

Mentorship Engagement Programs: Stories of Novice Teachers

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Abstract. This study explored the lived experiences of novice teachers in mentorship engagement programs within the Kapalong West District, Division of Davao del Norte. Ten beginning teachers participated through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, utilizing a phenomenological approach to uncover their experiences, coping mechanisms, and insights. Thematic analysis revealed three major themes related to their experiences: supporting novice teachers, fostering professional growth, and improving job satisfaction and emotional resilience. In addressing mentorship challenges, participants employed coping strategies such as building strong relationships with mentors, seeking continuous feedback, and developing emotional regulation and resilience. Additionally, the study highlighted key insights for educational management, including the importance of structured mentorship programs, long-term teacher retention strategies, and tailored mentoring approaches. Anchored in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, Lave and Wenger's Situated Learning Theory, and Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory, the findings underscore how observation, authentic engagement, and reflective practices contribute to professional development. The study concludes that mentorship engagement programs play a vital role in helping novice teachers thrive, build their professional identities, and sustain their commitment within a collaborative learning community.

KEY WORDS

1. Mentorship Engagement Programs 2. Stories 3. Novice Teachers

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1. Introduction

The early phase of teaching is often marked by a steep learning curve, where new teachers grapple with the complexities of classroom management, curriculum planning, and student engagement. Amid these challenges, collaboration with experienced colleagues and peers can be a pivotal factor in building expertise and fostering professional growth. This study aimed to understand how novice educators engage with collaborative practices, develop expertise through peer interactions, and build their professional identities within a community of practice. This study is significant because the

early stages of teaching are critical for shaping professional growth and addressing challenges that can influence teacher retention. In Australia, novice teachers face disparities in access to professional learning communities (PLCs) across urban and rural settings. Urban schools tend to have more established PLCs that facilitate collaboration, whereas rural and remote schools struggle with limited resources and isolation. This gap makes it difficult for new teachers to engage in collaborative expertise and develop the necessary skills for effective teaching (Roberts Casey, 2024). In the United Kingdom,

while collaborative professional development is encouraged, novice teachers often face challenges related to school cultures that prioritize individual performance over team learning. Performance metrics and accountability can create competitive environments that undermine collaborative efforts, leaving novice teachers feeling unsupported in their development of collaborative expertise (Johnson Smythe, 2024). In Japan, heavy workloads and long working hours limit novice teachers' ability to participate in collaborative activities. There is a cultural emphasis on group harmony and collaborative practice, in reality, the demanding nature of teaching leaves little time for meaningful collaboration. As a result, novice teachers struggle to engage in professional dialogue and collaborative planning, which are essential for building expertise (Yamada Tanaka, 2024). One of the primary gaps identified is the lack of structured and sustainable mentoring programs that facilitate the transition of novice teachers into collaborative communities. While the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines specifically in Metro Manila has initiated the Teacher Induction Program (TIP), implementation is inconsistent across regions, leading to varying levels of support for novice teachers. Without experienced mentors to guide them, many new teachers feel isolated and struggle to engage in meaningful collaboration (Navarro et al., 2022). The establishment of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is a vital component for fostering collaborative expertise, yet many schools in the Philippines lack functional PLCs. PLCs exist in name; they often lack the depth and structure needed for professional dialogue and peer learning. In many cases, meetings are focused on administrative tasks rather than professional growth, limiting opportunities for novice teachers to build collaborative skills (Sanchez Garcia, 2023). Cultural factors also play a significant role in shaping collaborative practices. In the Philippines, the traditional

hierarchical structure within schools often discourages open dialogue between novice and experienced teachers. Filipino teachers tend to be more deferential to authority, which can hinder collaborative exchanges. Novice teachers may feel uncomfortable expressing their ideas or seeking support, which limits their engagement in collaborative practices and impedes the development of collaborative expertise (De Guzman Villanueva, 2021). In Cagayan de Oro City, Northern Mindanao, significant gaps were identified in the support systems available to novice teachers, particularly in the areas of classroom management, time management, and adaptation to learner diversity. Despite the presence of mentorship programs, the study revealed inconsistencies in their implementation, with many novice teachers reporting limited access to well-trained and committed mentors. This gap in structured guidance left many new teachers to navigate classroom challenges independently, often resorting to informal peer support or self-directed learning in (Felisilda et al., 2024). In Panabo City, Davao Del Norte, several significant gaps were identified in the professional development experiences of novice teachers under the National Educators Academy of the Philippines (NEAP) programs. One key gap identified is the lack of contextual relevance in training content, which often does not align with the real-life classroom challenges faced by beginning teachers, such as overcrowded classrooms, diverse learner needs, and limited teaching materials. Novice teachers reported that the trainings were too theoretical and did not offer practical strategies that could be readily applied in their specific teaching environments. Another gap is the absence of sustained mentorship and post-training support, leaving new teachers without adequate guidance as they attempt to implement unfamiliar instructional methods. It is also noted the lack of personalized or differentiated professional development, as NEAP programs tended to use a standardized approach

that overlooked the varying levels of readiness and capacity among novice educators. Further, no formal feedback mechanisms were in place to track teacher progress or challenges after attending NEAP sessions, leading to feelings of isolation and under preparedness among new teachers. These gaps point to a pressing need for professional development programs that are not only content-rich but also mentorship-integrated, context-sensitive, and responsive to the evolving needs of novice teachers in the Philippine public education system (Gonio Bauyt, 2024). Furthermore, novice teachers face unique challenges in developing collaborative expertise, influenced by regional contexts and educational settings. This review explores the gaps and issues related to the engagement of novice teachers in collaborative learning communities, mentorship programs, and professional development opportunities (Fernandez Balite, 2021). Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are crucial for fostering collaborative expertise, yet many novice teachers in Davao del Norte have limited access to functional PLCs. Some schools have established PLCs, participation is often inconsistent due to a lack of support from school leaders and insufficient time allocated for collaborative activities. This creates a barrier for novice teachers who need structured support to engage in professional dialogues and peer learning. Hence,

considering all the existing issues on the engagement to mentorship programs, the research opted to address these issues requires a concerted effort to create supportive environments that prioritize collaborative professional learning and provide novice teachers with the resources and time necessary to thrive.

1.1. Purpose of the Study—The study was on the phenomenological inquiry where it explored on how novice teachers perceive, experience, and interpret their participation in collaborative learning communities, mentoring programs, and other professional development initiatives designed to foster collaborative expertise. By emphasizing their personal narratives, the study aimed to illuminate how these teachers construct meaning around their roles in collaborative settings, how they experience support, and the impact of these experiences on their professional growth and development. Hence, this study aimed to provide a deeper understanding of how engagement to mentorship programs is cultivated among novice teachers and to identify strategies that can better support their professional growth in diverse educational settings.

1.2. Research Questions—In line with the purpose of exploring the experiences of teachers in mentorship engagement programs including the coping mechanisms with the challenges that they encountered, this study specifically sought answers to the following research questions:

- (1) What are the experiences of novice teachers in mentorship engagement programs?
- (2) How do novice teachers cope with the challenges encountered in mentoring engagement programs?
- (3) What educational insights can be drawn on mentorship engagement programs of novice teachers?

Mentorship engagement programs are crucial for novice teachers as they provide a structured support system to ease their transition into the teaching profession. This study may find significance to the following:

Novice Teachers – Individuals who are in

the early stages of their teaching careers, typically defined as those who have recently graduated from a teacher education program and are beginning their first few years of full-time teaching. This stage is characterized by the transition from theory to practice, where novice teachers

face various challenges as they adapt to the complexities of classroom management, curriculum delivery, and student engagement. They often require guidance and support from experienced educators, mentors, and professional development programs to build their confidence, refine their instructional strategies, and develop their professional identities.

*1.3. Review of Significant Literature—*This section synthesizes literature on mentorship engagement programs for novice teachers, emphasizing collaborative practices, coping mechanisms for professional challenges, and the administrative and instructional roles of mentorship in teacher development.

*1.3.1. Novice Teachers and Collaborative Engagement—*Participation in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) significantly enhances novice teachers' instructional skills, confidence, and professional identity. Through collaborative planning, peer sharing, and reflective dialogue, beginning teachers develop both pedagogical competence and a sense of community (Smith Jones, 2021; Johnson Smith, 2021).

Mentorship-facilitated collaboration—such as co-teaching and joint lesson planning—was found to increase teacher competence and help novice educators navigate early teaching challenges (Roberts et al., 2022). Collaborative interactions also strengthen professional identity, enabling teachers to define their philosophies and refine their instructional approaches (Lee Chen, 2023).

Student outcomes also benefit from teacher collaboration. Research demonstrates that classrooms led by novice teachers engaged in peer collaboration show higher student engagement and academic performance (Garcia Torres, 2024; Kim et al., 2023; Chang Hu, 2021). Collaborative environments foster innovation, differentiated instruction, and a culture of responsiveness to student needs (Williams et al., 2022; Garcia Tan, 2023; Roberts Lee, 2024).

However, sustaining these practices requires

administrative and institutional backing. Kim Ocampo (2022) stressed that school leadership and shared responsibility are critical to embedding collaboration in school culture.

*1.3.2. Coping with Collaboration Barriers—*Despite the benefits, novice teachers face considerable obstacles to engaging in collaborative practices. Time constraints, limited planning periods, and heavy workloads restrict meaningful interaction with colleagues (Patel Ramirez, 2024; Johnson Patel, 2021).

Lack of administrative support, including inadequate resources and minimal encouragement, further inhibits collaboration (Garcia et al., 2022). In some schools, cultural resistance and individualistic mindsets hinder novice teachers from forming professional networks (Roberts Lee, 2023).

Another barrier is the absence of targeted professional development focused on collaborative skills. Without these, novice teachers struggle to build peer relationships and adapt to team-based instruction (Nguyen Torres, 2024). Additionally, differing teaching philosophies between experienced and beginning teachers can lead to miscommunication or reluctance to collaborate (Chang Hu, 2022).

*1.3.3. Mentorship and Educational Management—*Mentorship programs play a pivotal role in novice teacher support. Structured mentorship provides emotional guidance, instructional feedback, and a pathway to collaborative engagement (Garcia Li, 2022; Smith Johnson, 2021). Through co-teaching and joint reflection, mentorship strengthens classroom readiness and professional belonging (Lee Patel, 2022).

