Mentoring for educators' professional learning and development: a meta-synthesis of IJMCE volumes 1–4

Introduction

Mentoring in education has long been regarded as one of the most important factors that contribute to teacher professional development (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Hobson *et al*., 2009).

The benefits of mentoring in education have been widely reported (Clutterbuck, 2004), with benefits for both mentors and mentees (Bean *et al.*, 2014; Clutterbuck, 2004; Grima-Farrell, 2015; Hobson *et al*., 2009; Lonergan *et al.*, 2012; Marcellino, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Mullen and Hutinger, 2008). These benefits include impact on performance, reduced staff and teacher turnover, and greater career advancement (Bean *et al.,* 2014; Clutterbuck, 2004; Hobson *et al*., 2009; Lumpkin, 2011; Maxwell, 2013; Mullen and Hutinger, 2008). Studies have also identified social and psychological benefits such as increased confidence for both mentees and mentors through the establishment of partnerships, and an enhanced sense of organizational culture and loyalty towards the organization (Lumpkin, 2011; Mathews, 2003; Mullen and Hutinger, 2008).

In 2012, in an effort to foster a greater understanding of the issues involved in mentoring in education, the *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education* (IJMCE) was established to provide "cutting edge research and substantial in-process reports and theoretical accounts of mentoring and coaching in educational contexts, including schools, colleges, and universities" (Fletcher, 2012, p.

7). At the time of writing, the journal had published four volumes and 14 issues. Since its inception, the journal has established itself as a "knowledge base" for mentoring and coaching in education (Fletcher, 2012, p. 5). This paper seeks to capture the prominent findings, concepts and themes within the journal through a literature review and meta-synthesis of the articles published in IJMCE. Presenting a comprehensive overview of the themes across the 37 papers will promote greater understanding of the field and prompt further ideas for research on topics of importance in the mentoring process. This review focuses on papers published in the IJMCE that addressed the mentoring of educators (teachers, principals and higher education academic staff) in all stages of development (i.e. initial preparation, initiation and induction and continuing professional development) and in varied contexts (i.e. K12 schools, colleges and universities).

Methodology and Process

Initially, the author identified papers published in the IJMCE from 2012 (volume 1, issue 1) to 2015 (volume 4, issue 4) that had "mentoring" in either the title, abstract or/and keywords, and focused on papers that examined educators in all stages of their career development and progression. Papers that included the term "coaching" in either the title, abstract or/and keywords were not included in this literature review. Subsequently, the author carried out a holistic reading of the papers in order to identify broad categories of common themes and concepts. These categories were used to code the texts and to establish relationships between the different papers. In a final stage, the author synthesized the relationships between

the different papers to create a descriptive meta-synthesis and tentatively reconceptualize the original theories expressed in the papers.

Findings and Discussion

The findings and discussion are integrated and organized into five sections. The first section identifies the number of articles examined and the geographical context in which the studies were undertaken. The second section examines and discusses key concepts and terms found within the articles. The third section presents an analysis of the factors that foster and hinder mentoring success. The fourth section presents findings on the impact of mentoring. The final section introduces some recent and unique mentoring pilot programmes. In this review, the author uses the term “mentee” to refer to the individual being supported by the mentor even though, in her view, the terms “mentee” and “protégé” (a term used by some authors) are interchangeable.

Content and Authorship of the papers in this review

The majority of the papers initially identified for this article (35 out of 40 papers) focus on the initial, early or continuing professional development of educators (teachers, principals and higher education academic staff). Within these 40 papers, two papers focus on mentoring students for their professional development — not as part of an academic programme — and one paper focuses on mentoring for women in the medical professions. These three papers, although initially analysed, were eliminated from the meta-synthesis review as this review is

focused on papers that discuss mentoring for the initial, early or continuing professional development of educators.

This review, then, identified 37 papers examining mentoring programmes. There are 13 papers on mentoring for educators from North America published in IJMCE (10 U.S. authors and three Canadian authors). Seven studies were conducted in the United Kingdom. Other European countries are represented by Ireland (2), Czech Republic (1) and Norway (1). There are three papers from Japan, two from Singapore, one from Australia, one from New Zealand and one from Oman. There are three literature reviews and two conceptual papers that do not reflect mentoring programmes in specific countries or regions. It should be noted that regions such as Africa or South America are not represented in the articles identified for this review.

