing this to the ways in which mentoring and coaching are used in the field of education.

Methodology

This paper derives from a wider research brief where different mentor and coach types were compared. The word "type" is used to denote a specific mentoring or coaching

label, usually linked to the specific context in which the work is being carried out. These included mentors of pre-service teachers, mentors of young people, mentors of leaders, executive coaches, coaching psychologists and sports coaches. A social constructivist framework was used as this focuses on the way in which "people make sense of the world especially through sharing their experiences with others via the medium of language" (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2008, p. 58). In order to capture these experiences, individual case studies were used to try and explore how each mentor and coach "type" approached their role, so as to ascertain where similarities and differences might be found. This provided a rich range of perspectives (Gray, 2009) which is important when looking to understand how mentors and coaches from different professional contexts have shared and distinctive approaches. The case studies were made up of three professional mentors and three coaches operating within each of the six "types". Participants took part in semi-structured interviews which allowed access to professional accounts of mentoring and coaching experiences (Miller and Glassner, 2011). Participants were asked to define their role and explain what their practice looked like. The mentors were asked how they saw their role compared with coaches, and vice versa. Some participants were able to draw on first-hand experience, having been a mentor and coach; whilst others talked about their perceptions if they only had first-hand experience of one mentor or coach "type". Once the interviews had been completed, the data were analysed using thematic analysis, so that comparisons could be made first from within each "type" and then across the different sectors or professional areas.

Whilst this paper focuses on the findings drawn from the mentors of pre-service teachers, additional findings from the coach "types" will be discussed in order to make recommendations for the potential wider use of coaching for pre-service teachers.

Results

This paper highlights elements of the results which are pertinent to the place and use of mentoring and coaching for pre-service teachers. This section starts with the participants' own experiences of mentoring pre-service teachers including reflections about their role and the approaches they use. The discussion is then broadened by comparing mentoring for pre-service teachers with other professional mentors and coaches in different settings. Finally, the data suggests that current practice could be developed further by utilising coaching alongside mentoring for pre-service teachers.

How mentors of pre-service teachers see themselves

The three mentors of pre-service teachers who took part in this study were given the opportunity to reflect on their role, what they look to achieve and how they go about engaging pre-service teachers in the mentoring process. Each participant worked in a different school, two as deputy head teachers and the third as a head of department; all had responsibility for the induction of teachers into their respective schools. They each had direct experience of mentoring as well as coordinating other senior colleagues who mentored pre-service teachers.

The key themes which emerged from the interviews included: the shared passion of working in the field of education which drove the mentors to want to support their mentees in developing the skills to successfully embark on their teaching career. Linked to this was the perception of being role models by setting examples of good teaching based on the mentor's expertise. And finally, they wanted to work developmentally with their mentees, providing the space for pre-service teachers to

reflect on their strengths and weaknesses and help them to develop strategies so that they could improve in the areas they found challenging.

1. Access to experienced and knowledgeable teachers with credibility

Mentors of pre-service teachers typically have a proven professional track-record as they are often part of the senior management team. Therefore they are selected based on their experience and commitment to the profession. This provides the mentee with someone they can have access to, who has a lot of experience and knowledge in their chosen department or area of teaching, as one mentor described:

> It will be somebody in their faculty because they can discuss very specific lesson planning or very specific syllabus type stuff.

Another participant reiterated the value of accessing a mentor with plenty of teaching experience behind them:

> The mentor is someone who is more experienced […] and is therefore actually not only just kind of helping that person to come to recognise what the areas of weaknesses are and explore the possible solutions to development issues; but the mentor would actually be able to suggest ways of improving in a very targeted way.

