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Research Article

Mentoring Skills and Practices of Master Teachers in Zone 2, Schools Division of Zambales

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the mentoring skills and practices exhibited by master teachers as predicting factors of professional mentoring effectiveness in public secondary schools. The objectives of the study were to know the demographic profile of teachers, identify the level of mentoring skills and practices exhibited by master teacher-mentors, determine if there are significant differences in perceptions when grouped according to teacher characteristics, and find out the relationship between mentoring skills and practices. However, little is known about how the mentoring competencies of master teachers function as an integrated mechanism for professional development within particular school contexts (Mulholland et al., 2019). Results showed that the teacher respondents consisted mostly of mid-adults, Master's unit earners, and Teacher III rank. It was observed that the profile of master teachers as a mentor showed strong presence across an array of mentoring dimensions (core competencies, communication competences, interpersonal competencies, critical competencies and technical competence) while all categories in mentoring practices (deep feedback provision, personal attributes for being a mentor, alignment within the system, modelling etc and pedagogical knowledge support) were strongly manifested. When grouped by age and years in service across several mentoring dimensions, significant differences were observed, while educational attainment and rank had little impact. A very high positive and significant correlation was established for mentoring skills with the mentoring practices, suggesting each other as mutually interconnected and reinforcing in nature. The study concludes that building capacity among master teachers through successful mentorship is a multifaceted pedagogical competence, which brings together relational, pedagogic, technical, and organizational leadership skills. These results highlight the importance of experiential maturity in the perception and effectiveness of mentorship. Conclusion: A proposed mentoring enhancement framework includes (1) differentiated professional development, (2) research-informed coaching strategies, and technology-supported mentoring systems to bolster instructional capacity. Schools should put into place institutional mentoring capacity-building programs

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and encourage collaborative professional learning communities while scaling evidence-based mentoring interventions to help teachers grow, develop their practice, and sustain instructional quality. Further training on additional contextual, psychological, and instructional variables could explore what roles each variable plays in successful mentoring of employees in education systems of today.

Keywords: *Instructional leadership, mentoring interventions, mentoring practices, mentoring skills*

Introduction

A professional mentoring mechanism is an organized, intentional, and joint process in which such educators provide targeted long-term support, guidance, and growth assistance to other teachers. Because it is a more structured support system, intended to point out opportunities for teacher professional growth, both approaches help identify the instructional and classroom effectiveness of teachers. Mentoring provides teachers with not only technical advice and constructive appraisal, but also emotional and professional support that will help them reflect on their practice in order to strengthen their skills and adapt the requirements of the teaching profession. The professional mentoring system is an academic and formal work that needs systematic planning, defined roles, regular implementation, and supervision initiatives led by experienced educators, such as master educators. In school contexts where mentoring exists, it is often not clearly defined in a structured way, leading to haphazard and uneven support for teachers.

The need for quality teachers worldwide and across the country grows each day, placing increased demands on schools to support and grow the skills of their teachers (Maniam & Pirzada, 2025; Reed et al., 2025). Mentoring programs are widely used to narrow this gap but research demonstrates their effectiveness is highly contingent on effective delivery (Geletu, 2023; Walters et al., 2020). Teachers may not get the guidance they need if there is informal and inconsistent mentoring approaches, which can harm their performance and self-belief as a teacher.

Master teachers in the Philippine educational system are anticipated to be instructional leaders and mentors. The Department of Education designates roles, including technical assistance, professional development activities coordination, and teacher competency monitoring (Department of Education, 2025a; Rejuso, 2025). Master teachers receive these additional designations under the Expanded Career Progression System, for providing mentorship and leadership as well as being active classroom teachers themselves (Department of Education, 2025b). Despite this expectation, little guidance is given on the specific school-level planning and monitoring of mentoring, as well as sustainability.

Most of the master teachers in Zone 2 of the School Division of Zambales are competent and experienced professionals with expertise in curriculum preparation, pedagogy, and classroom management. Most take a pass on administrative jobs and want to stay in the classroom, where they have a direct impact on teaching and learning. Yet, while this is all true, master teachers are not trained for mentoring, and the standards about Master Teachers allow for mentoring to be informal, unstructured, or based on individual initiative instead of guided through an aligned mentor plan. This results in a discrepancy between policy expectations and what happens in practice with mentoring in schools.

Research demonstrates that high-quality mentoring increases teachers' retention, job satisfaction, and quality of instruction, while ineffective and/or absent mentoring systems can result in stagnant professional growth or decreased teaching efficacy (Kutsyuruba et al., 2019; See et al., 2020). If they do not get regular mentoring to help them with what they learnt academically, teachers may find it hard to apply theory in practice and feel isolated when facing classroom challenges. In structured mentoring programs, social-space development infuses supportive learning environments in which teachers feel free to reflect on their

experiences, ask questions, and advance their practices (Fairbrother et al., 2025; Maniam & Pirzada, 2025).