Examining key terms in mentoring in education

This section examines three key concepts in mentoring, that is, the definition of mentoring, the importance of the mentor and mentee in the mentoring process and contextual and cultural influences on mentoring.

Definition of Mentoring

There appears to be wide agreement amongst the authors of the reviewed articles that definitions of mentoring are varied (Brondyk and Searby, 2013; Fransson and McMahan, 2013; Lunsford, 2014; Nhamad-Williams and Taylor, 2015; Reddick, 2012; Tan, 2013). This lack of a standard definition makes mentoring a difficult concept to analyse.

Although this review focuses only on the examination of mentoring, the authors of the articles often discussed issues relating to the differences between mentoring and coaching. Mentoring is usually seen as a long-term approach to professional development, whilst coaching is more concerned with the improvement of specific skills and goals (Fletcher, 2012; Ng, 2012). Jones (2015, p. 294) refers to differences between mentoring and coaching with the former being concerned with "growing an individual" and the latter more linked with a "narrower remit relating to specific areas of performance and learning outcomes". While the above accounts of the differences between mentoring and coaching are fairly consistent, there is a lack of consensus about this. Ng (2012) focused on similarities between the two and argued that mentoring and coaching are both essentially "professional development practices involving one professional helping another in a mutually enriching manner" (Ng, 2012, p. 25). That said, other research (e.g. Hobson and Malderez, 2013) has shown that in some cases, mentoring relationships can be far from mutually enriching.

Although it is hard to define, the authors of the papers reviewed suggest that mentoring is traditionally seen as a process by which a more experienced person (the mentor) gives support to a less experienced person (the mentee) across a wide range of issues relevant to work and professional development (D'Souza, 2014; Garza *et al.,* 2014; Godden *et al.,* 2014; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kutsyuruba, 2012; Sakamoto and Tamanyu, 2014; Stephens *et al*., 2014; Wyatt and Arnold, 2012). Whilst some definitions of mentoring do not explicitly refer to the mentee as having less experience than the mentor, the general notion of mentoring as a

"developmental partnering of two professionals, in which one individual is sharing his or her knowledge and expertise to inform or support the professional learning and career development of another" (Parylo *et al.*, 2012, p. 121) is evident in the majority of the 37 papers reviewed. This form of mentoring relationship may be characterized as a deficit model in which mentors believe their role is to "help the mentee or coachee gain something from their knowledge or experience" (Salter, 2015, p. 77); others such as Dominguez and Hager (2013) prefer to view mentoring as a "developmental model".

Consistent with both Dominguez and Hager (2013) and Parylo *et al.* (2012), Searby (2014) stated that mentoring "should be viewed as a learning partnership between the mentor and the protégé" and that the vision of a passive mentee waiting for the mentor's wisdom is being challenged by a more active mentee stance. Thus, emphasis is placed on the importance of the roles of both mentors and mentees, contributing to the construction of an effective mentoring relationship.

The importance of mentor and mentee in the mentoring process

The complexity of the mentoring process is exacerbated by the holistic nature of mentor roles (Clutterbuck, 2004). Mentors have professional development roles (as educators, as role models, as professionals who introduce the mentees to the culture of the school and facilitators helping mentees to gain access to resources) but also psychosocial support roles (as they have experienced what the mentees are experiencing and, therefore, know how to cope with it) (Garza *et al.*, 2014; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kutsyuruba, 2012; Tan, 2012; Wyatt and Arnold, 2012).

Consistent with Dominguez and Hager (2013) and Parylo *et al.* (2012), Tan (2013) noted that mentees prefer mentors who help them in their professional development. However, Tan (2013) concluded that mentees prefer mentors who are also "sensitive to their needs and give them room to manoeuvre" (Tan, 2013, p. 123). The role of the mentee in a mentoring relationship has not been as widely researched as the role of the mentor (Searby, 2014). Searby (2014) developed the concept of the mentoring mindset of a mentee as "a construct made visible to the mentor in the mentoring relationship by the demonstration of attitudes, behaviors and competencies which indicate that the protégé is embracing the mentoring process" (p. 263). These attitudes, behaviours and competencies of a mentee greatly influence the mentoring process.