Whilst there is little choice in terms of the mentor and mentee being able to opt out of the arrangement, the mentees are offered a high calibre of mentors with significant teaching and leadership experience. Mentors are well positioned to demonstrate to pre-service teachers, through support and experience, what good teaching looks like as Delaney (2012) points out. This relates to the need for mentors to have an established track record in teaching (Hudson and Hudson, 2010; Ligadu, 2012; St George and Robinson, 2011). Parker (2010) and Wynn *et al.* (2007) go one step further and suggest the mentor and mentee should be matched based on the specific subject department or age group they specialise in so that the specific knowledge the mentee is accessing is beneficial, both in the short- and long term.

2. Role-modelling good practice

All mentors of pre-service teachers identified role modelling as an important part of what they do. This often requires the mentor to offer plenty of advice, as one participant explained:

> Lots of techniques for behaviour management […] It's about how to differentiate between the different levels of abilities; it's about how to make the students engaged and interested.

This very much echoes the teaching role itself – passing on knowledge and expertise and using real life experiences to help demonstrate effective classroom strategies. The mentors were not afraid of being directive where appropriate to help guide and steer the mentee in the right direction. Two participants both explained separately when they might step in, particularly as a non-directional approach can be time consuming:

> In mentoring, if I then felt they didn't really have the knowledge or expertise or skills, I would then train them in that.

> Sometimes you just want somebody to tell you the answer so that you can move on.

Given the mentor's status within the school as a senior member of staff, they will possess a certain amount of credibility and authority. One participant described how he allowed his mentees to observe his own practice so that the mentee could appreciate his ability to "walk the talk":

> All the pre-service teachers have seen me teach, for example, so that when I am […] talking to them about good teaching and learning, they know that I am not just talking about it, I can actually do it myself as I have more credibility.

Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) and Russell and Russell (2011) have also identified role-modelling as a key component of mentoring for newly qualified teachers.

3. Working developmentally with the pre-service teacher

All participants agreed that a key component of the role was to work developmentally with the mentee. This they saw as largely dependent upon possessing good interpersonal skills, such as listening and the art of asking clever questions:

> The root of it is good questions and good listening I think.

Another mentor described this as developing "reflective practitioners":

> It's to get them to reflect on their – you know it may be their lesson observations – on the progress they are making to perhaps see the bigger picture.

The other mentor highlighted the use of effectively assessing their mentees' progress, which is something that Akbar and Jackson (2012) emphasise. The purpose of offering the mentee feedback, having assessed their strengths and weaknesses, was a way of enabling the pre-service teacher to find effective ways of moving forwards:

> As a mentor I would probably say, I think this is what it is, this is what you need to develop.

A developmental focus, which is often viewed as a fundamental component of mentoring, can appear to venture into territory synonymous with performance coaching, especially when the mentor is helping the mentee develop particular skill sets. Garvey (2011) explores the different emphases placed on how performance is understood in the mentoring and coaching literature. He suggests that mentoring tends to view performance as a developmental process, seen holistically and over a longer period of time; whereas coaching sees performance as a faster, more focused process with managerial connotations. Mentoring for pre-service teachers seems to encompass the holistic developmental side with at times management-led focus on performance when skill-enhancement is needed, which suggests these two approaches can be interchangeable, incorporating at times a coach-approach.

How do mentors of pre-service teachers compare with other mentor and coach "types"?

An in-depth thematic analysis of the six mentoring and coaching "types" featured in this study provided the opportunity to compare shared and distinctive approaches. Findings showed that depending on the criteria used for comparison, different "types" were separated out in different ways. Below two sets of criteria will be discussed:

(1) the use of directive and non-directive approaches or styles; and

(2) underlying philosophical beliefs that the mentoring or coaching is based on a deficit or asset model.

1. Directive vs non-directive approaches

Clutterbuck (2008) explains how different types of mentoring and coaching can either be directive or non-directive. A directive approach is where practitioners tend to step in and offer advice or instructions. A non-directive approach would look very different, much more facilitative relying heavily on "questioning, listening and clarifying" (CIPD, 2010). This is based on the belief that the mentee or coachee has the resources within themselves to find their own solutions; a directive approach is much more dependent on the mentor or coach taking the lead and setting the learning agenda.