Studies reveal that effective mentorship increases teacher retention, reducing early career burnout by fostering support systems (Garcia et al., 2023). It also enhances cultural competence, with mentors modeling inclusive practices that help novice teachers meet diverse learner needs (Robinson Ocampo, 2024).

However, the success of mentorship de-

depends on mentor availability, training quality, and administrative consistency. Weak implementation limits its impact (Nguyen Torres, 2022). Addressing these constraints is essential to ensure that mentorship not only develops instructional capacity but also sustains collaborative expertise.

1.4. Synthesis—Mentorship programs are structured initiatives pairing experienced mentors with novice professionals to foster skill development, provide emotional support, and promote career advancement. In education, these programs aim to bridge the gap between pre-service training and the demands of teaching. Research highlights improved professional growth, confidence, teaching efficacy, and teacher retention. Mentorship provides a supportive environment where novice teachers can discuss challenges, learn best practices, and receive constructive feedback. Despite their benefits, mentorship programs are not without challenges, the researcher felt the need for further research to explore the experiences of novice teachers in their engagement to mentoring programs and their coping mechanisms with the challenges. Addressing this gap could provide valuable insights for educational leaders aiming to improve the professional development programs for teachers. This study on mentorship engagement programs is crucial for understanding their impact, identifying areas for improvement, and ensuring they meet the needs of novice teachers effectively. By providing evidence-based insights, such research strengthens the teaching profession, improves teacher retention, and hence enhances student outcomes.

1.5. Theoretical Lens—This study is anchored on Social Learning Theory of Bandura (1977). Bandura's Social Learning Theory emphasizes learning through observation, imitation, and modeling. Novice teachers can observe experienced mentors, model their practices, and learn through guided experiences.

Novice teachers learn best practices by observing their mentors' teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and interactions with students. Mentors act as role models, providing feedback and scaffolding to help mentees refine their skills. This is also supported by Situated Learning Theory by Lave Wenger (1991). This theory posits that learning occurs in a social context and is embedded within authentic, real-world activities. Mentorship programs often create a "community of practice" where novice teachers learn by participating in meaningful teaching experiences. Novice teachers become part of a learning community, engaging in collaborative problem-solving and shared practices. Mentors guide mentees through situated learning experiences such as lesson planning, student assessment, and reflective discussions. Further, this deals on the perspective of engagement to collaborative expertise as a way to reveal stories or insights of novice teachers. It is pillared on the Transformative Learning Theory developed by Jack Mezirow (1991). This theory is particularly relevant in adult education, focusing on how adults learn and change through. Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory posits that learning occurs through critical reflection and dialogue, which is essential for teachers, especially novices. A study by Kim and Chang (2024) examined how collaborative experiences foster transformative learning among novice teachers. The researchers found that engaging in reflective discussions with peers led to deeper understanding and changes in teaching practices, highlighting the importance of collaboration in transformative learning. Teachers were able to look at alternative provided that their peers in as well as pondering their own audacity and practices as a result of these exchanges. Their approach to classroom management, instructional tactics, and pupil engagement gone through huge changes as an outcome, resulting in transformative learning. Thus, the study signifies the concept that

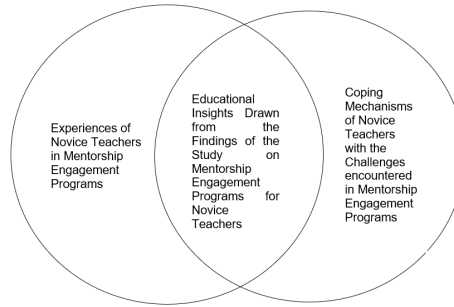


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

collaboration is not only helpful but also essential in helping novice educators in review and reshaping their teaching philosophies and behaviors, making it an essential part of favorable teacher development initiatives.

2. Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design, participants, data collection, and analysis procedures used to explore the experiences and coping mechanisms of novice teachers in mentorship programs. It also describes the researcher's role, ethical considerations, and steps taken to ensure the study's trustworthiness. The methods were carefully selected to capture authentic insights from novice teachers and support the study's overall purpose.

2.1. Philosophical Assumptions of the Study—This study is grounded in philosophical assumptions that informed the collection, analysis, and interpretation of qualitative data. Understanding these assumptions was essential in framing how the experiences of novice teachers were explored, interpreted, and presented. Rooted in qualitative inquiry, the study followed the belief that knowledge is co-constructed through human experience and interaction. As noted by Khalifa and Khalifa (2024), these assumptions encompass ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological perspectives, which shaped how the research was designed and carried out in the context of mentorship experiences among beginning teachers.

Ontology – Ontology refers to beliefs about the nature of reality. In this study, it was assumed that reality is multiple and subjective, shaped by individual experiences. Following the constructivist view of Newman (2019), reality was understood through the personal nar-

ratives of novice teachers who participated in mentorship programs. Their lived experiences, perspectives, and coping strategies were treated as valid and rich sources of data. By listening to their stories and analyzing their responses thematically, I acknowledged the diverse realities of beginning teachers in Kapalong West District. I took deliberate steps to avoid bias and maintained authenticity in the interpretation of their voices, ensuring their realities were represented truthfully and without distortion.

Epistemology – Epistemology concerns how knowledge is acquired and the relationship between the researcher and participants. As Crotty and Denzin (in Khalifa, 2023) emphasized, knowledge in qualitative research is derived from close, meaningful interaction with participants. In this study, I engaged directly with novice teachers to understand their experiences and perspectives regarding mentorship. This close researcher-participant relationship was essential to generate insights into the chal-

allenges they faced and the coping strategies they adopted. Phenomenology, as both a philosophical stance and methodological approach, allowed me to gain deep understanding through the participants' firsthand accounts, collected in the settings where they work and live.

Axiology – Axiology pertains to the role of values in the research process. According to Creswell (2019), qualitative researchers are transparent about their biases and ethical responsibilities. In this study, I acknowledged the value-laden nature of the data and recognized that each participant's contribution carried personal significance. I was careful to respect the confidentiality and dignity of every response, interpreting the data in a way that honored the participants' voices. My own values centered on ethical conduct, respect for participants, and integrity in reporting guided every stage of the research process.

Rhetoric – Rhetoric refers to the style and tone used in presenting qualitative research. As Creswell and Poth (2020) describe, qualitative research often employs a personal, narrative-driven style. In this study, I used first-person language to reflect my active role as the researcher and to present the experiences of novice teachers in a way that was both accessible and authentic. The use of narratives, participant quotations, and thematic storytelling helped bring to light the emotional, cognitive, and professional dimensions of their mentorship journeys. This approach reinforced the study's goal of capturing the human essence behind their lived experiences.

2.2. Qualitative Assumptions—Every research study operates on a set of foundational assumptions that inform how data is collected, interpreted, and understood. In qualitative research, these assumptions guide the exploration of human experiences and give context to participants lived realities. For this study, the focus was on understanding how novice teachers in Kapalong West District navigated men-

torship programs and the strategies they employed to cope with associated challenges. As Barrick (2020) explains, in-depth interviews are essential tools in qualitative research because they allow researchers to gather comprehensive insights into participants' personal experiences and interpretations of their social environment. Hinton and Ryan (2019) similarly emphasize the importance of interviews in capturing detailed narratives across disciplines. In this study, I used in-depth interviews to explore how beginning teachers understood and experienced mentorship engagement within their schools. Neubauer, Witkop, and Varpio (2020) note that phenomenology is especially suited for inquiries seeking to understand human experiences at a deeper level. To engage in phenomenological research is to examine the meanings people attach to their lived realities, often by uncovering the emotional and cognitive layers beneath surface-level experiences. This approach required me to acknowledge and reflect on my own assumptions and biases, thereby enhancing the study's credibility. The phenomenological approach, as described by Lester (1999, as cited in Bhandari, 2020), is rooted in capturing individuals' perspectives while setting aside preconceived notions, a process known as "bracketing." The aim is to prioritize the voices of participants and their subjective interpretations. This method values context, language, and meaning over numerical data and allows for a more nuanced understanding of personal experiences. In this research, phenomenology enabled an exploration of how novice teachers perceived mentorship, how they dealt with its challenges, and how they made sense of their early teaching journeys. In practice, I conducted extensive one-on-one interviews with teachers who had participated in mentorship programs. The data analysis followed phenomenological procedures, beginning with horizontalization, identifying significant statements from transcripts, grouping these into

thematic clusters, and transforming them into broader psychological and experiential insights. These insights were then synthesized into rich textual and structural descriptions to illustrate what participants experienced and how they experienced it. Ultimately, the final report aimed to convey the essence of mentorship engagement from the novice teachers' perspectives. Despite the strengths of this approach, several challenges were encountered. Phenomenological research demands a strong grounding in its philosophical underpinnings and a rigorous commitment to bracketing personal biases. As the researcher, I had to continuously reflect on when and how to incorporate my interpretations without overshadowing the participants' voices. Qutoshi (2021) asserts that phenomenology allows researchers to closely examine lived experiences from the participants' point of view, fostering a deeper understanding of complex social realities. This process not only enhances the researcher's awareness of the phenomenon but also facilitates personal growth and greater sensitivity to the social practices under investigation. Phenomenology was chosen as the research design for this study because it allowed for an authentic and reflective investigation into the real-life experiences of novice teachers. Through their narratives, the study uncovered how they navigated mentorship engagement programs and revealed the coping strategies they employed in response to professional challenges during their early teaching years.