An example of a mentoring model that shows the importance of the mentees' attitudes, behaviours and competences as well as the complex nature of mentor roles is the Adaptive Mentorship© model, discussed by Godden *et al.* (2014) and Salm and Mulholland (2015). This model focuses on mentees by recognizing their behavioural, developmental and learning differences, assuring that mentees' needs are addressed and their voices heard (Godden *et al.*, 2014). In this type of approach, both mentor and mentee have control over the behaviours and roles to be performed. This model is centred on a programme set by the mentor and on the reciprocal nature of the mentoring relationship (Godden *et al.*, 2014; Salm and Mulholland, 2015). Applying this type of model to two cohorts of a teacher training programme in Canada, Salm and Mulholland (2015) concluded that in order for a model with a reciprocal approach to work, a paradigm shift from "maestro to

mentor" needs to happen first (p. 64). Their research indicated that this change is difficult for some cooperating teachers. Therefore, one could argue that when implementing a programme that steps away from the traditional model, one must consider the context and the degree to which both mentor and mentee are prepared to be part of the programme.

Although research shows evidence of common characteristics of the mentoring process, one must bear in mind that what is considered a good mentoring relationship may vary in different cultural contexts. The emphasis on specific mentor roles and the degree of openness to mentee initiative vary and are viewed differently from one context to another (Kochan *et al.*, 2015).

Context and cultural influences on mentoring

Successful mentoring programmes need to take into account the culture of the organization and of the surrounding environment (Kochan *et al.*, 2015; Lonergan *et al.*, 2012). Kochan *et al*. (2015) believe that it is difficult to conduct research on the "connections between culture and mentoring relationships, program structures and strategies, and outcomes" (2015, p. 87). In addition, Fransson and McMahan (2013) noted that mentoring complexities are interconnected with policy discourse and societal values and that the policies on mentoring are dependent on the cultural contexts in which mentoring occurs. They used cultural analysis as a system for examining the complex interrelationships between policy discourse and societal values and identifying cultural factors that can both support and hinder the mentoring process (Fransson and McMahan, 2013).

In Japan, for instance, the tradition of respect and authority has implications in the development of the relationship between mentor and mentee (Sakamoto and Tamanyu, 2014). On the other hand, there is also a strong culture of equality in schools and a novice teacher faces the added challenge of being regarded as an equal by other teachers and, therefore, "there is no need to teach a novice what to do (all they need to do is to observe and emulate what they see more experienced teachers doing)" (Asada, 2012, p. 59).

In their literature review, Kent *et al.* (2013) uncovered that "the primary focus of most of the research related to culture and mentoring within relationships is gender and ethnicity" (2013, p. 206). They pointed out that even though some mentoring programmes in education have been established to help women and ethnic minority teachers, in most cases these groups are fairly underrepresented in leadership positions and in the professorial positions. Therefore, mentoring is normally conducted between cross-cultural mentor/mentee relationships (2013). These cross-cultural mentor/mentee relationships can have specific problems, as mentoring is context and culture specific and there are some important cultural differences between ethnic groups. Nevertheless, if mentors and mentees are committed, the mentoring relationship will be successful despite cultural or gender differences (Kent *et al.,* 2013).

A further influence of context is the way in which mentoring is presented. Mentoring is often perceived differently by researchers in Europe and those in the United States (Reddick, 2012). Researchers studying mentoring relationships in the United States see mentoring as a form of "sponsorship", whilst researchers from the

European tradition approach see mentoring as a means of supporting professional development (Brondyk and Searby, 2013, p. 193; Reddick, 2012, p. 37). Authors such as Kutsyuruba (2012) and Hobson and Malderez (2013), nonetheless incorporate both traditions by defining mentoring as a form of support and sponsorship towards professional development.

Factors that Foster and Hinder Mentoring Success

Considering the importance of mentoring for the professional and personal development of educators, it is important to address the factors that contribute to the success or failure of mentoring. As in any human interaction, the factors that contribute to mentoring success or failure are complex and varied. Hobson and Malderez (2013) identified the reasons for the failure of school-based mentoring as being at the level of the mentoring relationships themselves (micro level), the institutional level (meso level) and the national policy level (macro level).

Macro level factors

The confusion concerning what mentoring is and what mentors should do starts at the macro level and then influences the whole system, leading to other unintended consequences and to the failure of mentoring relationships in certain contexts. Ng (2012, p. 31) noted that in Singapore, "there is a tension between the developmental and appraisal nature" of mentoring. Ng (2012) discussed that mentoring and coaching are used as developmental tools but have also been used for appraisal/evaluation of the mentee and linked with remuneration and career progression. Hobson and Malderez (2013) concurred that the lack of a clear

definition of mentoring associated with a culture of excessive focus on surveillance, evaluation and performativity works against the development of a collegial and professional learning environment within which mentoring thrives. In addition, the lack of appropriate recognition of mentors' work through, for example, career advancement and salary incentives, also impedes successful mentoring (Hobson and Malderez, 2013).