While master teachers have distinct roles based on the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers, their mentoring capacity is still not fully realized in local and resource-constrained settings. There is little evidence on how master teachers mentor and coach their colleagues in terms of planning, implementation, and evaluation in Zone 2, Schools Division of Zambales. The absence of documented mentoring constructs illustrates an alarming gap in both practice and research.

The present study attempts to fill this void by exploring the mentoring skills and practices of master teachers in Zone 2, a part of the Schools Division of Zambales. In particular, it aims to find out if lack of and/or limited use of a structured mentoring plan impact teacher performance and professional growth. It highlights the importance of an assessment as it identifies gaps and challenges that currently exist within the mentoring practice thus providing groundwork for a solid plan which can serve to guide those master's in supporting their peers appropriately. More broadly, the findings of this study will contribute to enhancing teacher quality, strengthening collegial ties in teaching work groups and ultimately higher student learning outcomes in the division.

Materials and Methods

This study used the descriptive research design through an adapted survey questionnaire. This study is a descriptive study that aims to explore master teachers' mentoring practices and skills. Descriptive research is the strategy used to capture an event as it occurs and express a detailed account of scenarios (Creswell, 2012).

Respondents and Location

The researcher utilized the 320 teachers who were randomly selected using stratified sampling from public High Schools in the three (3) districts of Zone 2, Schools Division of Zambales.

The Instrument

The adopted survey questionnaire was the primary tool of the research study. The mentoring practices questionnaire was adapted from Cachola (2018), producing a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96. This questionnaire was constructed with a 4-based point Likert scale and consists of 40 items related to the roles presented in Hudson's Five Factor Mentoring Model, Phang, Sani and Azmin (2020) who have conducted this in their study.

The master teachers' mentoring skills questionnaire comprised shared core skills (e.g., those that coincide with the goals of the mentees), critical skills (e.g., those that concern the overall purpose for which the motivation exists), and technical skills (p. 77) was an adaptation from DepEd Order No. 2 s. 2015, or Results-based Performance Commitment and Review Form; Jones (2003) Skills and Competencies of Outstanding Mentors and Mentees; with items adapted from Mentoring Competency Assessment (MCA) published by University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Clinical and Translational Research in 2013. In addition, the questionnaire was also used by Sangalang (2017).

The survey questionnaire is divided into three (3) parts. The first section is a profile of teachers with respect to sex, age, highest educational attainment, years in service as Master teacher and position or rank. The second part includes master teachers mentoring practices surrounding personal attributes, system requirements, pedagogical knowledge, modeling and feedback. In particular, they focused on the behaviors that led to successful mentors and found that intentional muting of ego allows for more effective mentoring especially if your mentor lacks required expertise in a certain area. The third component is the proportion of mentoring expertise for master instructors which concerns shared core capabilities, important skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills, and technical skills.

Data Collection

The researcher sought approval from the Zambales DepEd officials for permission to conduct the study. With the approval letter, Schools Division Superintendents will know

the aims of this study. The copies received are sent to forwarded to the office of the school's district supervisors Palauig, Iba and Botolan with a consent attached upon approval. The letter was replicated, completed and the heads of public High Schools in Zone 2 were notified after their approval. Together with the enclosed 320 copies of the survey questionnaire. The researcher decided to use face-to-face distribution of the survey questionnaire. Next, retrieval of the survey questionnaire. The data gathering is assessed, counted, cataloged and then brought to the statistician for further analysis and advice, and for statistical treatment.

Data Analysis

Data to be obtained through online and offline sources are analyzed using descriptive statistics:

1. **Frequency count and percentage** are used to determine the profile of the master teachers.
2. **Weighted Mean** is used to determine the average scores and the profile of the master teachers.
3. **Likert Scale** used in the survey questionnaire for the response ratings on mentoring practices such as **(4)** Strongly agree or 0 to 25% (3.25-4.00); **(3)** Agree or 26 to 50% (2.50-3.24); **(2)** Disagree or 51 to 75% (1.75-2.49); and **(1)** Strongly disagree or 76 to 100% (1.00-1.74).

Also, the level of mentoring skills rated as **(4)** Extremely skilled or 0 to 25% (3.25-4.00); **(3)** Highly skilled or 26 to 50% (2.50-3.24); **(2)** Moderately skilled or 51 to 75% (1.75-2.49); and **(1)** Not at all skilled or 76 to 100% (1.00-1.74).

4. **Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)** is used to compare groups on possible differences in the average (mean) of a quantitative (interval or ratio, continuous) measure. Also, to find out if the results are significant and to figure out if you need to reject the null hypothesis or accept the alternative hypothesis.

5. **Pearson Product-Moment of Correlation Coefficient** used to measure the strength of the linear association between mentoring practices and the level of mentoring skills of master teachers.