2.3. Design and Procedure—This study employed a qualitative research method using a phenomenological design to explore the lived experiences of novice teachers engaged in mentorship programs in the Kapalong West District, Division of Davao del Norte. Phenomenology, as a qualitative approach, focuses on exploring how individuals interpret and make sense of their personal experiences. According to Lester (2021), phenomenological research emphasizes studying experiences from the individ-

ual's perspective by "bracketing" preconceived assumptions and conventional ways of understanding. This method prioritizes subjectivity and the depth of individual insights, allowing for a rich interpretation of the meanings that participants attach to their experiences. Qutoshi (2021) affirms that data collection and analysis in phenomenological research occur concurrently to illuminate specific lived experiences and identify emerging themes. The goal is to broaden understanding, enhance reflective thinking, and articulate the essence of phenomena as perceived by the participants themselves. Phenomenology, therefore, serves as a powerful lens through which to explore the complex, contextual, and deeply personal nature of novice teachers' engagement in mentorship programs. This research relied on in-depth interviews as the primary method of data collection. Interviews offered a direct channel for participants to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in detail, providing the nuanced data needed to uncover the underlying themes and meanings of their mentorship involvement. As stated by Delve and Limpaecher (2022), interviews in phenomenological research grant access to in-depth knowledge and individual perspectives that cannot be easily captured through structured instruments alone. To address the challenge of limited accessibility and availability of some participants, structured questionnaires with open-ended questions were also employed. These allowed respondents with time constraints to share their insights in a reflective written format. The open-ended nature of the questions enabled participants to elaborate on their answers, thereby enriching the data collected. Questionnaires were particularly useful for reaching a broader number of respondents who could not be interviewed in person. Qualitative research, by its nature, seeks to uncover the "why" and "how" behind a phenomenon rather than to measure frequency or correlation. It focuses on meaning, interpretation, and depth

over breadth. As such, the study involved a relatively small, purposively selected group of participants who had firsthand experience with the mentorship process. This approach allowed for a focused and detailed exploration of the topic. Furthermore, qualitative data analysis took into account not only what participants said but also how they said it. Non-verbal cues such as tone of voice, pauses, and emphases were considered during interviews, offering deeper insight into participants' feelings and attitudes. These observations were noted during the transcription process and factored into the analysis. During the analytical phase, horizontalization was employed to extract significant statements from transcribed interviews. These were then organized into clusters of meaning and aligned with key psychological and phenomenological concepts. From these, a comprehensive textual and structural description of the lived experience was developed, revealing both what was experienced and how it was experienced by the participants. This led to the emergence of the essence of novice teachers' engagement in mentorship programs, as understood through their voices. This phenomenological design enabled a deeper understanding of novice teachers' perspectives, highlighted their coping mechanisms, and offered insights into how mentorship experiences shaped their early professional development. The study's findings are expressed in rich, descriptive narratives that reflect the subjective realities of the participants rather than objective generalizations.

2.4. Ethical Considerations—The ethical considerations for this study were carefully addressed to protect the rights, well-being, and dignity of the novice teacher-respondents involved in the mentorship programs in Kapalong West District. These principles guided the research process, ensuring that all participants were treated with respect and fairness throughout the study.

Social Value – This study carries signifi-

cant social value as it directly contributes to the professional development of novice teachers participating in mentorship programs within Kapalong West District, Division of Davao del Norte. By thoroughly documenting and analyzing the experiences and coping mechanisms of these novice teachers, the study offers rich, contextualized insights into how mentorship programs influence their growth and resilience in the early years of teaching. The findings are crucial because they highlight both the strengths and challenges faced by novice teachers, which can inform the design and improvement of mentorship programs to be more responsive to their actual needs. Strengthening these support systems can lead to more confident, competent teachers who are better equipped to handle classroom demands, thereby enhancing teaching effectiveness. Improved mentorship and support for novice teachers have a ripple effect that benefits learners as well. When teachers receive appropriate guidance and develop effective coping strategies, their instructional quality improves, contributing to better student engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes. This helps address educational disparities by providing learners with more consistent and quality instruction. Moreover, the social value of this research extends beyond individual teachers and their immediate classrooms. By providing evidence-based recommendations, the study can guide policymakers, school administrators, and education stakeholders in crafting policies and programs that prioritize mentorship and teacher support as vital components of educational development. Ultimately, this contributes to the overall improvement of school performance and the quality of education within the district and potentially similar contexts elsewhere. The study's social value lies in its potential to foster sustainable teacher development, which in turn positively impacts student achievement and strengthens the local education system, making a meaningful contribution to the community's

educational advancement.

Informed Consent – To uphold ethical standards, informed consent was secured from each novice teacher participating in the study. This process involved clearly explaining the study’s objectives, methods, potential risks, and benefits in a straightforward manner, ensuring that respondents fully understood their involvement. Teachers were assured that their participation was completely voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without any negative repercussions. All consent agreements were properly documented in compliance with institutional guidelines. I also responded to any questions or concerns promptly, honoring the participants’ autonomy and reinforcing mutual respect.

Vulnerability of Research Participants – Recognizing that novice teachers are the primary sources of firsthand information, I took care to ensure their accessibility and comfort during the study. Participants were contacted through reliable means for clarifications or additional support. The research environment was intentionally made safe and supportive to avoid any emotional distress or discomfort during interviews or data collection. This sensitivity protected the teachers’ psychological well-being and respected their vulnerability throughout the process.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety – Given the nature of the study, there was a potential risk of emotional discomfort when novice teachers reflected on their challenges and coping mechanisms within mentorship programs. To minimize this, questions were thoughtfully crafted to be respectful and culturally sensitive, avoiding any form of insensitivity or coercion. Confidentiality measures were rigorously applied, anonymizing all data to protect participant identities. The study’s benefits include providing the education sector with a deeper understanding of novice teachers’ needs and effective support strategies, which could lead to improved mentorship frameworks. For participants, sharing their

experiences offered a reflective opportunity that may enhance their professional growth and engagement with their teaching roles. Safety protocols were strictly followed, ensuring that all interactions whether in-person or virtual occurred in secure settings. The research was conducted under the supervision of an academic ethics committee, ensuring adherence to the highest standards of ethical practice to protect respondents and maintain research integrity.

Privacy and Confidentiality – Compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 was paramount throughout the study to safeguard the personal information of respondents. All data collected were securely stored and accessed only by authorized individuals. Personal identifiers were removed or coded during analysis and reporting to maintain anonymity. The information provided by the participants was used exclusively for research purposes and was not shared with third parties without explicit permission. Participants were informed about these privacy protections to build trust and transparency in how their data would be handled.

Justice – The principle of justice was upheld by ensuring fair and equitable selection of participants, with no group disproportionately burdened or excluded. The study aimed to provide equal opportunities for all respondents to benefit from the insights generated, which could inform mentoring practices across similar contexts in the education sector. Findings from this research are intended to be shared widely within the local educational community so that all stakeholders, not just study participants, can access and utilize the knowledge gained.

Transparency – Transparency was maintained by providing clear and open communication about the study’s goals, procedures, risks, and benefits through verbal explanations and written documents. All informational materials were presented in language easily understood by the participants to ensure informed decision-making. The results of the study were made

accessible to the respondents and relevant educational authorities to foster openness and to contribute positively to educational improvement efforts.

Qualification of the Researcher – As the researcher, I am fully qualified to undertake this study, having completed all academic requirements and successfully passed the comprehensive examination for my master’s degree. I possess the necessary physical, mental, emotional, and financial capacity to conduct the research responsibly. My solid background in educational research, methodology, and ethical practices, supported by a strong adviser-advisee collaboration, guarantees that the study was conducted competently and ethically. Additionally, my expertise in interdisciplinary teaching and curriculum development enables me to analyze the findings with depth and accuracy, ensuring the research contributes meaningfully to educational practice and policy.

Conflict of Interest – To preserve the integrity of this research, any potential conflicts of interest were proactively identified and managed. Funding sources were disclosed to all participants and stakeholders with assurances that these did not influence the research process or outcomes. I maintained an impartial stance, ensuring that data analysis and interpretations were strictly based on evidence and established educational theories. Regular peer reviews and audits of the study helped detect and address any conflicts promptly, thereby safeguarding the objectivity of the findings.

Adequacy of Facilities – The study was completed within the planned timeframe and supported by adequate resources and facilities. The research locations were chosen to be physically accessible and culturally respectful of the Kapalong West community. This inclusivity ensured that all participants felt comfortable and valued during data collection. Emergency protocols were established to manage any unexpected events, prioritizing the safety of both

respondents and research personnel. Ongoing monitoring of facilities ensured a conducive environment for high-quality data gathering.

Community Involvement – Community involvement was integral throughout the research process to ensure that the study remained relevant and beneficial to the local educational community in Kapalong West District. I respected the cultural traditions, values, and perspectives of the novice teachers and their communities. The study was conducted transparently, without deception at any stage from participant recruitment to data collection. I also expressed sincere gratitude for the enthusiastic participation and cooperation of all respondents, acknowledging their vital role in the success of this research.

2.5. Research Participants—The study involved ten (10) participants who were elementary grade teachers from five schools within Kapalong West District, Division of Davao Del Norte. These schools included Gabuyan Central Elementary School, Semong Elementary School, Tiburcia Elementary School, Bunawan Elementary School, and Pag-asa Elementary School. To qualify as participants, teachers needed to meet the following inclusion criteria: they must have served in their teaching role for a period ranging from one month up to three years, have been mentored by a master teacher, and be of any gender. Participants needed to be currently active in their teaching roles and willing to participate voluntarily in both in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. To ensure a diverse and comprehensive perspective, the selection included teachers across different grade levels and subject assignments, with balanced representation in terms of gender and educational background. Furthermore, participants were required to have had regular interactions with their mentors, such as a minimum frequency of monthly mentorship sessions, to provide meaningful insights into their experiences. Those with no prior disciplinary actions were preferred to maintain focus

on typical mentorship experiences. Participants for both the in-depth interviews (IDI) and focus group discussions (FGD) were chosen through purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling. This method ensured that participants were deliberately selected based on their relevance to the study's objectives, thus guaranteeing that the data collected would be rich, relevant, and authentic to the research focus.

2.6. Research Instrument—To gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences and coping mechanisms of novice teachers involved in mentorship programs in Kapalong West District, this study employed multiple qualitative data collection methods. These included audio-recorded, one-on-one unstructured interviews, focus group discussions, and comprehensive field notes. Each selected teacher participated in several interview sessions conducted over a span of four days, with each session lasting approximately one hour and fifteen minutes, providing ample time for reflection and detailed sharing of their mentorship experiences. A set of five open-ended questions was prepared to guide the unstructured interviews. These questions were carefully crafted to encourage novice teachers to openly discuss their personal encounters with mentorship, the challenges they faced, and the practical coping strategies they utilized within their teaching context. The questions were closely aligned with the study's main themes to maintain focus and ensure consistent data collection. Following the approach of Fuster-Guillén (2020), the in-depth interviews were designed to elicit rich, personal narratives that reveal how novice teachers perceive and make sense of their mentorship experiences. Unlike observational methods that capture actions as they occur, these interviews emphasized the teachers' subjective perspectives, emotions, and reflections regarding the support and guidance received from their mentors in navigating their early teaching careers. To complement the in-

dividual interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted to explore shared experiences and collective insights among novice teachers. Five teachers participated in individual interviews, while another five engaged in FGDs. According to Stewart and Shamdasani (2019), FGDs foster dynamic interaction where participants build on each other's ideas, providing a broader understanding of common mentorship challenges and effective coping mechanisms within the local teaching community. Krueger and Casey (2020) further highlight that group discussions reveal both individual opinions and collective viewpoints, enriching the overall qualitative findings of the study.