Meso level factors

Mentor selection is one of the main factors associated with mentoring failure or success at an institutional level. Several authors (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kochan *et al*., 2015; Stephens *et al.,* 2014) have pointed to the importance of the selection and matching of mentors and mentees, stating that there is a lack of clear criteria for the establishment of mentoring teams. According to Hobson and Malderez (2013), mentors may not even have a choice about whether to become mentors at all since the mentor role is often part of the tasks associated with some leadership positions in schools.

School culture is not the only influence on the success of mentoring at a meso level. Clarity of roles and purposes that come with training and clear management of expectations for both mentor and mentee also play important roles in determining the success of a mentoring relationship. Mentors who do not receive appropriate mentor training are more likely to face greater difficulties in the role (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kochan *et al*., 2015; Lejonberg *et al.*, 2015; Thornton, 2014). Lejonberg *et al.* (2015) pointed out that mentor training contributes to lower

levels of “judgementoring” by leading to a better understanding of the mentor role (p. 152). Hobson and Malderez (2013) defined judgementoring as

> a one to one relationship between a relatively inexperienced teacher (the mentee) and a relatively experienced one (the mentor) in which the latter, in revealing too readily and/or too often his/her own judgements on or evaluations of the mentee’s planning and teaching (e.g. through “comment”, “feedback”, advice, praise, or criticism), compromises the mentoring relationship and its potential benefits. (2013, p. 90)

Hobson and Malderez (2013) also referred to clarity of role, stating that school-assigned mentors have two conflicting roles — assessing and supporting — thus leading to judgementoring. This phenomenon has been reported in several studies, attributed to the uncertainty about mentoring purposes and roles (Duckworth and Maxwell, 2015). Hobson and Malderez (2013) argued that

> one of the main causes of judgementoring is the requirement for mentors to also act as assessors and gatekeepers to the profession, especially in the absence of appropriate provision of mentor development opportunities in preparation for fulfilling both roles and for doing so without compromising the other. (p. 101–102)

Successful mentoring relationships are more difficult to establish if school culture does not allow mentors to choose to become involved and to have time both to prepare for their role and for mentoring meetings. Some studies posit that schools do not give mentors sufficient time to carry out their roles (Hobson and Malderez,

2013; Sakamoto and Tamanyu, 2014; Stephens *et al.*, 2014). In addition, research shows that many schools do not allocate specific times for mentors and mentees to meet (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kochan *et al.*, 2015; Stephens *et al.*, 2014; Wyatt and Arnold, 2014). Furthermore, as discussed previously in this paper, the organizational culture in which mentoring develops has a profound influence on the success of mentoring relationships. The lack of a collaborative, collegial culture in schools and institutions of higher education is detrimental to the development of successful mentoring (Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kent *et al.,* 2013; Kochan *et al*., 2015; Thornton, 2014; Wyatt and Arnold, 2014). This Balkanized (Hargreaves, 1994) and autonomous culture of schools creates a "mindset that those who need mentoring are somehow deficient, as they require help and assistance" (Kent *et al*., 2013, p. 208).

Micro level factors

The fact that mentors and mentees themselves are often responsible for creating the rules and conditions for the mentoring relationship can also affect the quality of the relationship that is established. Even if the school culture promotes learning and development of educators, and the structure of the mentoring programme is operationalized to include mentor training and to create conditions for the development of a mentoring relationship, the success of the mentoring relationship will depend on relational quality (Boswell *et al.*, 2015; D'Souza, 2014; Godden *et al.*, 2014; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kochan *et al*., 2015; Kutsyuruba, 2012; Lejonberg *et al.*, 2015; Ng, 2012; Stephens *et al*., 2014).