In this study, mentors of pre-service teachers, leaders and sports coaches were found to use more directive approaches. For pre-service teachers and leaders, the mentors found that their mentees were looking for advice and help, often due to the high pressured nature of their responsibilities and the need for quick ideas and advice. One mentor of pre-service teachers summed this up:

> They are dependent upon you for the expertise or the knowledge of the experience.

This was further echoed by a mentor of leaders:

> The mentor typically comes from within the same profession or […] they have professional insight into areas that you want to go in.

Similarly, athletes also value and appreciate the level of expertise and knowledge that their coaches have and therefore are looking for advice and guidance so that they can improve their performance capacity. One sports coach explained how his role involved instructional teaching:

> First of all there is observation – I see what people do naturally. Then there is teaching – as you show them how to do it better using what skills they have already got.

By comparison, mentors of young people, executive coaches and coaching psychologists were less likely to be directive, for varying reasons. Mentors of young people may or may not have things in common with their mentees and therefore start by building the relationship and tend to allow its direction to flow organically. One participant likened the mentoring process to a journey:

> Mentoring to me is more like, I walk alongside the young person so that they can get themselves to where they want to go.

The executive coaches were more likely to have less contact time with their clients compared with mentors of young people, but still preferred to use a non-directive approach. One participant executive coach had also experienced being a mentor and described the difference in approach:

> When I am talking in a coaching hat, it is always about facilitating the clients' inner resources I believe they have and the starting point for mentoring with me is I'm there because I've been there and done it and I've got some t-shirts and I can offer advice and it could be direct guidance.

These sentiments were echoed by one coaching psychologist, who again preferred to facilitate rather than offer direct advice:

> Mentoring is for me based around an expert, wiser, older model […] somebody who has understanding and experience in that particular domain and they bring that more to the

> forefront. So they are more likely to be active in making suggestions, giving opinions, offering advice. Whereas coaches are not likely to start from that point.

This range of experiences and opinions highlights the different starting points that mentors and coaches take, based on the professional setting they are operating in. That is not to say that there are exceptions to the rule or that these views are automatically generalisable within each of the six mentoring and coaching "types" discussed. However, it does show subtle differences in approach which in turn suggests that some mentees and coachees might not be getting the kind of input or support that they actually need.

2. Deficit vs asset model

Mentors and coaches will consciously or unconsciously refer to a set or values or beliefs which inform the way in which they work with others. Some responses from participants revealed aspects of beliefs held about their role and what they want to achieve. In broad terms, there were two underlying perspectives: those who believed their purpose was to help the mentee or coachee gain something from their knowledge or experience, which could be described as a deficit model (Philip, 2008). This usually involves working towards a set of pre-determined goals (Garvey *et al.*, 2009). Others, however, believed that the mentee or coachee would respond better to a more mutual approach, enabling the practitioner to find ways of developing themselves further (Garvey *et al.*, 2009). A deficit model was found amongst mentors of pre-service teachers, mentors of young people and sports coaches; whilst an asset-based model was more evident amongst mentors of leaders, executive coaches and coaching psychologists.

Mentors of pre-service teachers are never usually voluntary and aim specifically to develop teaching skills in their mentees (Hudson and Hudson, 2010). One participant described how the mentor is consciously looking to identify specific weaknesses in order to increase the mentee's capacity to teach:

> The mentor is someone who is more experienced […] and is therefore actually not only just kind of helping that person to come to recognise what the areas of weaknesses are and explore the possible solutions to development issues; but the mentor would actually be able to suggest ways of improving in a very targeted way.

Mentors of young people are usually briefed to help develop life skills in young people (Philip, 2008). One participant explained the nature of the young people referred to mentoring programmes, highlighting how certain referral criteria may contribute to labelling the young people as deficient:

> They come from a variety of backgrounds, quite sort of chaotic families, sometimes quite vulnerable kids with difficulty containing emotional states and things like anger management.

