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School-Based Teacher Mentoring – Further Evidence for the "Cinderella" Metaphor?

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Research Article

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Abstract

Background/purpose. There exists a desire to provide schoolteachers with mentors. In English schools, school-based mentors are mandatory for schools participating in Initial Teacher Education and the Early Career Framework. The purpose of this study is to highlight the need for a professional mentoring capacity within schools without burdening existing teachers' already stretched workload. To that end, a case study of secondary school mathematics teachers acting as early career teacher mentors were interviewed in order to ascertain whether they were officially recognized as school-based mentors. The participants were asked whether they held a title as a mentor, and their responses analyzed and interpreted according to Miles et al.'s (2020) "think display" visualization.

Materials/methods. The literature has previously used the "Cinderella" metaphor to describe the role of school-based mentors. This study pursues this analogy to interpret school-based mentors' qualitative responses to juxtapose the metaphor in relation to schoolteacher recruitment and retention coupled to an extrinsic motivating factor to provide school-based teacher mentoring. Seven school-based mentors were interviewed separately within their own practice schools. Audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were shared with each respective participant for their approval and to check for accuracy, and each were also given the opportunity to withdraw from the study at every sequence, following the ethics agreement laid out by the researcher's university. The collected data were analyzed according to Miles et al.'s (2020) "think display" technique and a constructivist interpretation following research by Knapp (2019) to integrate theories of mentoring exposed by Kemmis et al. (2014).

Results. The study founds that most teachers acting as mentors were extrinsically charged to fulfill the role since their employing school participated in initial and early career teacher provision. None of the participating teachers held a specific title of mentor as reward for their endeavor. This case study consisted of seven participants from seven different schools, and although small, the participant group was homogenous and therefore representative so as to interpret the phenomenon. The findings were then used to make predictions that could affect the success of mentoring programs for teachers.

Conclusion. The study intended to add further evidence of the ethnomethodological actions of teacher mentoring in order to create an understanding of the profession in daily life. School teacher mentoring is seen as an effective way to support teachers, but if mentors are not recognized or rewarded the provision is at risk of becoming a cottage industry and unlikely to become common practice without being made mandatory. Governments may have act with good intent, but often their solutions are a one-size-fits-all approach and lack sufficient financial incentive. Teacher recruitment and retention is crucial to a government's education policy and therefore critical that strategies imposed upon teachers do not negatively impact upon their well-being or existing workload. This original case study aims to add to the empirical evidence existing in the field of teacher mentoring.

1. Introduction

Recruitment and retention in the maintained teaching sector in the United Kingdom is at a critical point and the UK Government has implemented a strategy to alleviate this strain, including the proposal that every teacher should have access to a mentor. The current study is inspired by a proposal put forward by Murtagh and Dawes (2020), that "school-based mentors" (SBM) remain a "Cinderella" role within school hierarchy and remuneration structures. The well-known folktale "Cinderella" in Western culture, which is based on the novel "*Histoires ou contes du temps passe"* by Charles Perrault, translated into English in 1697, is synonymous with typifying the subordinate role, exploited by power and authority. The UK Government instils that Initial Teacher Trainees (ITT) and Early Career Teachers (ECT) have a personal SBM and proposes that all serving teachers should also have access to SBMs (Department for Education, 2016a, 2016b, 2019a, 2019b, 2020a, 2020b, 2020c, 2020d, 2020e). The documents that form the UK Government's proposal are considered the "golden thread" of teacher development. The "golden thread" development framework was further reinforced by a White Paper introduced by the UK Government for education in England, which stated that ECTs receive mentoring from "fully trained mentors," with a proposal that an appropriate body will "reduce training burdens and protect mentor and ECT training time" (HM Government, 2022, p. 19). Notwithstanding the often confusing use of mentoring/coaching titles, these "golden thread" documents, a contributor (Moore) at the 2022 Department for Education for England conference (Department for Education, 2022b) also reiterated that what had changed was that "mentors have the recognition they have long needed" (Department for Education, 2022b, 2:40 Mentoring).

Following on from a study by Wilkinson (2022), who looked at the lack of qualified SBMs currently in practice, the current study surveyed practicing SBMs as to whether or not they held any official mentoring title, with negative responses maybe indicative that mentoring is still a largely unrecognized task. In turn, their responses may also be interpretated to ascertain an understanding of the proposal of Murtagh and Dawes (2020) to consider the intrinsic/extrinsic reasoning for teachers' engagement in the role of an SBM. The current study's hypothesis, that teacher mentors not in receipt of remuneration or title for their mentoring role could be operating extrinsically to fulfill a government mandation leading to risk of unfulfilled intent due to increased mentor teacher workload, will be investigated through questioning practicing teacher mentors. Interpreting the collected data through a meta-study of existing research literature corresponding to the "Cinderella" metaphor, the study examines if teacher mentors are being burdened without recognition through remuneration or recognized job title.

The UK Government is convinced that providing ITTs and ECTs with a teacher mentor will improve teaching and learning, recruitment and retention of ITTs and ECTs, and the empirical evidence supports this notion. However, there is a gap in the empirical evidence of how this can be achieved other than by governments mandating that participating schools provide teacher mentors to all ITTs and ECTs. Therefore, a need exists to investigate current ethnographic practices in order to ascertain why teacher mentors participate in the practice which could lead to a more sustainable program. Notwithstanding the many contestations of mentoring as a practice to be studied and accepting the plurality of mentoring theories exposed by Kemmis et al. (2014), a social constructivist theoretical approach will be employed in this study to analyze the aforementioned hypothesis through constructing knowledge and understanding within a social and cultural setting (Knapp, 2019).

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2. Literature Review

Mentoring practice is complex and variable, often poorly understood, and becomes operationalized through models like Kram's (1983) four stages which affects the efficacy of the practice (Lynn & Nguyen, 2020). Ganser (1994), in a study of practicing mentors invited to describe their practice through metaphor, discussed that the practice provided beliefs about mentoring, promoted reflection, highlighted ambiguities, promoted dialogue, and described the practice to outsiders, wherein metaphors elucidated the complexities of mentoring in an attempt to explain quintessence. Drawing on previous research, Ganser (1994) described metaphors as tools that could be shared and provided systematic ways of thinking which aimed at comprehending what cannot otherwise be comprehended in full, as today's world is imagination and value laden.