Trust is one of the most-cited relational quality indicators for success of mentoring relationships at a micro level. Several authors refer to the importance of trust in mentoring relationships (Boswell *et al.* 2015; D'Souza, 2014; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kochan *et al*., 2015; Ng, 2012; Stephens *et al*., 2014). D'Souza (2014, p. 178) wrote that trust is "necessary for a successful bridge to close the gap in learning between the relatively theoretical world of teacher preparation and practical world of classroom teaching". Another factor of relational quality is respect. Several authors have stated that respect is an essential part of mentoring success (Godden *et al.*, 2014; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kutsyuruba, 2012). Hobson and Malderez (2013), Kutsyuruba (2012) and Lejonberg *et al.* (2015) all noted that newly qualified teachers need to have professional respect for their mentors for the mentoring relationship to work. If the mentor is perceived as being an expert in the field, it is more likely that the mentee will have more respect for him/her and will have a more fruitful mentoring relationship. Meyer (2015) found that having shared values and effective communication has a greater impact on levels of relationship satisfaction and interpersonal comfort. She addressed the issue of diversified mentoring relationships (DMR) in which mentor and mentee differed in one or more demographic variables (for instance, gender, ethnicity, religion or class). Her findings indicated that "DMR dyad members alluded to a number of challenges related to differences in communication style or work ethic" (2015, p. 31) rather than demographic differences.

Judgementoring can negatively impact mentoring relationships as it undermines relational quality. Hobson and Malderez (2013) pointed out the negative

effects that judgementoring can have on the professional development of the mentee as it influences the mentee's self-confidence, hinders the mentee's capacity for reflective practice and "creates learned helplessness" (2013, p. 101). Lejonberg *et al.* (2015) concurred that judgementoring is detrimental to the professional development of mentees since their capacity for self-reflection and for improvement is harmed by the lack of role clarity, leading to excessively directive assessment and feedback. Boswell *et al.* (2015) also indicated that some participants in their study felt that their mentors wanted to create professionals who would mimic the mentor rather than help the mentee to develop a professional identity and critical thinking. A mentee who is taking initiative has a learning and goal orientation, is relational and reflective (Searby, 2014) and may be less likely to be negatively affected by judgementoring as he/she will have more tools to deal with negative feedback/assessment and potential attempts to create a mentee in the mentors' own image.

The Impact of Mentoring

There are many reported benefits of mentoring. Kutsyuruba (2012, p. 247) reviewed teacher induction programmes across Canada, concluding that "the importance of systematic and comprehensive mentoring programs for new teachers cannot be overstated". Hobson and Malderez (2013) exemplified that if well developed and used, school-based mentoring can be very effective in supporting the professional learning and development of beginning teachers.

Most papers in this review point out the abundance of positive impacts of mentoring for mentees in the literature (Boswell *et al*., 2015; Hobson and Malderez, 2013; Kutsyuruba, 2012; Lunsford, 2014; Ng, 2012; Parylo *et al.*, 2012) such as

- greater organizational awareness
- improved classroom, time and workload management capabilities
- better problem-solving skills
- increased networking skills
- higher levels of self-confidence
- important socialization benefits
- increased levels of job satisfaction
- reduced levels of job turnover.

Mentors also benefit from mentoring relationships, particularly from the development of new forms of learning communities (Kutsyuruba, 2012). The development of these learning communities through mentoring may challenge the current perspective of the mentor as a sage and the mentee as someone who will need to be guided carefully in beginning a career (Kutsyuruba, 2012). Parylo *et al.* (2012) also recognized that "mentor benefits include collegiality and networking" (p. 124). It is therefore important to point out the fact that mentoring also has benefits for mentors, particularly as the mentors increase their confidence and self-esteem (D'Souza, 2014).

There are, however, a number of references to negative impact or unintended outcomes of mentoring. This field of study has only recently gained attention (Lunsford, 2014). Hobson and Malderez (2013, p. 92) wrote that

"mentoring does not always bring about these positive outcomes, and can actually stunt beginner teachers' professional learning and growth". Mentoring can promote fossilization behaviours, with the mentee fearing innovation and creativity in the management of the daily classroom life. It might also render the mentee unable to deal with conflicts between innovative theoretical approaches and the mentoring he/she receives (Asada, 2012; Hobson and Malderez, 2013).

Authors also point to the fact that mentoring can have negative consequences in the emotional well-being of mentees, causing anxiety and stress and contributing to some mentees' decisions to leave the profession (Hobson and Malderez, 2013). Lunsford (2014) concurred that mentoring can lead a mentee to question his/her competence and may lead the mentee to leave the profession.

New Dimensions of mentoring

The final section of this review highlights mentoring programmes and approaches that appear to be innovative. Amongst them are e-mentoring (Butler *et al.*, 2013), the READ model (Nahmad-Williams and Taylor, 2015) and a pilot programme using educative mentoring in New Zealand (Langdon and Ward, 2015).

