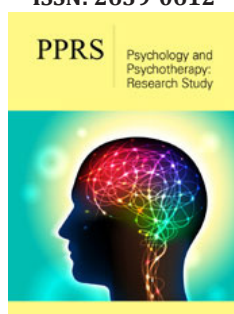# Benefits of Mentoring for School Principals

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Mini Review

Various forms of professional insertion programs, including those inspired by mentoring, have been developed in professional fields (e.g., entrepreneurial, organizational, etc.). The main goal of these programs is to support beginners in their new functions. Mentoring is considered as an important source of learning for new entrepreneurs, as well as contributing to experience, relationships with colleagues, and self-learning [1]. Mentoring can lead to many areas of professional growth for novice entrepreneurs that will be transferred within the organization, such as development of management skills, development of reflective practice in different situations (conflict or other), as well as improved decision-making processes [2]. For St Jean [3], a novice entrepreneur who has been supported by a mentor enjoys various advantages: development of knowledge and skills, reduction of professional isolation, construction of professional identity, etc.

Guay et al. [4] define mentoring as a means of consolidating the mentee's professional identity and making a successful transition into the workplace. Lusignan [5] emphasizes the relational aspect of mentoring as "a form of professional insertion by which an experienced person supports a junior person, through a cooperative relationship, in a transition to a new reality and in his or her learning towards the development of his or her personal and professional potential" (p.45-46). During mentoring, the mentee builds his or her professional identity and leadership model through interaction with other experienced leaders [6]. Derue and Ashford [7] indicate that the mentor is a model who ensures the development of the mentee's identity. When mentees feel protected and supported in their actions, they believe in their abilities, work on their leadership, and develop through mentoring. By observing their model (the mentor), the new leader (the mentee) begins to appropriate similar reactions and acquire the necessary skills for successful integration into the job [8,9].

According to Rhodes & Fletcher [10], mentoring can improve emotional well-being, strengthen social relationships, and increase cognitive skills and identity development. Dubois et al. [11] highlight benefits such as self-perception (better self-esteem) and the mentee's sense of effectiveness. In a motivational approach to mentoring, Brodeur et al. [12] identify three benefits to a mentoring relationship: 1) a sense of efficacy, 2) a sense of belonging, and 3) a sense of autonomy. St Jean [1] focuses on cognitive and emotional learning as benefits resulting from a mentoring relationship.

School Principals

Researchers have long been interested in the complex and demanding nature of the school principals' job. Based on the importance of mentoring for the novice entrepreneur, it becomes essential to understand this relationship and its benefits for new school principals. For school principals, mentoring refers to a relationship between a qualified, experienced principal and a new principal to help this individual make the transition to school management [13]. According to Mullen and Cairns [14], official programs for school principals (novices) must

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include not only an academic component, but also a practical component (e.g., mentoring, internships, training workshops). New principals require continuous support, supervision and professional guidance [15] to allow them to acquire practical and necessary skills for the job. Relational practices for school principals are considered through a range of hierarchical relationships (support and supervisory roles), professional relationships (experience sharing roles), technical relationships (role of assisting principals' activities) and personal relationships (individual coaching roles of principals) [16].

Relationship Practices Through Mentoring

Based on different models and the literature, Hadchiti et al. [17] developed a mentoring relationship practices model based on five relationship practices experienced by school principals during mentoring (MRPP): coaching, supervision, counselling, tutoring and professional guidance. Coaching is used to strengthen management capacities [18] and aims to develop managerial skills of new leaders [19]. Professional guidance concerns training and professional integration [20] and takes place in a new situation to respond to specific needs. Counselling fulfills a purpose of mentoring related to psychological and personal support. It takes the form of support and guidance [21]. Tutoring is defined as "a helping relationship between two people for the acquisition of know-how and integration into work" [22]. New school principals receive tutoring through exchanges of professional [23]. Supervision comprised two characteristics: Assessment and understanding of professional acts [24]. Supervision is linked to performance assessment of principals, and it is exercised when the situation is deemed appropriate [25].

Benefits of Mentoring for School Principals

Based on the MRPP model [17], school principals responded to two open-ended questions:Q1-How can mentoring benefit school principals? Q2-What are the personal and professional benefits that the mentoring relationship has brought to you? Content analysis technique was used and consisted of categorizing the various positions or attitudes reflected in the responses, searching for information, and identifying its meaning to enable a quantified presentation of the results [26]. Table 1 presents the results of the two questions.

Table 1: Benefits of mentoring (MRPP model) for school principals.

Model of Hadchiti et al. [17]	Mentoring Relationship Benefits	Personal Benefits	Professional Benefits
Coaching	Personal self-efficacy	Maintenance of emotional well-being	Development of managerial skills and leadership
Supervision	Personal reflection	Self-evaluation	Clarifying work-related goals, feedback and evaluation of completed tasks
Counseling	Understanding the emotional dimensions	Managing stress, breaking isolation, guidance and emotional support	Managing conflict in the workplace
Tutoring	Acceptance of feedback	Social and emotional learning	Acquisition of knowledge in school management
Professional guidance	Capacity to make the right decision	Managing emotions at work	Facilitating early integration into the workplace, facilitating networking and access to experts

The content analysis revealed the changes that mentoring can have at the professional (leadership, decision making, networking, etc.) and personal level (self-confidence, breaking isolation, motivation, etc.). A link is identified between the model of MRPP [17] and the emotional competencies in terms of personal benefits. Motivation is the most important benefit for coaching, followed by the development of school management skills. Benefits from professional coaching are reflected by integration into the job (key to success), followed by the development of social contacts (facilitating networking and access to experts). For counselling, personal support through guidance and emotional support in various situations are the most important benefits. These personal and emotional benefits demonstrate the importance of being listened to and supported in difficult times. The personal and professional benefits of tutoring concern the notion of learning and training for school management. Finally, for supervision, personal reflection emerges as a benefit. However, the results identified some drawbacks for mentoring. School principals identified an important aspect that can negatively affect mentoring. The role of the mentor can also have a negative influence when the mentor is not available or if trust is not established. If the mentee is left alone or is unable to maintain a relationship with his or her mentor, then mentoring becomes a disadvantage for the mentee's development. It turns out that a successful mentoring relationship depends largely on the mentor-who is the expert and the model for the mentee.

Conclusion

This research indicated the numerous benefits of mentoring for school principals that emerge according to the model on relationship practices of Hadchiti [27]. To achieve personal and professional benefits school principals need a context of trust. Mentors are the guide that help mentees to succeed. By the quality of their presence and the ability to establish a positive relationship with the mentee, they will be able to help develop the mentee's professional, personal and emotional skills. Coaching and professional guidance are the most important benefits for school principals. They occur primarily at the start or midway through careers and help facilitate integration [28]. This research supports

the importance of mentoring for school principals in Quebec. Future research is needed to explore the role of the mentor, as well as the qualities necessary to succeed in this mandate with the mentee.

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