Metaphors are a recognized method of alignment to demonstrate mutual understanding within the abstract nature of the language used in academic settings, although some care should be taken when communicating with non-native speakers (Alejo- González, 2022). In a study of "twofoldness," a term developed by Wollheim (1987), Gallagher and Gallagher (2019) investigated the theme that "mirror neurons" are developed at a very young age through play acting and absorption of culture through films, books, art, etc., which enables observers to use N-imagination (narrative imagination) to empathize with others. The "Cinderella" fairytale, an international common fable, has been used as a metaphor in education for many years. Boettcher (1997) used many characters from Cinderella to metaphor changing roles through a long and varied career in education, specifically when wondering why she had been "chosen" to mentor a preservice teacher. Contemplating whether she was both the "Fairy Godmother" and "Prince Charming" at the same time was an interesting take on the tale developed during her Ph.D. proposal at university, where she realized that there were certain characters who were valued, vested, and rewarded, wherein the "stepmother" valued the "ugly step-sisters" because of their "quantitative" return, yet "Cinderella" herself was not valued, because she only brought "qualitative" return. Runyan (1999) wrote about how the beginning teacher, as in "Cinderella," was often left to "sink or swim" through the evaluatory practice of mentoring through the "golden thread" of pedagogy, which can be pictured as being ruled by the "stepmother" or principal/headteacher. It is the "stepmother" who decides who will be a mentor whilst the mentor holds the key to the process being considered successful; in effect, the mentor has the role of the "Fairy Godmother." Runyan (1999) went on to classify the mentoring process as evaluative (for certification – quantitative assessment) and developmental (removed from the decision process – qualitative), and suggested that for the mentor role to be evaluated several multifaceted outcomes should be quantified to demonstrate a mentor's aspiration to improve for the benefit of their mentee.

Wolfe (1992) developed the necessity for a reward system for mentors, else the "Cinderella syndrome" would persist, wherein the named mentor is cast fulfilling a role without any real concrete definition or recognition. Wolfe (1992) insisted that mentoring is multifaceted and extends well beyond the skills of a teacher, requiring three basic principles; autonomy, collaboration, and time, which can only be derived through having a recognized title. A title provides a powerful message, securing both job satisfaction and improved morale, with Wolfe (1992) having drawn from the writings of Lortie (1975) in considering this honor as part of a reward system to incentivize mentoring as complementary to Lortie's three types of rewards: extrinsic, intrinsic, and ancillary. The rewards that Wolfe (1992) considered would eliminate the "Cinderella syndrome" are release time, financial compensation, professional development opportunities, and public recognition, which would only likely come about when a mentor is afforded an official title, but all have certain cost implications.

The UK Government appears unclear as to why so many teachers leave the profession before retirement age (National Audit Office, 2017). The Early Career Framework (ECF) (Department for

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Education, 2019a) targets ECTs, but a systematic review of teacher attrition by Doherty (2020) highlighted the unmanageable workload often imposed on today's teachers, and that financial recompense and the holding of senior positions in the profession are clear factors in the deterioration of teacher recruitment and retention. Sanders (1994) proposed that the mentoring of mathematics teachers is somewhat different to teacher mentoring in general; whilst this may or may not be the case, what is certain is that the UK Government has persistently missed recruitment employment targets for this crucial educational curriculum and quite possibly any potential improvement, such as specific mentoring, inclusive of recognized training and retention opportunities for mentors, through recognized promotional schemes, to improve the situation. Indeed, the UK Government has launched an inquiry into the recruitment and retention crisis (UK Parliament, 2023), referring to the difficulties of recruiting and retaining STEM-qualified ITT which affects the UK Government's attempts to mandate that all students must study mathematics to the age of 18. The emerging common themes can be drawn out as illustrated in Figure 1.

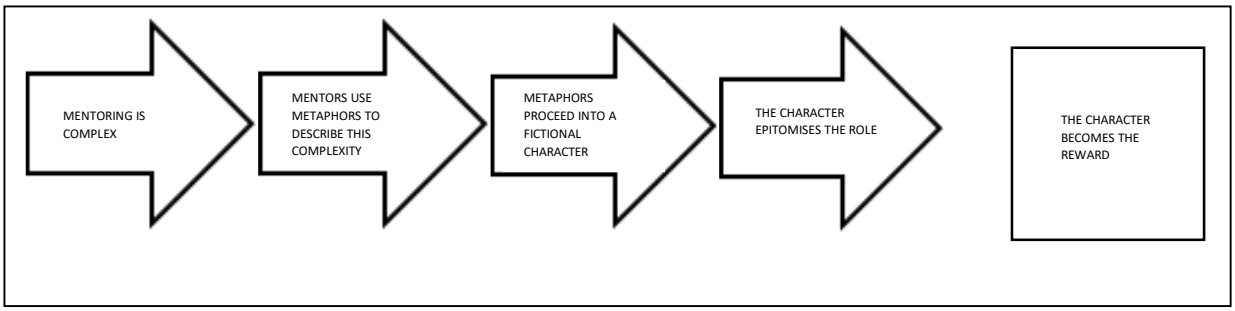

Figure 1. Emerging common features from the literature

The conceptual framework based on previous studies of the phenomena of mentoring in educational settings for the current study is as set out in Table 1.

Table 1. Conceptual framework of phenomenon

School setting	Teacher	Mentor	Recognized/titled position
Secondary school (age 11-16 years) with over 1,000 students	Qualified to teach in schools in England	Mentoring training for teachers/early career teachers	Mentors recognize themselves as mentors, but do they hold a titled position as mentor within the school hierarchy?