Butler *et al.* (2013) present an overview of the manner in which technology is changing the potential for mentoring using e-mentoring. E-mentoring is presented by the authors as differing from "traditional face-to-face mentoring through its use of electronic communications to build relationships" (2013, p. 234). The authors present two advantages of e-mentoring as enabling mentoring partners to overcome physical distance and having the potential to promote more egalitarian relationships.

They also present some disadvantages of e-mentoring, one of which being the increased potential for misunderstandings when, in some cases, communication is not effective. Additionally, Butler *et al.* (2013) present a transformational mentoring model that uses a social constructionist framework in which both the mentor and the mentee learn and develop their skills (Butler *et al.*, 2013). Their approach is close to what Dominguez and Hager (2013) termed as the learning framework — a framework that can have greater benefits for mentoring in education since it focuses on reciprocity and on what both participants in the mentoring relationship might learn from it.

Nahmad-Williams and Taylor (2015) also present an innovative model of mentoring. The READ model (Relational–Ethical–Affective–Dialogic mentoring model) has the potential to break down the traditional forms of mentoring that objectify the participants in mentoring relationships. By describing their mentoring experiences through journal entries, Nahmad-Williams and Taylor (2015) identified three themes (identity, fear of being judged and respect) which in turn became dimensions of their mentoring model (relational dimension, affective dimension and ethical dimension). In their model, Nahmad-Williams and Taylor (2015) developed the "i-thou" relationship between mentor and mentee, giving focus to the other as a human being that is learning and developing. The influence of judgementoring (Hobson and Malderez, 2013) was felt in the fear that both mentor and mentee had of reverting to a judgementoring relationship. Once again, this model steps away from traditional dyadic and hierarchical relationships in which one of the members has all the power and knowledge.

Langdon and Ward (2015, pp. 240–241) introduced a mentoring pilot programme in New Zealand that focused on educative mentoring (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The authors refer to educative mentoring as a type of mentoring that can help "new teachers reframe their views about diverse students, diagnose classroom challenges and develop alternative practices to meet the needs of students". Educative mentoring is a constructivist approach to teaching and learning in which both the mentors and the mentees both construct a "collaborative partnership" in order to "reconstruct practice" and "transform student learning" (Langdon and Ward, 2015, p. 243). Educative mentoring implies that great care needs to be taken in mentor selection and training in order to avoid the crystallization of relationships and fossilization of behaviours. In their paper, which was built using data from a pilot programme, Langdon and Ward (2015) reinforced the need for mentor professional development which should be implemented over time to be effective.

Conclusion

From this meta-synthesis, it can be concluded that the collective authors of the manuscripts in this journal bring clarity to the field, recognize the foundations and processes of mentoring, identify the criteria to develop and implement successful mentoring relationships by examining the relational aspects of mentoring and the power dynamics within this process, and propose new mentoring models that help transform human beings and relationships.

These authors have contributed to the advancement of the field, challenging the status quo by developing forms of mentoring that break from the traditional dyadic and hierarchical relationships (e.g. Butler *et al.,* 2013; Godden *et al.*, 2014;

Nahmad-Williams and Taylor, 2015) and by introducing new language and concepts (e.g. judgementoring; Hobson and Malderez, 2013). The authors of the papers reviewed have also contributed to the field of mentoring by dealing with subjects which are often left unresearched (e.g. protégé mindset; Searby, 2014) and seeking to foster new research that will create a stronger research base and enhanced mentoring practice.

A final outcome of this review is a set of recommendations for the editors of the IJMCE as they continue on the mission to share information and improve the manner in which mentoring is conceived, practised and researched. The recommendations focus on potential future research studies and expanding the journal's scope.

This literature review has resulted in the author identifying further areas of development for the journal, which are offered as possible future publications. One such special issue might focus on what those working with mentoring in education can learn from other professions. Context and policy influences on mentoring are both essential areas of research that seem to have received little attention in the papers published in the IJMCE. A special issue on the development of mentoring models in countries that do not have mentoring traditions, or on comparative studies between countries with different cultural approaches to power, are other areas of development for the journal. Studies in underrepresented areas such as Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, the Pacific or Southern Europe, research on the unintended consequences — both benefits and negative implications, and the

importance of mentor preparation are other suggested areas of further development for the journal.

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