2.7. Role of the Researcher—In this study, my role as the researcher was to access and understand the thoughts, emotions, and lived experiences of the participants, particularly as they navigated the mentorship process as novice teachers. Given the personal and often sensitive nature of these reflections, I remained committed to ethical practices and the core mission of educational research: to uncover, disseminate, and apply meaningful knowledge that benefits both individual practitioners and institutional systems. As a facilitator and promoter of unbiased research, I conducted and guided in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with care and neutrality. I made conscious efforts to interpret participants' responses not through my personal lens but through the lens of existing literature and relevant studies. This approach ensured that bias was minimized, and the participants' authentic voices remained at the forefront. In my role as an expert in qualitative methods, I was committed to methodological rigor. With guidance from my research adviser and other professionals, I ensured that qualitative techniques were applied correctly. This involved proper execution of interviews, careful field observations, and thoughtful selection of artifacts, images, and journal excerpts. I also employed Environmental Triangulation

and Thematic Content Analysis to ensure credible and trustworthy results. As a data collector and keeper, I utilized multiple methods to accurately document participants' narratives, including handwritten notes and audio or video recordings. These recordings were transcribed verbatim to preserve the integrity of the data. Recognizing the sensitivity of the information shared, all collected data were securely stored to maintain confidentiality and uphold research ethics. Lastly, as a data analyst, I interpreted the data through the lens of the participants' perspectives. This process involved transcribing, coding, theming, and reading between the lines to uncover deeper meanings and patterns. I ensured that the voices of the participants were faithfully represented and that the findings were aligned with their realities. The results were organized around the research questions and supported by relevant literature. In the final presentation, I not only addressed the study's outcomes but also offered implications for educational policy and practice, providing valuable insights for the ongoing development of teacher support systems.

2.8. Data Collection—The process of data collection for this study followed a systematic approach to ensure ethical standards and thoroughness in exploring the experiences and coping mechanisms of novice teachers in mentorship programs within the Kapalong West District, Division of Davao Del Norte.

Securing Institutional Endorsement – In the second week of February 2025, I obtained an Ethics Compliance Certificate from the Dean of the Graduate School. This certification signified that the research adhered to institutional ethical standards and allowed the study to proceed.

Requesting Permission from the Schools Division Superintendent – During the third week of February 2025, formal communication was established with the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS) of Davao del Norte. A letter was submitted alongside the study's Chapters 1

and 2 and the research instrument, outlining the study's purpose, methodology, and criteria for participant selection. I waited the SDS's written approval before moving forward.

Coordinating with School Principals – Following the approval from the SDS, I reached out to the school heads of the five participating schools in Kapalong West District namely Gabuyan Central Elementary School, Semong Elementary School, Tiburcia Elementary School, Bunawan Elementary School, and Pag-asa Elementary School. Letters were delivered during the first week of March 2025, informing principals about the study's intent and procedures.

Securing Informed Consent from Participants – In the second week of March 2025, I personally met with the selected participants, novice teachers who met the inclusion criteria to explain the purpose of the study and their role in it. Participants were formally oriented about the process and signed informed consent forms, confirming their participation.

Conducting In-Depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions – Data collection through unstructured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions was carried out during the third and fourth weeks of March 2025. I used a prepared guide with open-ended questions aligned with study's themes. Participant profiles were collected, and conversations were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy during transcription. Detailed notes also taken. I actively listened and engaged with participants to foster a reflective and open environment. *Transcribing Interview Data* – In the first week of April 2025, the recorded conversations were transcribed verbatim. I carefully reviewed the recordings to ensure the accuracy of each participant's responses, preserving the authenticity of their narratives.

Data Coding and Thematization – During the second and third weeks of April 2025, I began the process of coding and categorizing the

transcribed data. Emerging themes were identified, and participants' responses were compared and analyzed to detect patterns, differences, and shared experiences. These themes formed the basis for the interpretation and discussion of findings, providing insight into how novice teachers coped with mentorship challenges and support mechanisms within their schools.

2.9. Data Analysis—To thoroughly interpret the data gathered from in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with novice teachers, this study employed thematic analysis, guided by Creswell Guetterman (2024) model of identifying themes. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to systematically explore the personal experiences and coping mechanisms of novice teachers involved in mentorship programs across the Kapalong West District. As explained by Chali et al (2022), themes in qualitative research are constructed by grouping together related codes to form meaningful categories that reflect significant ideas from the data.

Familiarization with the Data – I began by deeply immersing in the data. This involved listening to recorded interviews multiple times, reading through transcriptions carefully, and noting preliminary insights. This stage allowed me to become intimately familiar with the teachers' narratives, ensuring that emerging patterns were grounded in authentic participant voices.

Coding – Next, I systematically assigned codes to significant phrases, expressions, and responses from the participants. Each piece of data that related to the core research questions was labeled using brief, analytical tags. This step moved beyond mere summarization and aimed to capture both explicit content and underlying meaning. I then compiled all codes and relevant excerpts for further organization. **Searching for Themes** – Once the initial codes were created, they were analyzed for recurring patterns and grouped into broader thematic categories. These themes represented common

threads in the lived experiences of novice teachers and their mentorship journeys.

Reviewing Themes – At this stage, I critically examined the themes to ensure they accurately reflected the data. Themes were revised and refined by checking them against the full data set. The goal was to ensure coherence within themes and clear distinctions between them, confirming that they contributed meaningfully to answering the study's central questions.

Defining and Naming Themes – Each theme was then clearly defined to capture its core essence. I developed concise and descriptive labels that conveyed the significance of each thematic category.

Writing-Up – Finally, the results were organized into a comprehensive narrative. The write-up integrated direct quotations from participants to illustrate the themes, supported by the researcher's interpretation. The analysis was then contextualized with related literature, highlighting how the findings contribute to broader discussions on teacher mentorship and early-career support within the educational system of the Division of Davao del Norte. By following this detailed and rigorous approach, the study ensured that the insights gathered were authentic, credible, and rooted in the actual experiences of the participants. The thematic analysis process ultimately revealed rich, actionable findings that can inform policy and practice regarding mentorship programs for novice teachers in similar contexts. **Framework of Analysis** – This study utilized Framework Analysis, a qualitative data analysis approach well-suited for applied research, particularly in policy and program evaluation contexts. Given the study's focus on understanding novice teachers' experiences and coping mechanisms within mentorship programs, framework analysis provided a rigorous and systematic method to organize and interpret the data collected from teacher participants. Following the guidelines of Fuchs (2023) and Goldsmith (2021), the analysis proceeded

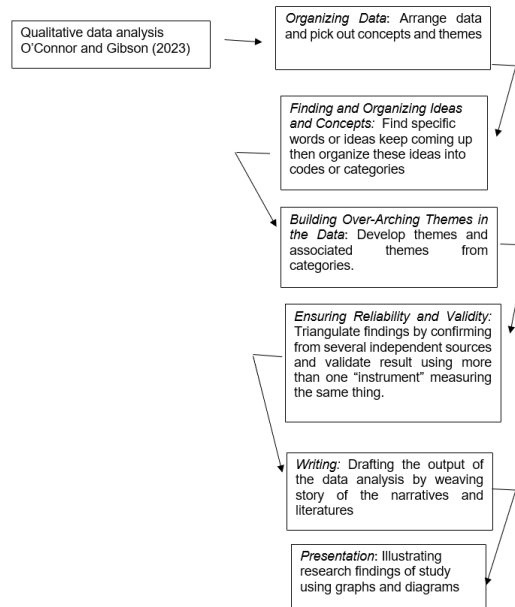


Fig. 2. Analytical Framework of the Study

through several key stages:

Organizing the Data – I first arranged the raw data into an accessible format, allowing a clear overview of responses by participant and topic. This organization facilitated thorough review and comparison across the different interview and focus group transcripts.

Identifying and Categorizing Ideas and Concepts – Recurring ideas, phrases, and key terms were identified throughout the data. These were then systematically grouped into codes or categories that reflected significant concepts relevant to novice teachers' mentorship experiences and coping strategies.

Developing Overarching Themes – The various categories were further synthesized into broader themes that captured deeper meanings within the data. Some categories were combined under central, overarching themes that represented key dimensions of the novice teachers lived experiences with mentorship programs.

Ensuring Reliability and Validity – To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher cross-checked the themes and categories against multiple data sources such as different participant interviews and focus group discussions and used multiple qualitative methods (e.g., audio recordings, field notes). This triangulation strengthened the validity and dependability of the analysis. I also completed the final stages of framework analysis by crafting a narrative that weaved together participant stories with relevant literature, and presenting the findings through thematic summaries supported by visual aids like charts and illustrations. While framework analysis offers a structured approach, it demands careful, ongoing attention to detail and flexibility, as emphasized by Ritchie and Spencer (1994, as cited in Goldsmith, 2021). The researcher remained committed to this systematic yet dynamic process throughout the study.

2.10. Trustworthiness of the Study—In qualitative research, traditional concepts like validity and reliability are often replaced by the broader notion of trustworthiness, which bet-

ter captures the quality and rigor of qualitative inquiry. Trustworthiness is composed of four key components: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These elements

are essential to ensure that the research findings are both meaningful and trustworthy, especially when such findings can inform policies that impact educational practices. For this study on novice teachers' mentorship experiences, credibility refers to how believable and accurate the research findings are, particularly the extent to which the participants' perspectives align with the researcher's interpretations. The study employed techniques such as member checking and peer debriefing to strengthen credibility, in line with the framework proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Enworo, 2023).

Transferability – Addresses the applicability of the findings to other contexts beyond Kapa-long West District. The researcher provided thick, detailed descriptions of the participants, settings, and mentorship programs to enable future users or researchers to judge whether the findings can apply to similar educational environments.

Dependability – It involves the consistency and repeatability of the study. Detailed doc-

umentation of the research process, including data collection methods and analytical steps, was maintained so that other researchers could replicate the study and expect to find comparable results.