The conceptual framework presented in Table 1 develops the theme that within any school setting there are teachers qualified to teach who are mentoring developing and early career teachers. Whilst they may recognize themselves as mentors, the literature suggests that when asked to describe their role a metaphor commonly used is the fairytale Cinderella character (Boettcher, 1997). This may be because the concept of mentoring is complex (Lynn & Nguyen, 2020) and difficult to explain; whereas, as narrative, imagination is culturally more commonplace (Gallagher et al., 2019) and the metaphor more easily mutually understood (Alejo-González, 2022). But why would the Cinderella character be the chosen metaphor? Cinderella is a pleasing character, liked by all, but is taken advantage of by both her stepmother and her stepsisters. Teacher recruitment and retention is in crisis in England and the UK Government is unsure as to why (National Audit Office, 2017). On this, Doherty (2020) reported the workload of teachers as unmanageable, whilst Nguyen (2022) stated that mentoring has become operationalized. Runyan (1992) mentioned the term evaluative regarding the role of mentors, and there has been a constant

call for a reward system to appropriately compensate for this additional workplace burden since the writings of Wolfe (1992).

3. Methodology

Interpretivist knowledge is socially constructed to seek out patterns and draw links (Miles et al., 2020). The current study's interpretive analysis of the primary qualitative data drew heavily upon Miles et al.'s (2020) "think display" visualization to derive plausible explanations in seeking to reveal patterns and draw links to the epistemological evidence from the literature in describing the participant SBMs' reasoning for their agency as mentors to ITTs and ECTs through a strategy of discovery. In recognizing common features of qualitative data through the following method steps, meaning can be derived that is inclusive and retained:

- Assigning codes – Do the mentors hold a recognized mentoring title? Are the mentors responses motivated intrinsically/extrinsically?
- Sorting – See Table 2 and Table 3 for the participants' responses.
- Isolating patterns – Extracted from Table 2 and Table 3.
- Noting reflections – Making meaning from the codes.
- Elaborating a set of assertions – An intended hypothesis for mentoring is challenged (see Figure 2).
- Comparing with a formalized body of knowledge – Thematic array of emerging themes (see Figure 4).

3.1. Participants

The study's seven participants, four male and three female, had a wide range of prior experience of mentoring ITTs, some for a couple of years and some for much longer. The participant teachers taught in mainly mixed-gender comprehensive schools and academies in the north of England. The researcher was already known to the participants through their work as a regional university link tutor to ITTs under the mentorship of the participants. This meant that the participants had an established level of trust in the event, and were at ease and confident in the researcher's intentions. The findings are offered as qualitative data and the instrumentation was open-ended questioning, repeated with each participant during separate interview events. The researcher offered no prompts during the interviews, but gave the interviewees longer thinking time where necessary and paused if the participants' responses seemed slight. Although the cohort is small, Leslie (1972) predicted that such a sample would be acceptable since the population was homogenous, and any bias is likely to be insubstantial if the questions posed are on group-related issues; in this case they were all mathematics teachers working in similar environments. The focus of the current study on mathematics teacher mentors resulted from the researcher having been invited to submit a chapter for a forthcoming book on the mentoring of mathematics early career teachers, which was part of a series of books on the mentoring of specialist schoolteachers. Sanders (1994) invoked that it was important to talk to and observe mathematics teacher mentors in action; emulating this, the researcher in the current study had previously regularly visited the mentor participants in action, hence a formal dedicated interview with each mentor was arranged as separate events for the current study.

3.2. Instruments

The seven practicing mentors were interviewed on location in their seven separate schools, with each interview recorded using a Yamaha Pocketrack audio recorder. These recordings were

later transcribed and shared with the individual SBMs for their approval. The research was ethically cleared through the researcher's university ethics approval system. All participants in the research were fully informed of the purpose of this research and their role within it, and each signed a form declaring that they fully understood the nature of their participation and their right to request that the recording equipment be turned off if they felt uncomfortable at any stage during the interview. The recorded sessions were conducted in private locations within each school, with only the participant and researcher present. Most took place in an office, whilst two were set in an empty teaching classroom. At every stage of data handling (interview recording, retrieval, transcription, writing up) the participants were sent copies for approval. Likewise, they were asked for their consent to the collected data gathered being used for research purposes.

The collected qualitative data were analyzed for meaning through in vivo coding which looked for common word usage to the question "Do you hold an official title as a mentor?" In the first instance that meant the presence of a word indicating a positive or negative response (e.g., Yes/No). In the second instance, most of the respondents offered reasoning for their initial answer unprompted, which interpreted could indicate their motivation through the choice of emotive words or phrases such as happy implying self-motivation as intrinsic motivation, or an ancillary reason such as a departmental obligation from which their extrinsic motivation is implied. By theming the data in this way, the characteristics of the dataset provides momentum for interpretation of the phenomenon being studied (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Nowell et al., 2017). The advantage of thematic coding is the enablement of interpretation, a common practice in qualitative constructivist research (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To this end, an understanding of the perspectives and experiences of homogenous practice in its natural setting was achieved (Kyngäs et al., 2020), enabling social scientific analysis.

3.3. Procedures and Data Analysis

To gain understanding of the reality of the phenomenon, it was necessary to venture into the field of practice which took place during the 2018/2019 academic school year, with interviews that took place following completion of the individual teacher's school day. The following research question was asked of each practicing teacher mentor in order to ascertain whether their acting as an SBM carried a title that could in turn officially reward their endeavor:

- "Do you hold an official title as a mentor?"