Sports coaches also tend to operate from a deficit model, based on the way they look to use their skills and knowledge about their particular area of sport as a way of improving the athlete's performance:

> Coaching is more to do with repetition, feedback and working with a player seeing where it is going right, where it is going wrong. How to develop fitness, how to develop the skills.

This differed somewhat with mentors of leaders, executive coaches and coaching psychologists who suggested they were working towards an asset-based model. Coetzee *et al.* (2009) describe this model as facilitative and collaborative, focusing on

strengths in a way that does not position the helper as expert. For these participant mentors and coaches, the client group they engage with are in positions where their strengths are perhaps more noticeable, given than many of their mentees or coachees are successful leaders or managers in their chosen profession; or have been identified as "gifted and talented" with potential to be fast-tracked into leadership or managerial positions. One mentor of leaders talked about the emphasis being on career development:

> The purpose of the mentoring is to help them plan and manage their careers and help them find their way through a large organisation.

One executive coach talked about the process being client-led rather than working towards an agenda set by the coach or organisation:

> I would set out to explore where the person is now, what their experiences are what their drivers are, what their motivation is, and by coaching, encourage them to bring about whatever change is needed.

A coaching psychologist described how their role was more about unlocking potential:

> I am not there as an expert in that person or what they should be doing, or the content of their job. I am there to help them realise what capabilities they have got themselves and how they can discover those, look at those differently, and find resources within themselves.

These opinions along with those expressed regarding direct and non-directive approaches, reflect the complexities associated with trying to clearly define how mentoring and coaching might overlap or differ from one another. There are clearly differences and similarities. However, the reasons for these subtle differences and overlaps are complex; and closely associated with the context in which they are found. The next section explores how some approaches found in other mentor and coach "types" might be useful as additional tools for supporting pre-service teachers.

Developing coaching and mentoring opportunities for pre-service teachers

In cases where mentors adopt directive approaches based on a deficit model, this could be restrictive at times to the development of the pre-service teacher. This point is illustrated by one participant mentor of pre-service teachers who reflected on a scenario where a school was trying to roll out mentoring and coaching for teaching staff, beyond the induction period. He described how the announcement of the mentoring and coaching programme was perceived by the staff team:

> The ones going to be mentored were the ones that weren't very good and the ones that were going to be coached were the ones that were the better teachers. It was completely divisive.

This reveals a belief that mentoring is reserved for those who are not very good at what they do, and therefore have a lot more to learn about what it means to teach; whereas coaching is set apart for those who have already demonstrated that they are good at teaching and therefore have the potential to be fast-tracked in their career. It was almost seen as an insult to be put forward for mentoring.

Another participant is a deputy head teacher who has overall responsibility for staff CPD as well as inducting pre-service teachers. As part of her broader remit, she has been trained in both mentoring and coaching and in turn, has trained her staff team in both roles. She is therefore a firm believer that both should be utilised throughout the

school but in an integrated way, although she explained how the aim should be to coach; but mentoring can be used as and when it is needed:

> I would always start with coaching, and if they are able to identify for themselves what the issues are, and if they are able to identify solutions for themselves, then I would leave it at that.

She therefore sees the need for mentors of pre-service teachers to be equipped to identify the needs of their mentee; and then assess when to step back (non-directive approach) or step in (directive approach):

> I guess the conclusion that I have come to is, you have the different skills in your toolkit, and you bring out different ones as and when it is appropriate.

This participant understood coaching to be used in a way that allows the mentee/coachee to formulate their own thinking without being told what they could or should do. She switched into mentoring if she felt the client did not have the knowledge or experience to make those judgements or decisions for themselves but would always have in the back of her mind the aim of working towards a coach approach as this demonstrates that the client is becoming less dependent upon others. This point is interesting, because the view taken is that coaching approaches are interventions which practitioners should aim for, because it suggests the client is taking more ownership of their own development and learning. This somewhat simplifies the range of mentoring approaches which can also aid growth; but it certainly challenges many of the deficit models that can be found in some types of mentoring and coaching. Figure 1 illustrates what a mentor-coach integrated approach based on an asset model might look like.