Confirmability – Highlights the objectivity and neutrality of the research process. To uphold confirmability, the researcher maintained clear audit trails of the data and analysis and sought consensus with advisers and colleagues to ensure interpretations were grounded in the data rather than personal bias. Qualitative data analysis provides rich, nuanced insights into the lived experiences of novice teachers navigating mentorship challenges and coping mechanisms. However, it also presents challenges unique to qualitative methodologies, such as managing subjective interpretations and ensuring rigorous data analysis. Awareness and careful management of these challenges helped strengthen the overall trustworthiness of this study (Dye, 2021; Hendren et al., 2023; Ahmed, 2024).

3. Results and Discussion

This part of the study dealt with the research questions and their answers based on the participants' responses. The study explored the mentorship engagement programs, stories of novice teachers.

3.1. Experiences of Novice Teachers in Mentorship Engagement Programs—Mentorship engagement programs play a critical role in supporting novice teachers as they transition into the teaching profession. These programs provide guidance, professional development, and emotional support, helping new educators navigate the challenges of classroom management, instructional planning, and school culture. The experiences of novice teachers in mentorship engagement programs, focusing on key themes such as professional growth, emotional support, challenges encountered, and the impact of mentorship on teacher retention and effectiveness. This was supported by one of the most

significant benefits of mentorship engagement programs is their impact on teacher retention. In the United States, novice teachers who received mentorship support were 30 percent more likely to remain in the profession beyond their first five years compared to those without structured mentorship (Smith Johnson, 2021). Similarly, mentorship programs reduced burnout among new teachers by fostering a sense of belonging and professional identity. These findings suggest that effective mentorship programs can help mitigate teacher attrition by addressing early-career challenges (McDonald et al., 2023).

3.1.1. Supporting Novice Teachers—This support system encompasses tailored guidance,

individualized feedback, and targeted resources to address the specific needs and challenges faced by each teacher (Smith, 2023). Being a master teacher requires extensive pedagogical knowledge and refined teaching strategies acquired over years of experience. The foregoing results of the study were consistent with the findings made in Singapore highlighted that mentee who engaged in structured mentoring sessions improved their lesson planning, student engagement techniques, and assessment practices (Chen Wong, 2022). Likewise, the study's findings are also supported by the study of Osei Boateng (2020) in found that mentorship programs helped novice teachers gain confidence in using technology for instruction, which was particularly beneficial.

As I analyzed the narration from the lived experiences of teachers, P1 a new teacher, primarily sought mentorship to address classroom management challenges. Their experience involved regular "walk-throughs" in the mentor's class, gaining practical tips on setting rules, and learning to manage disruptive behavior, which significantly boosted their confidence (Johnson 2022). Thus, P2, also a first-year teacher, focused on leveraging mentorship to overcome difficulties in curriculum and lesson planning, particularly in creating engaging and differentiated activities. Their experience involved receiving structured feedback on lesson plans and guidance on designing appropriate assessments for diverse learners, accelerating their development as a planner (Davis 2021). According to Thompson and Rivera (2020) noted that their experience involved receiving structured feedback on lesson plans and guidance on designing appropriate assessments for diverse learners, which accelerated their development as a planner.

It can be gleaned from the responses of the participants that comparing these two teachers' profound endorsements of mentorship engagement programs, P9 views them as a lifeline

for managing emotional stress and overwhelm. This teacher found a safe, non-judgmental space to share frustrations and received practical self-care advice, significantly boosting their mental well-being and teaching effectiveness. In contrast, P10 highlights mentorship's role in a teacher's holistic development, specifically addressing the challenge of understanding and meeting the diverse needs of students, including those with special needs or varied cultural backgrounds. P10's experience involved learning differentiated and culturally responsive teaching strategies, gaining confidence in fostering an inclusive classroom. This corroborates Kumar Sharma's (2022) noted that ineffective mentor-mentee pairings hindered meaningful engagement, as some mentors lacked the willingness or expertise to guide their mentees effectively. According to Tanaka Suzuki (2023), mentorship programs with clear goals, regular feedback sessions, and professional development workshops yielded better outcomes for novice teachers. Robinson and Lee (2021) found that mentorship programs with clear goals, regular feedback sessions, and professional development workshops yielded better outcomes for novice teachers.

3.1.2. Fostering Professional Growth— Modeling effective teaching practices is a key component of the experiences of teachers being mentored by master teachers (Lopez, 2022). The findings of the study agree with the findings of Brown Williams (2024) in Australia reported that 70 percent of novice teachers and mentors struggled with time constraints, making it difficult to schedule regular mentorship sessions. Similarly, Kumar Sharma (2022) in India found that mismatches in teaching philosophies and personalities hindered the effectiveness of mentorship programs, leading to a lack of engagement and trust.

With the narration above, I analyzed how both insights highlight how mentorship effectively targets specific areas of professional de-

velopment for novice teachers, with P3 focusing on subject-matter pedagogy and enthusiasm, and P5 on proactive classroom behavior management. Research indicates that mentees who engage in mentoring programs with master teachers report significant improvements in their teaching abilities. According to Tanaka Suzuki (2023) emphasized the need for formalized frameworks with clearly defined mentorship goals, scheduled feedback sessions, and mentor training programs. The sense of efficacy among mentees is a critical outcome of successful mentoring. Miller Clark (2022) found that peer mentorship fostered collaborative learning, allowing novice teachers to exchange strategies and experiences in a supportive environment. The sense of efficacy among mentees is a critical outcome of successful mentoring. Research has shown that structured mentoring relationships enhance self-efficacy by promoting reflective practice and mutual support (Nguyen Harper, 2021).

P8's insight highlights the essential role of mentorship engagement programs in expanding pedagogical skills, particularly for a new teacher struggling to adapt to diverse student learning styles. Through co-teaching with an expert in differentiated instruction, the teacher directly observed and learned various activity formats and assessment methods, significantly broadening their strategic repertoire and improving their ability to meet the varied needs of their class (Anderson and Patel, 2020). Research by Osei Boateng (2020) highlighted the benefits of virtual mentorship, where novice teachers engaged with experienced educators through online platforms, allowing flexible and continuous professional development. In a study by Johnson et al. (2023) found that novice teachers who lacked supportive networks experienced higher levels of imposter syndrome, affecting their confidence and motivation. In contrast, schools with structured mentorship programs reported higher retention rates and lower stress

levels among beginning educators.

3.1.3. Improving Job Satisfaction and Emotional Resilience—Mentorship extends beyond the classroom, offering mentees access to professional networks and resources, which further supports their growth and development as educators (Chen and Wallace, 20121). Through these experiences, mentees gain valuable insights and connections that enhance their teaching practice and contribute to their overall professional success. The said findings were also supported by Garcia and Lopez (2021) also underscores the role of school culture in influencing novice teachers' psychological well-being, emphasizing that positive and inclusive environments significantly impact teachers' mental health. Certainly, the findings of the study were affirmed by the study of Smith and Carver (2020), structured mentorship programs that pair novice teachers with experienced educators improve job satisfaction and emotional resilience.

Generally, I analyzed the narration of a new teacher feeling immense fatigue and stress from workload and classroom management, P4 approached their department head and was paired with a mentor adept at work-life balance, who provided practical advice on time management and stress reduction. In contrast, P6 highlights how mentorship helped them cope with the unanticipated "realities" of teaching, such as paperwork, unexpected incidents, and parent interactions, which were not covered in their training. By actively speaking with senior teachers, P6 found mentors who validated their feelings and shared coping strategies, increasing their emotional resilience and strengthening their commitment to the profession. Williams Martinez (2023) emphasize that emotional mentorship helps new teachers cope with work-related pressures by providing a safe space for discussions, peer support, and encouragement. Having a mentor reduces feelings of isolation and increases job satisfaction, making novice teachers

more likely to remain in the profession. Collaborative mentorship approaches that include peer discussions help build a sense of belonging, reducing feelings of isolation (Boon Taylor, 2022). Martinez and Green (2021) found that collaborative mentorship approaches involving peer discussions foster a sense of belonging and help reduce feelings of isolation.

As mentioned earlier, P7's insight highlights the crucial role of mentorship engagement programs in fostering confidence and a sense of belonging for new teachers in a new school environment. By participating in social events and being open, this teacher found a mentor who became a friend and cheerleader, providing regular check-ins, positive feedback, and guidance on navigating the school's intricacies. This support significantly increased job satisfaction and provided the courage to face challenges by fostering a feeling of community integration. Training on stress management and emotional resilience equips teachers with strategies to cope with work-related stress (Yilmaz, 2021). A study by Brown and Patel (2023) found that some mentorship programs focus primarily on instructional strategies while neglecting the emotional and psychological needs of novice teachers. Addressing these gaps requires a more holistic approach that integrates both pedagogical and emotional support (Garcia Nguyen, 2020). Based on the figure above, three themes emerged from the responses of the participants: supporting novice teachers, fostering professional growth and improving job satisfaction and emotional resilience. One significant theme that emerged from the experiences of novice teachers in mentorship engagement programs is the importance of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) in fostering support

and collaboration. Johnson and Smith (2021) emphasized that participation in PLCs offered novice teachers meaningful opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, share instructional resources, and engage in reflective dialogue.

Another theme highlighted the pivotal role of mentorship in promoting collaborative practices that lead to professional growth. Roberts et al. (2022) found that mentors who engaged novice teachers in co-teaching, collaborative planning, and instructional feedback sessions significantly enhanced their confidence and instructional competence. This form of guided collaboration helped novice teachers tackle the daily challenges of classroom management, lesson delivery, and student engagement. The mentorship engagement programs that integrate such collaborative opportunities become powerful tools in shaping the novice teacher's professional journey, providing scaffolding that promotes continuous learning and pedagogical refinement. A third theme revealed how collaborative engagement contributes to job satisfaction and the formation of professional identity among novice teachers. According to Lee and Chen (2023), engaging in reflective and collaborative practices enabled novice educators to articulate their teaching philosophies and better understand their evolving roles as professionals. These interactions, often facilitated through mentorship programs, allowed novice teachers to exchange diverse strategies and perspectives with peers, enriching their instructional approaches and reinforcing their sense of purpose. Moreover, Johnson and Smith (2021) noted that such collaborative environments nurtured emotional resilience and job satisfaction, critical factors in teacher retention and long-term commitment to the profession.