The UK Government has mandated that all schools participating in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) or the Early Career Framework (ECF) must provide teacher mentors to ITTs and ECTs, and the seven practicing teacher mentors were interviewed in the study as teacher mentors during ITE. The following are transcript excerpts of each interviewed teacher mentor's response to the research question:

> I don't have an official title as such, within the mathematics faculty we all have kind of like, the department has tried to give us some kind of role of responsibility, as such. And I guess, I mean I've been, how long have I been here now? I've been at the school for 7 years and I've probably been mentoring for five of those years, so I guess within the department, I'm the mentor, won't say specialist, you know if we do ever get any trainees, it's always me. We did have a list of jobs, I don't have any leadership responsibility, purely out of choice. You know I'm happy to take on the role of mathematics mentor and I have done a little bit of mentoring NQT [newly qualified teacher]. Just at this moment I am mentoring…at the moment. [School-Based Mentor A]

No, not at the moment. I do it because I enjoy it and because I want to do it and I volunteered. [School-Based Mentor B]

No, I don't, I'm just a mathematics teacher. [School-Based Mentor C]

As a mentor no, I don't. There's shared responsibility in the department for ITE and NQTs, the department are aware of that. Outside of the department, they have an ITT tutor for the school and they are a named person, but no I'm not. [School-Based Mentor D]

I don't, but it is part of my role, as second in mathematics. [School-Based Mentor E]

No, I don't have an official title. I am unofficially one of the host teachers and mentor for trainee teachers, but I don't have any official title. [School-Based Mentor F]

No, my title is just mathematics teacher. [School-Based Mentor G]

The initial first cycle of in vivo coding of each the participant's own words resulted in a homogenous pattern evolving.

Table 2. In vivo coding, SBM response to "Do you hold an official title as a mentor?"

SBM	No	Unsure	Yes
A		I don't have an official title as such	
B	No		
C	No		
D	No		
E	I don't		
F	No		
G	No		

None of the SBMs interviewed held an official title for their role as mentor. Further research would be needed in order to ascertain whether mentors personally felt that not holding an official title was deemed detrimental to them. Two of the mentors described themselves as being "just a teacher," which could be indicative of an inferior psychological perception in how they perceived themselves. Notwithstanding the desire for *mot juste* –the desire to seek a word which most satisfies the expectation of conventional academic interpretation– in the context of teacher discontent, Helterbran (2016) stated that teachers fail to see themselves as meaningful contributors, and when they describe themselves as being "just teachers" it should be considered a terrible waste of expertise. From Helterbran (2016), it is reasonable to assume that teachers may improve their self-esteem if they were to describe their role as "more than just a teacher," as it is evident from their work as teacher mentors that they are engaged in teacher leadership to a degree, and which would on merit justify an official title. Furthermore, the participants' responses in the current study also indicated a level of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for their unofficial involvement in acting as SBMs (see Table 3).

Table 3. In vivo coding of intrinsic/extrinsic motivation for mentor engagement

SBM	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation
A	I'm happy to take on the role of a mathematics mentor.	The department has tried to give us some kind of role of responsibility.
B	I do it because I enjoy it and because I	

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SBM	Intrinsic motivation	Extrinsic motivation
	want to do it and I volunteered.	
D		There's shared responsibility in the department for ITE and NQTs
E		It is part of my role as second in mathematics.
F		One of the host teachers and mentors.

Two of the respondents specifically pointed out that they were intrinsically satisfied to act as mentors, saying that they were either "happy" or that they "enjoyed…and volunteered." The other participants did not offer similar feel-good motivations, with responses that would suggest that they were fulfilling an ancillary role on behalf of their department, thereby satisfying an extrinsic motivation; as in, it needs to be done and someone must do it. Previous work by Wilkinson (2022) asked the same respondents "Have you undertaken training as a mentor?"; to which one participant responded as follows:

> Quite informal, which I quite like really, because I don't, I haven't kind of gone into it to become some sort of academic mentor or whatever. Just like, I just like sharing things with people and I think it's kind of just like another, different side of teaching for me. It's not really a great big, sort of, I don't know, a mentor. You know what I mean? It's sort of, it's like sharing and learning and I usually find that I can learn as much as people I mentor, as that learns from me, I think. Whether it's good stuff, or not good stuff. [School-Based Mentor G]

The respondent offered intrinsic reasoning for wanting to be a mentor, demonstrating the caring and human nature of "teaching," an aspect, especially in secondary education, that is often overlooked in today's "performative" educational system. The "different side of teaching" could refer to the pastoral role that teachers play, which is in line with the care that "Cinderella" felt for her siblings, even though her siblings did not extend that same care for her. The teacher mentors in the current study did not hold official titles and so their mentoring work was not being officially recognized. Four of the seven participants went on to indicate that they were acting as teacher mentors in order to fulfill their department's requirement to provide teacher mentors whilst participating in a government-led workplace initiative. Therefore, it can be postulated that the "Cinderella" metaphor addresses two aspects:

1. Cinderella had unconditional caring.
2. Cinderella was not cared for by her siblings, meaning that her care was not reciprocated.

4. Results and Discussion

The participants in the current study were not asked to describe their mentoring role in metaphor, but the proposition here was that without some official title and remuneration, the role of mentor is analogous to that of the "Cinderella" metaphor (a character that fulfilled an ancillary role, supporting the running of the household, but received no recognition or remuneration for doing so). Considering the expectation that mandating teacher mentors would imply the following intended hypothesis, the data analyzed through the meta-study from the literature led to the assertion described in Figure 2. The resulting interpretation of the hypothesis shows that teacher mentor mandation without recognition and remuneration could lead to unfulfilled intent and burdensome teacher workload.