This integrated approach allows for a more fluid movement between mentoring and coaching functions. Returning to the ways in which mentoring and coaching are defined

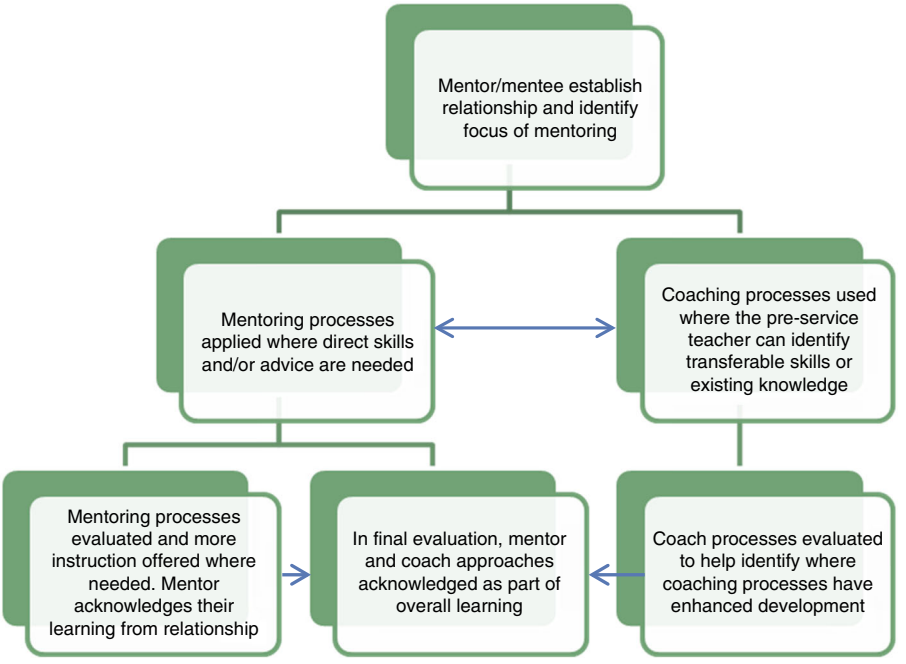

Figure 1.
Mentor-coach integrated approach based on asset model

(as outlined at the start of this paper), the mentor function offers scope for role-modelling and advice where needed. However, the pre-service teacher may well have transferable skills from previous professional experiences which allow them to steer their own development in certain aspects of the teaching role. This requires the mentor-coach to dip into coaching approaches and facilitate a conversation which helps the mentee to question and explore their teaching practice for themselves. The mentor-coach may also help the pre-service teacher identify specific weaknesses and allow for a focused time of honing in and setting goals with the view to improving performance in that area. It is worth noting that ultimately, whilst mentoring and coaching techniques may offer slightly different emphases, they are both carried out within the parameters of a professional relationship. Ultimately, the way in which that relationship is conducted (led by the mentor-coach) will determine the outcomes – rather than relying on technique alone.

Conclusion and recommendations for further research

There is already a great deal of knowledge regarding the use of mentoring in education, given its historical use of supporting and training teachers. However, little work has been carried out which explores the use and place of coaching for pre-service teachers. This raises the need for mentors to develop their thinking and ideas about the approaches they use when inducting teachers into the profession; and what might be gained by including coach approaches as and when the need arises.

This paper has also highlighted how in many sectors, either mentoring or coaching is found to be the dominant intervention – but never exclusively. For example, athletes rely heavily on sports coaching, yet mentoring is also available but usually on an informal basis. Mentoring was found to be more available to pre-service teachers and young people. Surely by offering mentoring and coaching opportunities more equally within professional settings, supporting interventions can then be driven by the individual's need rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

This study has underlined the need for further research in order to better understand how mentoring and coaching are implemented within the field of education. This would aid the expansion of teachers developing both mentoring and coaching skills in a way that helps combat any stigma associated with the use and place of mentoring.