3.2. Coping Mechanisms with the Challenges of Teachers on Mentoring Engagement Programs—Teachers face various challenges in

mentoring engagement programs, but they employ a variety of coping mechanisms to address these difficulties. By employing these coping

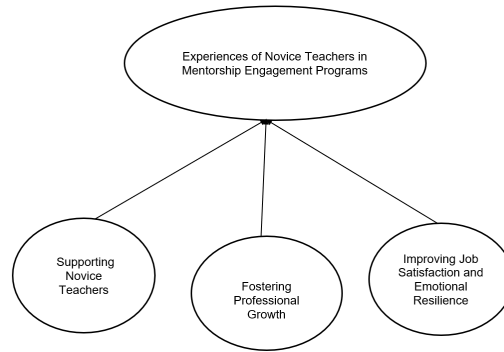


Fig. 3. Emerging Themes on the Experiences of Novice Teachers in Mentorship Engagement Programs

strategies, teachers can navigate the challenges of mentoring engagement programs more effectively, resulting in personal and professional growth and a better overall teaching experience (Lopez Ahmed, 2020).

3.2.1. Building Strong Relationships with Mentors—Evans and Moore (2021) noted that one of the key strategies teachers use to cope with challenges is fostering a strong, supportive relationship with their mentor. Establishing trust and open communication helps teachers feel more comfortable seeking guidance, discussing difficulties, and receiving constructive feedback. One of the major benefits of mentoring relationships is the emotional and psychological support they offer to teachers facing stress and burnout. According to a study by Lawrence and Whiting (2021), mentoring provides a platform for novice teachers to discuss their emotional challenges, helping them process feelings of stress, anxiety, and isolation that are common in the early stages of their careers. Mentors offer both empathy and practical advice, helping mentees to build resilience and emotional coping skills. Furthermore, McNally and Young (2022) argue that strong mentor-mentee relationships significantly reduce the risk of early career attrition by offering the necessary emotional backing for teachers to overcome initial challenges.

P1 grappled with the difficulty of finding a compatible and available mentor, addressing

this by actively seeking a mentor whose personality and teaching style aligned with theirs, even requesting a change when necessary. The success of their mentorship hinged on this crucial match and the mentor's genuine commitment. In contrast, P3 faced the common challenge of feeling like a "burden" to their busy mentor, coping by proactively scheduling meetings that suited the mentor's availability and ensuring they were always well-prepared for discussions. Harrison and Lim (2020) observed that the success of mentorship often stems from the mentee's proactive and organized communication, which helps foster a productive and strong relationship. In addition to emotional support, mentors also help teachers cope with instructional challenges, such as classroom management and curriculum implementation. According to an analysis by Wilson and Beckett (2020), novice teachers often feel overwhelmed by classroom behavior issues and the demands of instructional planning. Effective mentors not only provide guidance on how to manage these challenges but also create a safe space where teachers can express frustration and seek practical solutions. Research by Maxwell et al. (2023) emphasizes that the quality of mentor support in addressing classroom issues has a significant impact on teachers' self-efficacy and long-term retention.

The responses above revealed that comparing these two teachers' experiences with the

challenges of mentorship engagement programs, P6 highlights the initial difficulty of building trust and being vulnerable with a mentor. This was addressed by gradually sharing small issues, leading to a deeper relationship where openness and honesty allowed for more effective guidance and support. Thus, P7 grappled with balancing the desire for independence with accepting guidance from a mentor. This was overcome by actively listening to advice, critically filtering it, and then adapting it to their own teaching style. The success of their mentorship hinged on being open to criticism and adept at integrating advice into their practice, recognizing that guidance is for growth, not dictation (Lawrence Kim, 2020). The foundation of a strong mentoring relationship lies in trust and open communication. Studies have consistently shown that teachers are more likely to turn to their mentors for support when they feel that they can communicate openly without fear of judgment. For example, a study by O'Connell and McHugh (2021) found that mentors who foster an environment of trust and honesty lead to more meaningful and effective mentoring relationships. Such an environment allows novice teachers to share their frustrations, uncertainties, and challenges, which enables mentors to provide personalized advice and emotional support. According to Benson and Yates (2022), mentees who have established trust with their mentors report greater job satisfaction and a stronger sense of professional identity.

3.2.2. Seeking Continuous Feedback— Teachers actively seek feedback from their mentors to continuously improve their teaching practices. Alvarez and Singh (2020) found that regular feedback is essential for helping teachers recognize areas for improvement, apply new instructional strategies, and tailor their approaches to better support student learning. The study's findings agree that feedback in mentoring programs is most effective when it is constructive and focused on both strengths and areas

of improvement. According to Bell and Carter (2022), mentors who offer constructive criticism in a positive and nonjudgmental manner help build trust and encourage mentees to view feedback as a tool for personal and professional growth. This type of feedback enables teachers to recognize areas where they can improve without feeling discouraged. In the context of coping with the challenges of teaching, this constructive feedback empowers novice teachers to confront difficulties head-on and find solutions to problems, such as classroom management, lesson planning, or student engagement. On the other hand, the findings of the study were affirmed by Ortiz and Hall (2020) emphasizes that novice teachers are more likely to seek continuous feedback when they feel that their mentors are approachable and receptive to their questions. This open communication fosters a safe environment where teachers feel comfortable discussing their challenges and seeking advice.

Both insights highlight the crucial role of feedback in professional growth within mentorship, but P2 focuses on the proactive seeking and reception of feedback, while P4 emphasizes the effective application and integration of feedback into practice. Feedback becomes a two-way process, where mentees can express concerns, and mentors can provide guidance in a supportive, non-threatening manner. As Gallo and Jennings (2021) point out, such a culture enhances the effectiveness of mentoring programs, ensuring that teachers feel valued and supported. Formative feedback helps novice teachers understand their progress and adjust in real-time. A study by Simpson and Kumar (2022) found that novice teachers who received regular formative feedback were able to improve their teaching methods faster than those who only received summative feedback. The constant flow of feedback supports continuous improvement and allows teachers to feel empowered and confident in their teaching practices, leading to greater job satisfaction and less burnout (O'Donnell Fraser,

2020).

The participant also believes that the importance of mentorship engagement programs, the tendency to rely solely on mentor feedback. This teacher overcame it by actively seeking feedback from diverse sources, including fellow novice teachers and even students. The success of their mentorship hinged on their openness to different perspectives, as combining various viewpoints led to a more comprehensive understanding of their teaching practices and accelerated their growth. This deals with the idea of Boreen et al. (2020) who stated that communication breakdowns between mentors and mentees can contribute to mismatched expectations and misunderstandings. Poor communication, such as unclear instructions, inconsistent feedback, or infrequent meetings, can lead to confusion and frustration for mentees, impeding their ability to benefit from the mentoring relationship. In addition to receiving feedback from mentors, novice teachers can benefit from peer feedback as a coping mechanism. Peer feedback allows teachers to learn from one another and share strategies for overcoming challenges. According to Garrison and Martin (2023), peer feedback creates a collaborative support network where teachers can exchange ideas, reflect on their practices, and provide constructive suggestions for improvement. This collaboration fosters a sense of community and reduces the isolation that novice teachers often feel. Nguyen and Parker (2021) highlighted that peer feedback offers multiple perspectives, enabling teachers to tackle challenges with a wider range of potential solutions.

3.2.3. Emotional Regulation and Resilience—Teachers also develop emotional coping mechanisms to manage the stress and anxiety that may arise from the mentoring process. They practice emotional regulation techniques such as mindfulness, stress management, and maintaining a positive attitude to stay resilient in the face of challenges. The foregoing results

of the study were consistent with the findings of the study made by McAllister and Thomas (2020), resilience is not a static trait but a dynamic process that can be nurtured through supportive mentoring relationships. In the context of mentoring programs, mentors play a crucial role in fostering resilience by providing both emotional support and practical guidance. Through reflective conversations and encouragement, mentors help teachers reframe challenges as opportunities for growth, thus increasing their capacity to overcome adversity. According to Lee and Kumar (2022), teachers who feel emotionally supported and resilient are more likely to persist in the profession, even when faced with significant challenges such as student disengagement or inadequate resources.

P8 tackled frustration and irritation in the classroom by consistently applying emotional regulation techniques (like deep breathing or mental breaks) taught by their mentor. The success of this mentorship was rooted in the consistent application of these coping strategies, leading to improved teaching performance and classroom atmosphere. Hence, P9 addressed feelings of overwhelm and self-doubt stemming from new curricula or difficult parent interactions. This was overcome by actively sharing concerns with their mentor, who provided frameworks for reframing negative thoughts and encouraged focusing on small achievements. The success of this mentorship hinged on the mentee's openness to receiving psychological support and validation, which strengthened their emotional resilience and confidence. Mentors provide novice teachers with the emotional support necessary for emotional regulation, which, in turn, enhances their resilience. Studies by Smith and Ray (2021) found that novice teachers who feel supported by their mentors develop stronger emotional regulation strategies, leading to improved job satisfaction and a reduction in burnout. Mentors who offer encouragement, validation, and constructive feedback help

novice teachers maintain their emotional equilibrium during stressful situations. Walker and Martinez (2020) noted that emotional support is especially important during the early years of teaching, as teachers often face challenges managing the emotional demands of the classroom. Reflection is another crucial tool for emotional regulation and resilience in teaching. A study by Chang and Lee (2020) suggests that engaging in reflective practices allows teachers to process their emotions, understand their responses to challenges, and develop strategies to manage stress. In mentoring programs, mentors encourage novice teachers to reflect on their teaching experiences, providing a space for them to discuss emotional reactions to difficult situations. Through reflection, teachers can recognize patterns in their emotional responses and develop strategies to regulate their emotions more effectively in the future.