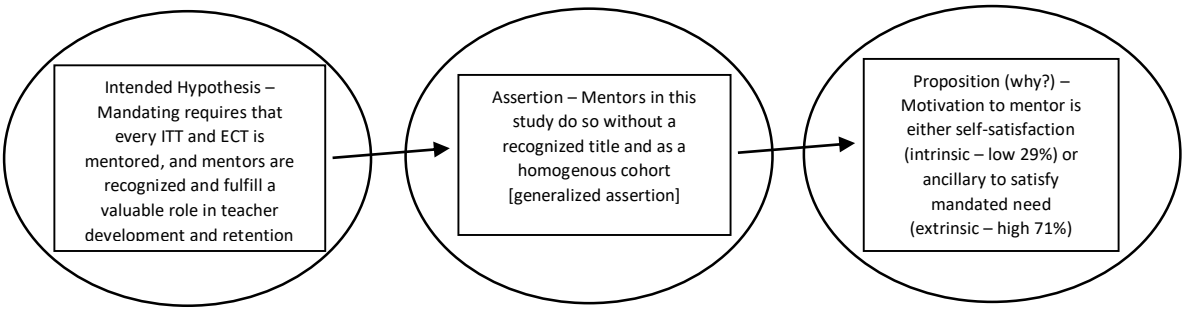

Figure 2. Hypothesis, assertion, and proposition

Maintained schools in England have a statutory duty to provide a mentor for both ITT (Department for Education, 2022c) and ECT (Department for Education, 2018) in their school, with failure to comply resulting in withdrawal from participation. Of the mentor participants in the current study, 71% commented that they were filling an ancillary role as mentor within their department (mathematics). This proportion increases if the participant who stated that they were "happy to take on the role [because] the department has tried to give us some role of responsibility" is also included. Each department is required to provide a mentor for ITT and ECT if the school is participatory in these schemes. Two of the mentors stated that they undertook the role because they enjoyed mentoring and one of these had volunteered to fulfill the mandatory role. This suggests that this feel-good satisfaction was an intrinsic desire to mentor for altruistic reasons from a minority of the participants. Most of the participants were filling ancillary roles in order to meet the statutory duty. Figure 3 highlights current practices.

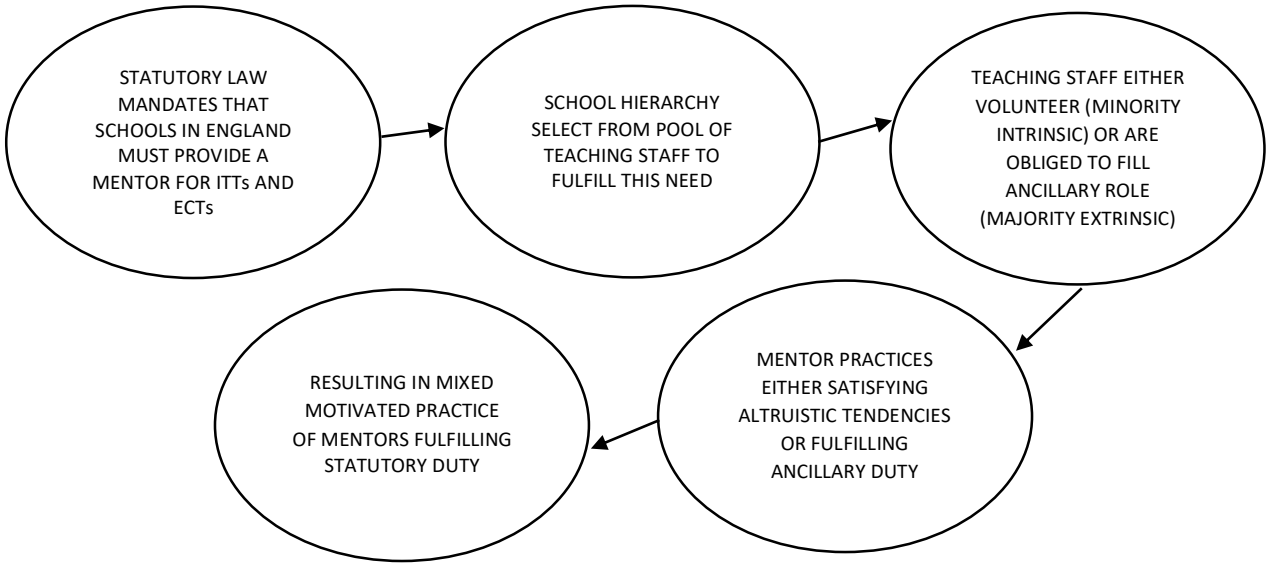

Figure 3. Present mentoring practices

Indeed, a recent study by Mutlu-Gülbak (2023) that considered the conceptions of all agents in preservice teacher training concluded that mentors carried out roles for the sake of duty, and that in the absence of personal interest and motivation the duty becomes a task leading to a higher burden for busy scheduled teacher mentors. The McNair program in the United States, a program committed to balancing Ph.D. graduates from low socioeconomic backgrounds, considers mentoring as an ancillary service that is not required, yet Wyre et al. (2016) found that doctoral students engaged in the McNair program, when mentored with a high relationship emphasis competency, were more likely to be successful. The high relationship competency referred to is one of the six interpersonal instruments developed by Cohen (2003) to produce a rationale to measure mentoring impact. A low score on the instrument's categories for "relationship" (trust) and "informative" (advice), both of which are non-judgmental, coupled with a high score for

"conformative" would be interpreted as indicating "an aggressive and poorly trained mentor style" (Cohen, 2003, Appendix 3, p. 12). This would lead to an interpretation in the current study that the participant with intrinsic motivation being more likely to score high for "relationship" having indicated that they enjoyed and volunteered for the mentorship role; whereas, most participants were reportedly fulfilling a necessary role and were more likely to be conforming to procedure through judgement and compliance. More research is therefore needed in this field and it is highly recommended that practicing and potential mentors should reflect on Cohen's Adult Mentoring Inventory as a benchmark for suitability.

A study by Faulkner-Ellis and Worth (2022) compared the "consumerist" approach to education policy in England with the Welsh education authority's "producerist" approach. They reported that education policy can have an important influence on teacher attrition, and that the difference in workload reported by teachers in each country was one aspect of policy difference, with England having the higher workload and attrition rate (Faulkner-Ellis & Worth, 2022). Therefore, in the current study, being allocated to a mentoring role in order to fulfill a departmental mandate, and without reward of either status or remuneration, would add to the teacher's existing workload and possibly a contributory factor in teacher attrition. In a study by Worth and Faulkner-Ellis (2022), it was reported that headteachers described mentoring mandation as "burdensome" and that the ECF was squeezing the school's mentoring capacity.

Therefore, two models emerge (see Figure 4) between what should be happening and what actually happens in the field.

