Mentoring

Background

The summary below presents the research evidence on mentoring in the Arab World context.

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit focuses on impact on outcomes for learners; it presents an estimate of the average impact of mentoring on learning progress, based on the synthesis of a large number of quantitative studies from around the world.

This page offers a summary and analysis of individual studies on mentoring in the Arab world. In contrast to the Toolkit it includes studies which do not estimate impact, but instead investigate the implementation of interventions and how they are perceived by school leaders, teachers and students using a range of research methods. This information is valuable for school leaders and teachers interested in finding out more about particular examples of mentoring interventions that have been delivered in the Arab world.

Summary of the research in the Arab World

Research on mentoring in the Arab world highlighted its positive effects on both mentors and mentees. From an Islamic perspective, mentoring was viewed as "engaging in good deeds towards others" عمل الخير, and it was one of the main reasons many mentors joined mentoring programs (Baroudi & David, 2020). Individuals who were involved in the mentoring practice showed self-confidence development, growth of knowledge, and positive social relationships (Baroudi & David, 2020; O'Sullivan, 2017). Particularly, females in conservative Arabic societies found comfort and security when they sought mentors support. Sharing their challenges with female mentors provided students with skills and confidence to overcome their problems and helped them build trusting relationships and stronger friendships (Baroudi & David, 2020).

While school-based mentoring could provide a wide range of benefits for K-12 students such as reducing student's anxiety and allowing for knowledge sharing, little is known in the Arab world. Most of the evidence-based data was mostly gathered from university students, preservice, and novice teachers. Hence, studies that investigated mentoring at the university level showed development of adult students' leadership, problem solving and decision-making skills (Baroudi & David, 2020; O'Sullivan, 2017). Not only that but mentoring programs supported students at the undergraduate level to become familiar with the university campus and its facilities, to receive guidance on the right course, and were provided emotional support (Aderibigbe et al., 2015).

The Teaching and Learning Toolkit focuses solely on mentoring interventions where the target of the mentoring is pupils. Mentoring was also investigated among teachers aiming to empower novice teachers and guide them in reflecting on and evaluating their own practices. In a multi-case study conducted by Wyatt and Arnold (2012) in Oman, it was found out that teachers mentees took greater control over their own professional growth. They were able to reflect about their teaching, share their experiences, and relate classroom practice to theories. In a similar study, Melki, Bouzid, and Fathloun (2018) revealed that mentoring preservice teachers in Tunisia offered them with opportunities for self-reflection, trying out various teaching methods, and making independent, autonomous decisions. Furthermore, mentoring increased their job satisfaction, effectiveness and

motivation towards teaching. All these benefits are expected to happen if the mentoring process considers teachers' learning needs, challenges, concerns, and provides the kind of support needed by new teachers (Ibrahim, 2012). As for existing teachers, mentoring offered them a myriad of teaching and learning strategies that helped them implement student- centered learning activities inside the classroom. All this helped increase student participation and engagement.

Mentoring was also regarded as a standard that should be included when designing an educational leadership program for training school principals. Providing principals with mentoring experience and having them work side by side, principal to principal provided them with several opportunities fundamental for the development of their leadership and management skills. These principals experienced a real-world example of day to day principalship and shared leadership that being forth new solutions to challenges faced by their schools, and were able to better understand their job expectations (Alansari, 2012). Moreover, mentoring was considered as a key sustainability factor for universities because of the strong relationships it helps build between students and their faculty mentors. It also created a bridge between the K–12 system and higher education. This is mainly due to the peer-mentoring practice that the university students provide to younger students at K–12 (O'Sullivan, 2017).

Overall, in the Arab region, there is still insufficient research and validation of mentoring programs in schools and higher education. Mentors and mentees are not well aware of their roles and of the critical importance of mentoring sessions to their personal development and to the transition, success, and retention of first-year students and new teachers in schools (Aderibigbe et al., 2015).

Summary:

The evidence of mentoring programs directed at pupils in schools in the Arab world is limited. The evidence that does exist mainly focuses on outcomes other than attainment and of older students attending university. Interviews with mentoring participants show that mentoring programs are regarded as supportive environments for students. Particularly, in the Arab world, female students found that being mentored by another female helped them overcome their learning challenges and increased their self-confidence.

Some programs in the Arab world have explored mentoring of teachers (the global evidence summarized in the Toolkit focuses on mentoring of pupils). Teachers in these studies reported that the programs helped them to self-reflect on their teaching strategies and develop their job effectiveness. Individuals engaged in the mentoring activity showed an improvement on their leadership skills. A survey of school Principals in Kuwait found that Principals reported that mentoring improved their leadership and management skills that were deemed necessary to overcome the day-to day principalship issues. It also strengthened the relationships between students and their faculty and created a bridge between schools and universities.

References

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Search Terms

Mentor; Mentoring, Role models, Coaching (Performance), Education Level: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, High Schools, Junior High Schools, Kindergarten, Middle Schools, Preschool Education, Primary Education, Secondary Education

Databases searched

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