References

Akbar, A. and Jackson, D. (2012), "'Mind the gap!' exploring the tensions in initial teacher training: school based mentor practices, student expectations and university demands", *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 110-119.

Aladejana, A., Aladejana, F. and Ehindero, S. (2006), "An analysis of mentoring relationships among teachers: a case study of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ilf, Nigeria", *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, Vol. 4 No. 1, pp. 20-30.

Ambrosetti, A. (2010), "Mentoring and learning to teach: what do pre-service teachers expect to learn from their mentor teachers?", *The International Journal of Learning*, Vol. 17 No. 9, pp. 117-132.

Black, M. (2013), "Coaching: impacting teacher behavior to improve the quality of classroom instruction", Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol. 73 (12-A)(E).

Bleach, K. (1999), *The Induction and Mentoring of Newly Qualified Teachers: A New Deal for Teachers*, David Fulton Publishers, London.

Burley, S. and Pomphrey, C. (2011), *Mentoring and Coaching in Schools: Professional Learning Through Collaborative Inquiry*, Routledge, Abingdon.

Carney, P., Crilley, E., Fala, J., Strouse, K., Tully, C. and Viviano, T. (2013), "In-classroom coach: an addition to mentor teachers", available at: www.acteonline.org (accessed 4 August 2014).

CIPD (2010), "Coaching and mentoring factsheet", available at: www.cipd.co.uk/hr-resources/factsheets/coaching-mentoring.aspx (accessed 4 August 2014).

Clark, P., Jamieson, A. and Launer, J. (2006), "Intending to be a supervisor, mentor or coach? Which, what for and why?", *Education for Primary Care*, Vol. 17, pp. 109-116.

Clutterbuck, D. (2008), "What's happening in coaching and mentoring? And what is the difference between them?", *Development and Learning in Organizations*, Vol. 22 No. 4, pp. 8-10.

Coetzee, S., Ebersohn, L. and Ferreira, R. (2009), "An asset-based approach in career facilitation: lessons for higher education", *South African Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 23 No. 3, pp. 537-560.

Delaney, Y. (2012), "Research on mentoring language teachers: its role in language education", *Foreign Language Annals*, Vol. 45 No. S1, pp. 184-202.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P.R. (2008), *Management Research*, 3rd ed., Sage, London.

Forde, C., McMahon, M., Gronn, P. and Martin, M. (2013), "Being a leadership development coach: a multi-faceted role", *Educational Management Administration Leadership*, Vol. 41 No. 1, pp. 105-119.

Fransson, G. (2010), "Mentors assessing mentees? An overview and analyses of the mentorship role concerning newly qualified teachers", *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 33 No. 4, pp. 375-390.

Garvey, B. (2004), "The mentoring/coaching/counselling debate: call a rose by any other name and perhaps it's a bramble?", *Development and Learning in Organizations*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 6-8.

Garvey, B. (2011), *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book About Coaching and Mentoring*, Sage Publications, London.

Garvey, R., Stokes, P. and Megginson, D. (2009), *Coaching and Mentoring: Theory and Practice*, Sage, London.

Gray, D. E. (2009), *Doing Research in the Real World*, 2nd ed., Sage, London.

Hooker, T. (2014), "The benefits of peer coaching as a support system for early childhood education students", *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 109-122.

Hudson, P. and Hudson, S. (2010), "Mentor educators' understandings of mentoring preservice primary teachers", *The International Journal of Learning*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 157-169.

Kwan, T. and Lopez-Real, F. (2005), "Mentors' perceptions of their roles in mentoring student teachers", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 33 No. 3, pp. 275-287.

Ligadu, C. (2012), "The impact of the professional learning and psychological mentoring support for teacher trainees", *Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 350-363.

Loeschen, S. (2013), "Generating reflection and improving teacher pedagogy through the use of cognitive coaching in a mentor/beginning teacher relationship", *Dissertation Abstracts International Section A: Humanities and Social Sciences*, Vol. 73 (10-A)(E).