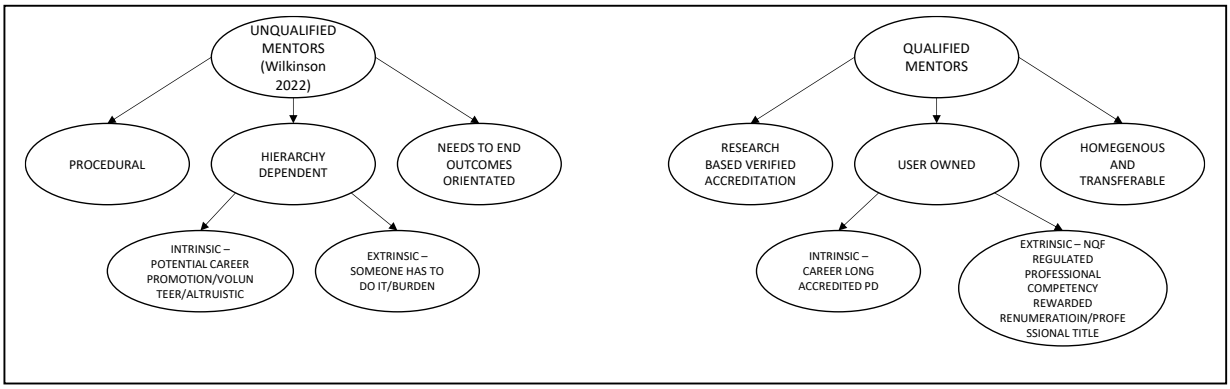

Figure 4. Thematic array of major themes arising

Previous research by Wilkinson (2022) suggested that school-based mentoring was not fit for purpose, as school-based mentors were practicing without qualification, which led to mixed practices which were neither sustainable or transferable. The major theme proposed by Wilkinson (2022) can be added to (see Figure 4) with unqualified mentors practicing procedurally, through needs-based mandation, the minority of whom act on intrinsic altruism, with the majority fulfilling the extrinsic "burden" set by the UK Government's rules on ITT and ECF provision. A more sustainable and transferable practice would be if mentors were accredited with recognized National Qualifications in mentoring, and therefore knowledgeable that their qualifications in mentoring practices provided a clear pathway in their career and that they would be suitably rewarded for their efforts. The annual Teacher Workload Survey conducted by the National Foundation for Teacher Research (Walker et al., 2019) updated findings by claiming that 70% of primary school teachers and 90% of secondary school teachers reportedly found their workload to be a fairly or very serious problem, and that most respondents stated that they could not complete their assigned work within their contracted hours. The workload of today's classroom teachers consists of a myriad of tasks, with the most exemplary including the following in addition to the provision of actual classroom instruction:

- Teaching timetable
- Planning lessons/assessment/schemes of work/resource development, etc.
- Marking/assessment/recording/feedback
- Extra and afterschool tuition
- Data management
- General administration
- Communication with colleagues and student's home
- Student discipline/detentions/follow-up
- Parental meetings.

The recommended non-contact time enabled for all teachers in England is a guaranteed minimum of 10% of their timetabled teaching time, which for a 25-lesson week equates to 2.5 lessons per week allocated to what is classified as "planning and preparation time" (PPA) (National Association of Schoolteachers, Union of Women Teachers, 2022). If teachers are already reporting that they are unable to complete their tasks, then any addition to their workload, such as mentoring without added resource time (which is usually only allocated through promotion to middle management), means that mentoring would add to their existing strain and thereby potentially contributing to the current high rate of attrition. A review of the mental workload literature by Cain (2007) concluded that workload is difficult to quantify and that there is no accepted definition. On this, Table 4 presents tentative definitions and reasons for the measurement of workload.

Table 4. Workload (Cain, 2007)

Tentative aspects of workload	
Aspect 1	Amount of work and number of things to do
Aspect 2	Time in which to do the work
Aspect 3	Subjective psychological experiences of the human operator
Reasons to measure workload	To quantify the mental costs as workload increases
Cost 1	Performance decreases
Cost 2	Errors increase
Cost 3	Variability increases
Cost 4	Fewer tasks completed
Cost 5	Task strategies change
Cost 6	Time pressure confounds task demands
Cost 7	Primary and secondary tasks increase operator load, as more mental stress on dual tasks than each task alone

In 2015, the Workload Challenge (Department for Education, 2015) implemented by the Secretary for Education in England decreed an end to burdensome activities. A figure of 24 minutes planning time per lesson was generally accepted, meaning that the average teacher would spend 24x22 minutes approximately on lesson planning, equaling about 8 hours alone in planning lessons each week. However, a higher burden of non-teaching tasks does not see a reduction in teaching time, which creates a poor incentive for teachers to take on additional responsibilities (Sellen, 2016). The study of teaching motivation by Perryman and Calvert (2020) concluded that teachers

are drawn to teaching because they want to make an intrinsic altruistic difference, but that this motivation quickly fades through a discourse of disappointment due to a high target-driven workload culture, a worsening work-life balance through constant changing government "box-ticking" initiatives, which was notably problematic in the case of England, and resulting in relatively high attrition rates among serving teachers. The "golden thread" of teacher training and retention documents previously mentioned (e.g., Department for Education, 2019b) highlighted the need for teachers to be trained on "cognitive load theory" in order to support student learning, yet the mental workload of teachers is largely neglected.

Traditionally, job satisfaction relates to a worker's job needs being met, broken into two parts, job comfort, as in the conditions of work and job fulfillment, and personal accomplishment (Toropova et al., 2021). In a study of job satisfaction, Toropova et al. (2021) concluded that excessive workload can lead to emotional exhaustion, but that ongoing professional learning as a collective effort can lead to teachers being contented and less prone to leaving the profession, whereas teacher turnover negatively affects collegiality and trust. Chughati and Perveen (2013) expressed that job satisfaction can be gauged by the amount of enjoyment felt through work, and that job satisfaction has implications on performance and effort. They also recommended that teachers should not be expected to take on extra workload without some additional incentive. Springer et al. (2016) studied the Tennessee US$ 5,000 teacher retention scheme in Priority Schools, considered the many monetary incentive schemes trialed previously which impacted on recruitment but had little effect on attrition rates, and concluded that the Tennessee scheme had a causal link to the retention of highly performing teachers in Priority Schools. On the other hand, Colson and Satterfield's (2018) study of the same incentive scheme concluded that no significant link was established with increased retention rates between those eligible for the compensation and those who were not when they examined staff working at a small rural primary school. This finding further demonstrates that compensating high performance determined by student performance does not alleviate teachers' stress and that their workload is a factor in teacher retention. Indeed, in research of a strategy to alleviate teacher retention issues, Reitman and Karge (2019) reported that early career teacher support was key to maintaining long-term retention in the profession, and that this relies upon administrative support (i.e., principal/headteacher) to enable mentors who are independent of judgement to have sufficient mutual time away from the classroom to maneuver beginning teachers through Moir's (1999) five stages of teacher development and Fuller and Brown's (1975) "survival" tactic of "self/task/impact" framework.