Hence, in mentorship engagement programs, P10 initially faced the challenge of controlling impulsiveness in discipline. This meant reacting quickly and sometimes without fully understanding the root cause of student misbehavior. To overcome this, P10 actively observed their mentor's calm and strategic approach to managing challenging behaviors. The mentor taught conscious emotional regulation techniques, such as "pause and reflect" before responding to a situation. This finding is congruent to the notion of a comprehensive study by Nguyen and Choi (2023), mentoring programs that prioritize emotional resilience training equip novice teachers with tools to cope with the emotional demands of teaching. Comprehensive research by Delgado and Ramirez (2022) highlighted the importance of self-care in preventing teacher burnout and promoting long-term success. Encouraging self-care not only improves teachers' emotional regulation but also enhances their resilience by preventing emotional exhaustion. Novice teachers who are encouraged to take care of their physical and

emotional needs are better able to sustain their passion for teaching and maintain a positive outlook throughout their careers (Martin Lee, 2020). Based on the themes identified from the figure, the coping mechanisms identified in the experiences of teachers in mentoring engagement programs can be understood through three emerging themes: building strong relationships with mentors, seeking continuous feedback, and developing emotional regulation and resilience. These relationships help novice teachers navigate the complexities of their new roles and reduce feelings of professional isolation. However, Garcia et al. (2022) noted that the role of school leadership is crucial in either fostering or hindering such collaborations. Their study found that when administrators failed to provide adequate resources or encourage collaboration, it significantly decreased teachers' motivation to participate in mentoring relationships.

Similarly, Patel and Ramirez (2024) emphasized that barriers such as time constraints, limited professional development, and lack of administrative support often obstruct novice teachers from fully engaging in collaborative and mentoring practices. Another coping mechanism identified among novice teachers is their tendency to actively seek continuous feedback from mentors and colleagues. This practice helps them refine their instructional techniques and build confidence in the classroom. Mentorship programs that facilitate regular feedback loops allow novice teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and identify areas for improvement. However, these efforts are often challenged by practical constraints. As highlighted by Patel and Ramirez (2024), novice teachers frequently struggle to find time for collaborative discussions due to heavy workloads and rigid schedules. These barriers can limit access to timely and constructive feedback. The third coping mechanism involves developing emotional regulation and resilience in the face of professional stressors. Many novice teach-

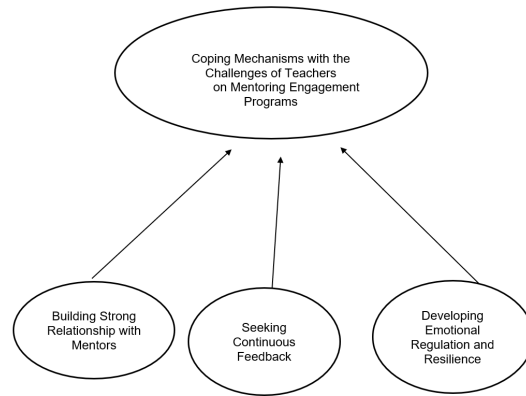


Fig. 4. Emerging Themes on the Coping Mechanisms with the Challenges of Teachers on Mentoring Engagement Programs

ers in mentorship programs report high levels of stress, particularly when juggling multiple responsibilities or adjusting to school cultures. Johnson and Patel (2021) found that time constraints and insufficient planning time led to feelings of being overwhelmed, which negatively

impacted teachers' ability to engage in meaningful collaboration. Despite these challenges, effective mentorship engagement programs can provide emotional support systems that help novice teachers build resilience.

3.3. Educational Management Insights on Mentorship Engagement Programs of Novice Teachers—The participants shared their educational management insights, and these were narrowed down into one to generate the themes. These themes were carefully analyzed and formulated based on what came from informants' accounts and reflections. The subthemes are shown below:

3.3.1. Importance of Structured Mentorship Programs—A well-structured mentorship program can significantly enhance the professional growth of novice teachers. Educational management needs to ensure that mentorship is not just an optional addition but an integral part of a teacher's development journey (Williams Chen, 2021). By aligning mentorship goals with the curriculum and school objectives, novice teachers can receive targeted support that directly impacts their teaching quality. Mentorship programs provide novice teachers with an opportunity to receive guidance and feedback from experienced educators, which is crucial

for developing effective teaching practices. According to studies by Flores and Day (2020), structured mentorship programs help new teachers transition into their roles by offering a supportive environment that focuses on teaching techniques, classroom management, and curriculum design. These programs often include regular observations, feedback sessions, and reflective practices, which help teachers improve their pedagogical skills and enhance their confidence in the classroom. According to Luekens et al. (2022), novice teachers who participate in formal mentoring programs are less likely to leave the profession, as these programs offer continuous professional support, feedback, and encouragement. The mentor-mentee relationship provides emotional and professional stability, helping teachers navigate the challenges of their early careers. Some participants shared insights regarding the importance of structured mentorship programs.

P1 emphasizes that the structured nature of mentorship programs provides a clear roadmap

for a novice teacher's comprehensive professional growth and adaptation, while P2 values the structured program's pre-defined checkpoints that foster a proactive approach to addressing teaching challenges and ensuring early intervention for emotional well-being. Emotional support is an essential component of mentorship programs, particularly for novice teachers who may face emotional and psychological challenges during their transition into the teaching profession. Research by Randhawa and Gupta (2021) highlights the significance of mentorship in providing emotional support to novice teachers. Mentors offer a safe space for mentees to express concerns, seek advice, and gain reassurance during stressful situations. This emotional support helps novice teachers cope with the pressures of teaching, such as classroom management issues, workload stress, and the demands of diverse student needs. The relationship between mentor and novice teacher can significantly influence the development of teacher confidence and pedagogical expertise. According to Iqbal and Aslam (2023), structured mentorship programs contribute to the growth of novice teachers by offering personalized guidance, reflective opportunities, and professional development resources. Davies and Morgan (2020) found that teachers who participate in mentoring frequently report increased confidence in their instructional skills and classroom management techniques.

The eighth participant expresses that mentorship engagement programs provide consistent support and systematic feedback through structured classroom observations and post-observation discussions, which not only facilitates skill development but also instills a crucial sense of security and companionship for novice teachers. In addition to offering guidance and support, structured mentorship programs provide novice teachers with valuable opportunities to expand their professional networks. As highlighted by Johnson and Nguyen (2020), mentor-

ship programs connect novice teachers with experienced educators, allowing them to build relationships within the teaching community. This networking fosters collaboration and knowledge sharing, which can enhance teachers' access to professional resources, best practices, and teaching innovations. Novice teachers who are part of a mentorship program also engage in collaborative practices with colleagues, attend professional development workshops, and participate in educational conferences. Educational management literature underscores the importance of institutional support in ensuring the success of mentorship programs. According to Mills and Juhl (2021), the effectiveness of mentorship programs depends on the structures put in place by educational institutions. Schools and school districts that provide funding, time allocation, and administrative backing for mentorship programs increase the likelihood that these programs will thrive. Providing time for regular mentor-mentee meetings, professional development opportunities for mentors, and administrative support ensures that mentorship programs can meet the needs of novice teachers (Lopez Hernandez, 2020).

3.3.2. Building Long-term Teacher Retention Strategies—Mentorship programs are key to increasing teacher retention, as they help reduce feelings of isolation and burnout, common among novice teachers (Brown Evans, 2021). Educational management should view mentorship as a long-term investment in teacher retention. Schools with strong mentorship programs are more likely to retain teachers, hence improving student outcomes and the overall quality of education. A key feature of mentorship programs is their role in enhancing teacher retention by providing ongoing support and guidance. According to a study by Ingersoll and Strong (2021), novice teachers who participate in mentorship programs are more likely to remain in the profession due to the emotional and professional support they receive. These programs

help novice teachers feel more confident in their teaching abilities and better prepared to manage the challenges of the classroom. By fostering strong mentor-mentee relationships, mentorship programs reduce the feelings of isolation and burnout that often lead to early teacher attrition. McLeskey and Billingsley (2021) also confirms that teachers who have access to mentorship are more likely to stay in the profession for longer periods, as these programs provide the emotional and professional scaffolding needed to thrive in the demanding field of education.

Moreover, both P3 and P4 strongly advocate for mentorship engagement programs as vital long-term teacher retention strategies, highlighting their profound impact on new teachers' commitment to the profession. P3 emphasizes that these programs function as an emotional and professional lifeline, significantly reducing the desire to leave the profession by offering critical support that helps new teachers manage overwhelming workloads and feelings of misunderstanding. P4, on the other hand, focuses on how mentorship programs build a strong sense of belonging and loyalty to the school community, making new teachers feel valued and part of a supportive family rather than just a number. Educational leaders have increasingly recognized the importance of mentorship programs in fostering long-term teacher retention. As noted by Guarino et al. (2020), effective mentorship programs provide continuous professional development opportunities, regular feedback, and a structured support system that helps teachers grow throughout their careers. By building long-term retention strategies, mentorship programs create a pathway for teachers to develop their skills progressively, from novice to expert levels (Clark Evans, 2020). Furthermore, these programs allow mentors to impart critical knowledge about the teaching profession, the school environment, and the intricacies of classroom management. This type of mentoring relationship, which is sustained over time, helps prevent

burnout and discouragement that novice teachers often face when working in challenging environments. It also ensures that teachers develop a sense of belonging, which, as research shows, is a strong predictor of retention (Borman Dowling, 2020). The fifth participant highlights that mentorship engagement programs significantly impact teacher retention by continuously improving teaching quality. This ongoing professional growth, driven by regular and targeted professional development and feedback, provides satisfaction and fulfillment. For P5, investing in teachers' capabilities through mentorship not only boosts confidence but also encourages them to remain in the profession and deliver better service to students. Teacher burnout is one of the primary factors contributing to high turnover rates, especially among novice teachers. Studies have shown that mentorship engagement programs are an effective way to address burnout by providing emotional support and practical teaching strategies (Vaughn Siperstein, 2021). Through the mentorship process, novice teachers gain the tools to better manage their classroom, deal with stress, and maintain work-life balance. The psychological support provided by mentors also helps alleviate feelings of isolation and stress that are often experienced during the first few years of teaching (Nguyen Foster, 2021). Research by Harris and Karlen (2022) indicates that when novice teachers receive consistent emotional support from mentors, they are more likely to remain in the profession. By fostering resilience and coping strategies, mentorship programs help novice teachers develop a healthy approach to their work, which in turn increases their satisfaction and commitment to teaching.

3.3.3. *Tailored Mentorship Approaches—*

Every teacher has different needs and challenges. A one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective. Educational leaders should promote flexibility within mentorship programs, ensuring that mentors adapt their guidance based on

the specific needs, strengths, and challenges of each novice teacher. This personalized approach can help teachers overcome obstacles more efficiently. According to Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), personalized mentorship increases the likelihood of success for novice teachers, as it offers a more adaptive response to the diverse challenges that they face in the classroom. For instance, novice teachers may require different types of support, such as classroom management advice, instructional strategy development, or emotional support, depending on the subject they teach and the students they work with. One of the core benefits of a tailored mentorship approach is its ability to build confidence in novice teachers by addressing their specific weaknesses while also reinforcing their strengths (James Holloway, 2020). As noted by Smith and Ingersoll (2020), novice teachers often experience self-doubt and a lack of confidence due to the demanding nature of teaching. Personalized mentorship provides a more supportive environment where mentees feel heard and understood.