Lee, O. and Choi, E. (2013), "Utilizing peer coaching to facilitate pre-service physical education teachers' reflection", *Asia Pacific Edu Res*, Vol. 22 No. 2, pp. 147-154.

Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2011), "The 'inside' and the 'outside': finding realities in interviews", in Silverman, D. (Ed.), *Qualitative Research*, (3rd ed.), Sage, London, pp. 125-139.

Parker, M. (2010), "Mentoring practices to keep teachers in school", *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 111-123.

Philip, K. (2008), "Youth mentoring – a case for treatment?", *Youth and Policy*, No. 99, pp. 17-31.

Rikard, G. and Banville, D. (2010), "Effective mentoring: critical to the professional development of first year physical educators", *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, Vol. 29, pp. 245-261.

Rock, M., Schoenfield, N., Zigmond, N., Gable, R., Gregg, M., Ploessi, D. and Salter, A. (2013), "Can you skype me now? Developing teachers' classroom management practices through virtual coaching", *Virtual Coaching Classroom Management*, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 15-23.

Russell, M. and Russell, J. (2011), "Mentoring relationships: cooperating teachers' perspectives on mentoring student interns", *The Professional Educator*, Vol. 35 No. 1, pp. 1-21.

Sempowicz, T. and Hudson, P. (2012), "Mentoring pre-service teachers' reflective practices towards producing teaching outcomes", *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching and Mentoring*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 52-64.

Shapira-Lishchinksky, O. (2009), "Israeli teachers' perception of mentoring", *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 23 No. 5, pp. 390-403.

St George, C. and Robinson, S. (2011), "Making mentoring matter: perspectives from veteran mentor teachers", *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin*, Vol. 78 No. 1, pp. 24-28.

Turner, M. and Bash, L. (1999), *Sharing Expertise in Teacher Education*, Cassell, London.

Wynn, S., Wilson Carboni, L. and Patall, E. (2007), "Beginning teachers' perceptions of mentoring, climate and leadership: promoting retention through a learning communities framework", in Jacobsen, S. and Leithwood, K. (Eds), *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, Vol. 6 No. 3, pp. 209-229.

Yalcin Arslan, F. and Ilin, G. (2013), "Effects of peer coaching for the classroom management skills of teachers", *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education*, Vol. 9 No. 1, pp. 43-59.

Web reference

www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/essential_guide_for_induction_tutors.pdf

Further reading

Heineke, S. (2013), "Coaching discourse: supporting professional teachers' learning", *The Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 113 No. 3, pp. 409-433.

About the author

Dr Tina Salter's background is in youth and community work where she has undertaken a number of roles, but latterly specialised in mentoring young people labelled "at risk" or exclusion from school. Dr Salter is currently a Senior Lecturer and a Programme Organiser for the degree programmes by distance learning at the YMCA George Williams College, a specialist professional training college for youth and community workers. Tina teaches in the full-time and distance learning undergraduate and master's programmes at the college. In 2007 Tina was awarded a Masters in Coaching and Mentoring Practice from the Oxford Brookes University. For this research she used a grounded theory approach to explore the thoughts and opinions of coaches regarding the emerging use of coaching supervision. This enabled her to offer a critical view on supervision and whether or not this should be mandatory for coaches who affiliate to related professional bodies. In 2014 Tina completed a Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring at the Oxford Brookes University. Her doctoral research focused on a comparison of mentor and coaches through the lens of six mentoring and coaching disciplines – mentors of pre-service teachers, mentors of young people, mentors of leaders, executive coaches, coaching psychologists and sports coaches. There is currently no universal definition of mentoring and coaching and whilst her research did not come up with any definitive answers. Dr Salter's findings show that practitioners can adopt specialist disciplinary, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches, according to skills and experience. Dr Tina Salter can be contacted at: t.salter@ymca.ac.uk