Boyd et al.'s (2011) study of the influence of school administration (principal/headteacher) on teacher retention found that over 40% of those that had left the profession raised poor administration and school principals as affecting teacher retention, and that teachers claimed to receive more support for their management roles than their teaching commitments. The so called "revolving door" of teacher turnover in areas with a high proportion of low socioeconomic families was shown to be enhanced by teacher leadership, wherein even teacher "stayers" did not feel strong connections to their administrators and for teacher "leavers" the majority stated that lack of recognition and support was a determining factor for their having left the profession (Kamrath & Bradford, 2020). Communities of practice within a hierarchical system are dependent upon the leadership's preparedness to relinquish power and the agent's willingness to trust collaborative forms of learning in order to reap the rewards of comradery and solidarity (Hairon & Dimmock, 2012), but that the constraints of time will diminish return and increase workload if the practice is not fully recompensed. To that end, a holistic community mentor model is offered (see Figure 5).

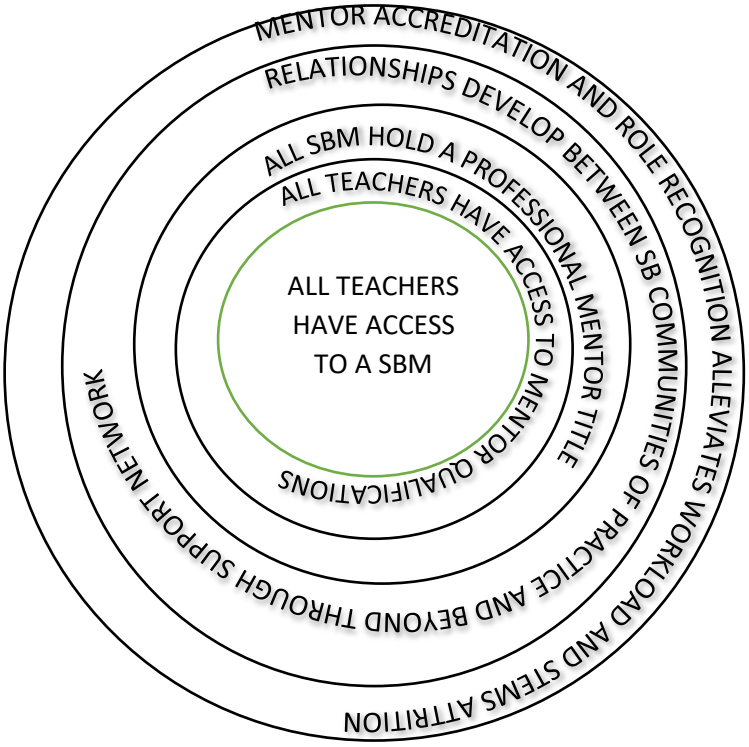

Figure 5. Community of practice holistic qualified mentor model

Figure 5 includes mentor role recognition through the compensated leadership role to offer a Community of Practice Holistic Qualified Mentor Model. In Wilkinson's (2022) original model, it was suggested that:

- All teachers should have access to a school-based mentor, as per recognized governmental priorities in many educational systems.
- All teachers should have access to mentor qualifications, so that all mentees are supported by qualified mentors.
- All practicing mentors should hold a mentor qualification, to demonstrate knowledge and understanding and provide professional clarification to their mentees, as well as to support their career progression, leading to:
- Mentor relationships developing through shared understanding and practice, based on a knowledge and understanding of empirical research evidence attained through Level 7 studies (a UK vocational certification focused on professional skills).

To this original model a further step is introduced:

- Mentors should be recognized within the school hierarchy, as they play an important role in supporting teachers at every stage of their teaching career. In recognition, teacher mentors, as leadership role teachers, should be compensated commensurately with increased salary and timetable reduction, enabling mentors to engage in the process during dedicated times, reducing the workload commitment of mentors, and leading to reduced teacher attrition.

The antecedal conditions, mediating variables, and outcomes that can be determined from the current study are presented as shown in Figure 6:

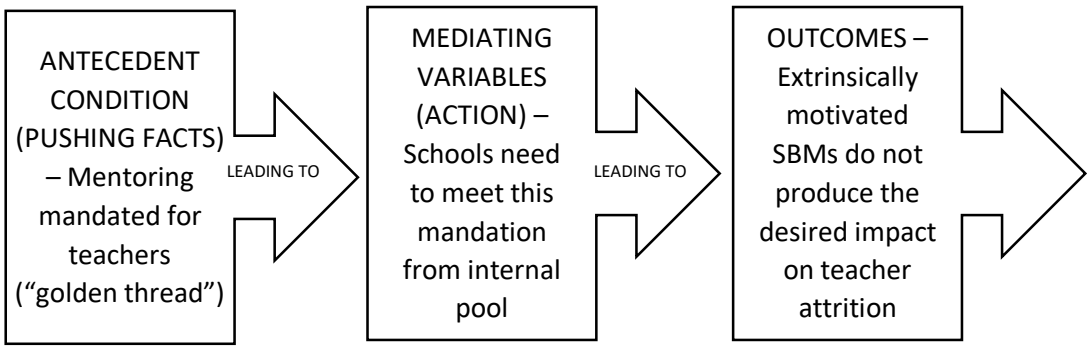

Figure 6. Antecedent conditions, mediating variables, and outcomes

As implied in Figure 6, the UK Government's "golden thread" mandation is that all teachers should have access to a mentor, reasoned through a realization that teachers need support and a desire to reduce teacher attrition. However, without sufficiently funding such a mandation, this means in reality that schools must provide mentors from within their existing pool of teaching staff. Most mandated teaching staff, as shown in the current study, operate with extrinsic motivation, which taken homogenously and interpreted across the whole sector is not having the desired impact as retention of teachers and teacher attrition remains poor.