Both P6 and P7 emphasize the personalized nature of mentorship engagement programs as a key factor in their significance for new teachers. P6 highlights that these programs are significant because they offer tailored mentorship approaches that directly address a novice teacher's individual needs and specific weaknesses, such as developing assessment strategies. This personalized guidance is deemed more effective than generic training because it precisely targets areas for growth. Thus, P7 focuses on how mentors in these programs are able to adjust their mentorship style to match the mentee's learning style. As a visual learner, P7 found immense value in a mentor who provided not just verbal advice. In educational systems that are culturally diverse, it is crucial for mentorship programs to consider the context in which the novice teachers operate (Singh Delgado, 2021). Tailored mentorship approaches ensure

that mentors are sensitive to the cultural, linguistic, and social backgrounds of the teachers and their students. This type of mentorship allows novice teachers to feel more comfortable and supported in applying effective teaching strategies that align with the specific needs of their classroom (e.g., handling diverse learning needs, promoting inclusivity). A study by Gray and McPherson (2021) emphasizes the importance of mentorship that is responsive to the specific teaching environments, as teachers who receive contextually relevant guidance are better equipped to manage the challenges of their schools and classrooms. Research by Johnson and Nguyen (2020) suggests that mentorship should be dynamic, with mentors offering increased support in the early years of teaching and gradually transitioning to a more consultative role as the teacher gains confidence and experience. This flexibility allows mentors to adapt to the individual needs of each novice teacher and to provide support at critical moments, such as after a challenging classroom observation or when a teacher is struggling with classroom management. The study could shed light on both P9 and P10 highlight the personalized and flexible nature of mentorship engagement programs as a key factor in their significance for new teachers' growth. P9 emphasizes that these programs effectively recognize and address the specific, unique challenges faced by each novice teacher. Meanwhile, P10 focuses on the programs' ability to cultivate a deep personal relationship where the mentor understands the mentee not just as a "task," but as an individual with aspirations and struggles. Educational management research by Mills and Juhl (2021) has shown that school leaders who actively participate in the design and implementation of mentorship programs are more likely to create tailored approaches that benefit their teachers. One of the primary challenges is the resource-intensive nature of personalized mentorship. In many regions, mentorship programs

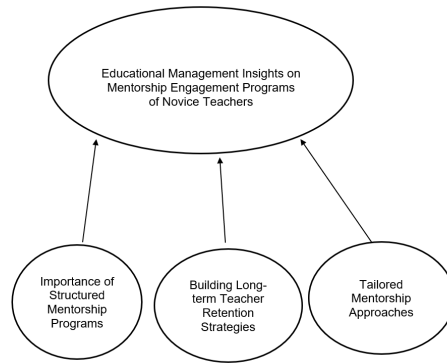


Fig. 5. Emerging Themes on the Educational Management Insights on Mentorship Engagement Programs of Novice Teachers

suffer from a lack of sufficient funding and institutional support, which can hinder their ability to provide individualized guidance (Vaughn Siperstein, 2021). Based on the figure above, three themes emerged from the participants' responses, which emphasized importance of structured mentorship programs, building long-term teacher retention strategies, and tailored mentorship approaches. The experiences of novice teachers emphasize the value of structured mentorship programs in supporting their early teaching journey (Reyes Thompson, 2020).

Anchored in Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, mentorship enables novice teachers to learn by observing, modeling, and imitating experienced mentors. Through guided experiences in classroom management, lesson delivery, and student engagement, novice teachers build foundational skills essential for success. Mentorship also plays a vital role in promoting teacher retention by fostering a supportive learn-

ing environment. Lave and Wenger's (1991) Situated Learning Theory supports this, suggesting that novice teachers thrive within authentic, real-world teaching communities. Mentors guide mentees through practical experiences like lesson planning and assessments, creating communities of practice. These interactions not only improve competence but also strengthen professional identity and long-term commitment to the profession. Moreover, mentorship that incorporates reflective dialogue supports deeper professional growth. This aligns with Mezirow's (1991) Transformative Learning Theory, which highlights the role of critical reflection in adult learning. Kim and Chang (2024) found that collaborative and reflective discussions among novice teachers fostered meaningful changes in teaching practices. Tailored mentorship approaches that prioritize reflection, dialogue, and shared experiences enhance both personal and professional transformation.

4. Implications and Future Directions

This chapter serves as a critical component of the study, providing insights into the practical, policy, and research implications of the findings, offering mentorship engagement programs, stories of novice teachers. A study on mentorship engagement would typically discuss the implications of the study's findings and suggest potential future directions for research or practice in the mentoring field.

4.1. Implications—The findings of this study have significant implications for improving mentoring programs aimed at fostering collegial relationships and supporting the professional growth of novice teachers. The emerging themes: support from mentors, opportunities for growth, and enhanced job satisfaction and emotional resilience highlight the diverse needs of beginning educators as they transition into the teaching profession. Anchored in Bandura's Social Learning Theory, the study emphasizes that novice teachers benefit greatly from observing and interacting with experienced mentors. These interactions provide valuable opportunities for modeling effective teaching strategies, classroom management, and professional conduct, enhancing their instructional confidence and competence. Educational institutions can support this process by designing structured mentoring programs that include classroom observations, co-teaching arrangements, and consistent feedback sessions. Moreover, aligned with Lave and Wenger's Situated Learning Theory, the findings stress the importance of immersing novice teachers in authentic, context-rich environments. Mentoring should be embedded within real teaching settings through professional learning communities (PLCs), collaborative lesson planning, and participation in school-based initiatives. These approaches not only foster a sense of belonging but also help novice teachers transition from peripheral participants to active contributors in the school community. The study reflects the principles of Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory which highlights the importance of critical reflection for personal and professional transformation. Incorporating reflective practices such as journaling, structured dialogue, and peer feedback into mentoring programs can help novice teachers make sense of their experiences, reframe challenges, and build emotional resilience. Training mentors in emotional intelligence and supportive communication, along with regular well-being check-ins, can further improve the quality of mentoring relationships and contribute to greater job satisfaction and retention among new teachers. In terms of coping mechanisms, the findings underscore how novice teachers rely on building strong mentor relationships, seeking continuous feedback, and developing emotional regulation and resilience to navigate professional challenges. These coping strategies align closely with Bandura's Social Learning Theory which emphasizes the power of social modeling in learning. Supportive mentor relationships provide a safe space for novice teachers to emulate professional behavior and develop confidence. Continuous feedback, when situated in real teaching contexts, resonates with Lave and Wenger's framework by reinforcing learning as a participatory process in authentic communities of practice. As novice teachers actively engage in teaching scenarios and receive timely, constructive feedback, they deepen their professional identity and move from the periphery toward the core of their learning communities. In addition, the ability to regulate emotions and develop resilience is closely tied to Mezirow's Transformative Learning Theory which encourages critical reflection as a pathway to growth. Through reflective dialogue with mentors, novice teachers are empowered to make sense of challenges, manage stress, and adapt effectively to professional demands. These practices not only help in coping with immediate pressures but also support long-term professional development and well-being. Regarding educational management, the study's findings emphasize the need for structured mentoring programs, long-term teacher retention strategies, and personalized mentorship approaches. These themes underscore the practical steps schools can take to institutionalize effective mentoring. Structured mentorship, as supported by Bandura's theory creates consistent opportunities for novice teachers to observe, interact, and learn from seasoned men-

tors. Ensuring these interactions are embedded in a school culture of collaboration and mutual support directly enhances teacher competence and confidence.

Furthermore, the theme of long-term retention links to Lave and Wenger's emphasis on situated learning within communities of practice. When novice teachers feel integrated into supportive mentoring networks and professional communities, they are more likely to remain in the profession and commit to ongoing development. Lastly, the importance of tailoring mentorship to individual needs reflects Mezirow's view of transformative learning, where critical reflection on personal challenges leads to meaningful change. Personalized mentoring that accounts for the unique goals, backgrounds, and struggles of each novice teacher allows them to reconstruct their assumptions, strengthen resilience, and become adaptive, reflective practitioners. Collectively, these findings offer a roadmap for educational institutions to create more intentional, responsive, and sustainable mentoring programs that support novice teachers not only in surviving but thriving in their early teaching careers.

4.2. Future Directions—To enhance mentorship engagement programs, the following considerations can guide policymakers, school administrators, and teachers in supporting novice educators effectively. **Learners** – Though indirect participants, learners benefit from effective mentorship programs through improved teaching quality. When novice teachers are well-supported, classroom instruction becomes more engaging, student needs are better addressed, and learning outcomes improve. A mentorship culture thus contributes to a more student-centered environment. **Teachers** – Particularly mentors, should receive proper training in men-

torship strategies that promote collaboration, reflection, and emotional support. By adopting differentiated approaches tailored to individual novice teacher needs, mentors can foster professional growth and boost teacher confidence. Peer-to-peer learning and the sharing of best practices also contribute to a more sustainable mentorship culture. **Department of Education (DepEd)** – Should institutionalize structured mentorship frameworks across schools. This includes allocating time within teachers' workloads for mentoring, providing funding for professional development, and ensuring policies that protect and support novice teachers. **National guidelines for mentorship programs** can ensure consistency and effectiveness across regions. **School Administrators – Principals and school heads** play a key role in creating a culture of mentorship. They must support collaborative schedules, recognize the value of mentor-mentee relationships, and actively monitor the progress of novice teachers. **Administrators** should also provide incentives for mentors and integrate mentorship into school improvement plans. **Parents** – Can play a role by supporting novice teachers through open communication and understanding. Establishing strong parent-teacher relationships helps reduce pressure on novice educators and builds trust. When parents collaborate with teachers, it creates a supportive community that benefits both teaching and learning. **Future researchers** – Are encouraged to explore diverse contexts and longitudinal impacts of mentorship programs. Studies can examine how mentorship engagement influences teacher retention, instructional quality, and student performance over time. Research into culturally responsive mentorship practices can guide context-specific program development.

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