A recent study by Owusu-Agyman (2022) found that institutions wanting to introduce a voluntary mentoring structure for early career lecturers in a South African university had difficulties in recruiting senior lecturers to act as mentors since they complained about their already high teaching load, and that mentoring would only add to this if a balance was not struck; meanwhile, early careerists were leaving due to lack of support. There was recognition by the UK Government that early career teachers needed mentoring support, whereas early career teachers were previously expected to operate as fully functioning teaching professionals from their very first teaching post on a "sink or swim" basis, and where formalized teacher mentors did not exist. The mandation of teacher mentors has created the mentor role, but in order to meet the requirements of the scheme, teachers are being forced into performing the role without recognition or remuneration, hence the "Cinderella" analogy.

5. Conclusion

The inductive hypothesis from this study would suggest that there is a recurrent phenomenon of extrinsic motivation to offer oneself as an SBM which is juxtaposed with a deductive hypothesis that this may only occur because the UK Government mandated for SBMs in schools, providing the extrinsic push. The current study was inspired by the proposal of Murtagh and Dawes (2020) that the SBM remains a "Cinderella" role within school hierarchy and rewarding structures. The findings suggest that practicing mentors are acting as government agents, fulfilling the mandation to provide mentors to all beginning teachers, through good will, and without remuneration or leadership title. This state could be a contributing factor to the growing teacher attrition problem in the United Kingdom, which highlights a need for further research to validate this interpretation. Presently the following predictions are offered:

- What is possible (what might happen) – SBM, as a label, is a fad that will likely lose trajectory as replacement governments implement alternative initiatives.

- What is plausible (what could happen) – SBMs will continue to offer their services, extrinsically motivated to fulfill a mandated role, but is this sustainable? The present recruitment and retention statistics would predict that it is not, as schools in difficult recruitment areas pull out of training and recruiting early career teachers, so reducing the mentorship burden.
- What is preferable (what should happen) – All SBMs are accredited mentors with a leadership title, so reaping the benefits commensurate and engage in professional communities of practice. This is achievable through recognition that all teachers, based on the nature of the professional role, are collegiality teacher leaders in normal practice, but this requires a "top down" hierarchical shift within schools and an overhaul of systemic government political interference and control.

The current study intends to provide further evidence that the blunt expectation that teacher mentoring will improve both teaching and learning and teacher recruitment and retention, while not incentivizing mentors through leadership role recognition and remuneration, leads to mandated mentors acting through extrinsic motivation which is neither sustainable or desirable.

There are limitations to any qualitative constructivist interpretive study and in this case the connection between the mentor teacher's negative response to receiving an official title to the "Cinderella" metaphor is based on an interpretation of the study by Murtagh and Dawes (2020). The current study presents further evidence that SBMs are acting as teacher mentors on top of their normal teaching role. It could be suggested that the mentors in this study were merely offering their experience to date when asked the question, "Do you hold an official title as a mentor?" They were not asked to justify their answer and so the interpretation of their comments has led to the conclusion that the mentors were operating through extrinsic motivation. There could be a situation where a longstanding mentor provides mentorship for multiple teachers over time, initially to fulfill the need, but then gradually absorbs the additional workload of mentoring into their normal teaching practice and therefore do not perceive the mentoring workload as a burden.

As teachers have a generally benevolent nature (Casey, 1990) the role of mentoring becomes normalized intrinsically. This should not negate or excuse mentoring as a "Cinderella" role, and the impact that mentoring has on beginning teachers should be recognized, as should the importance of this role in both teacher development and potential teacher attrition through their stages of development and of the workload of mentors. Notwithstanding the importance of mentoring, especially for early career teachers and ITT, other than principal/headteacher recruitment, no regulations are in force that schools in England should remunerate or promote teachers employed into a responsibility or hierarchical structure below that of principal/headteacher, and there is no requirement for schools to have a deputy headteacher or for most funded schools (i.e., academies) to even employ qualified teachers (Department for Education, 2021). However, pay and non-pay awards play a crucial role in recruitment and retention, and highly qualified and skilled people should be appropriately rewarded. However, in a marketized public service system there are certain pseudo-commercial supply and demand variables at play. The UK Government offers only non-statutory guidance (Department for Education, 2022a), but clearly states that pay and appraisal policies should minimize workload, that school leaders have a role to minimize the burden faced by their staff, and that good performance should lead to pay progression. The UK Government's "Implementing your school's approach to pay" guidance paper (Department for Education, 2022a, Annex B, p. 52) offered a model pay policy aimed at recognizing and appropriately rewarding teachers for their contribution to the school. This guidance states that a "highly competent" teacher is one whose performance is not only good but also good enough to provide coaching and

mentoring to other teachers. In order to help alleviate the recruitment and retention stress and the possibility that an added mentoring burden could be a causal factor of workload increase, it is recommended that; mentors should be recognized with a title, initiating a Teaching and Learning Responsibility (TLR) to recompense their additional workload and to alleviate their teaching commitment to enable sufficient time for carrying out the mentoring role professionally, triggering an increase in salary to recognize seniority beyond that of a classroom practitioner, so that "Cinderella" can come to the ball. This may be perceived as a trivial ending but the novelty of the metaphor, in that the "Cinderella" case is tragic until a moment of magic transforms the character's life chances, seems apt when considering the consequences of schools not participating in ITT or ECT due simply to a lack of SBMs and the chances of ever achieving the goal of a mentor for every teacher.

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