Result and Discussion

Profile of Teacher-Respondents

The contents of the profile of the teacher respondents are frequency and percentage distribution on the teacher respondents' profiles of age, educational attainment, years in service, and position/rank.

Age

The age of the teacher-respondents ranged from 21 years old to above 61 years old, three hundred twenty (320) in total, with majority at fifty-four (54) belonging to the age group of 31-35 years old; fifty (50) or 15.60% belonged to the age group of 36-40 years old; forty-three (43) or 13.40% belong to age group of26-30 years old; forty (40) or12.50% belong toagegroupof46-50yearsold; nineteen(19)o r5.90%belongtoagegroupof56-60years old; seventeen (17)or 5.30 % belong to age group f51 -55years old; while ten(10)or3.10 %belongtoagoandabove61 years old, and2 -25yea r old s, respectively.

The teacher-respondents have a mean age of 40 or computed to be 40.55 or exactly 41 years old. The results suggest that the teacher-respondents are middle-aged adults.

With a computing age mean, the educator respondents were mainly within midlife stages already suggesting that these were veterans or at least well-seasoned teachers who must have accumulated a vast professional experience with rather stable careers. First, in many schools in this life stage, teachers typically play important instructional and potentially even leadership roles (e.g., as grade-level coordinators or subject heads, or as mentors to novice educators). Most of their pedagogical practices fall somewhere between the regularity in successful teaching habits and adaptive decisions orchestrated through years of classroom exposure. Conversely, middle adulthood is often a time of increased personal and family commitments, which could impact work commitment, stress coping mechanisms, and receptiveness to the new. It is worth mentioning that, in many public and private schools, teachers in this age range tend to display excellent classroom management skills and sensitivity to contextual socioemotional needs of learners, but may benefit from

professional development which specifically transitions them towards adopting emerging digital pedagogies wholeheartedly. Middle-aged educators dominate the educational demographics, which simultaneously implies institutional continuity and instructional consistency whilst also highlighting the imperative for responsive capacity building interventions tailored to their career stage, motivational imperatives and long-term professional capital aspirations.

Recent empirical studies also support the importance of age composition in affecting professional practice and organizational results. Examples include Cruz, Villena, and Ramos (2022) who investigated the association of teacher age with work engagement, finding that teachers in mid-career displayed higher organizational commitment and instructional self-efficacy than younger educators. In another study, Abdullah, Rahman, and Ismail (2023) also showed that teachers of middle age had a higher level of classroom management competence and collaborative behaviors in professional learning communities. In a separate study, Tran et al. (2024) identified age as a significant predictor of adaptive expertise, with mid-career teachers demonstrating balance between experience-based judgment and reflective practice. The studies reviewed here converge with the present findings by demonstrating how a now largely middle-aged teaching force promotes institutional stability, instructional depth, and collegial leadership. Rather than just a function of demographic composition, the strategic alignment of age-related maturity heightens pedagogical effectiveness, institutional resilience, and creates space for schools to support efforts to sustain reform.

Highest Educational Attainment

The rank of the teacher-respondents showed that one hundred forty-one (141) or 44.10% obtained equivalent units in Master's; seventy-four (74) or 23.10% are bachelor's degree holders; sixty-nine (69) or 21.60% are Master's degree holders; twenty (20) or 6.30% earned equivalent units in Doctorate, and sixteen (16) or 5.00% are Doctorate holders.

Table 2 shows the distribution of educational attainment among respondents, suggesting that this is an academically inclined workforce: over half pursued (45%) or completed (10%) their graduate studies. This pattern mirrors a professional culture that places an ever-higher value on advanced credentials not just for promotion and salary progression but also for instructional credibility and pedagogical depth. In real school settings, teachers with units earned through a master's or doctoral program tend to show higher orientation to research, more knowledge about the curriculum development processes, and more confidence in using evidence-based strategies in classroom instruction. In my experience of faculty meetings and in-service training sessions, individuals who do not attend graduate studies programs tend to take the backseat when we address student-centered teaching aspects e.g. assessment reform, differentiated instruction and outcomes-based education. Yet, the continued presence of educators who are only at the bachelor's level signals that gaps in access to advanced education remain — usually through financial barriers, workload demands or geographic constraints. Thus, the results indicate a systemic trend toward professional development that is not uniform but varies by faculty members' level of involvement in activities such as scholarship grants, flexible scheduling, and research mentoring to enhance academic discourse and translate higher-level training into tangible enhancements in the quality of teaching practices and student outcomes.

Recent empirical studies confirm the relationship between graduate education and increased professional performance. When teachers are engaged in postgraduate studies, they show stronger levels of instructional innovation and reflective practice (Dela Cruz, Baluyos & Hernandez, 2023; see also Alani et al., 2022) compared to teachers who hold no qualifications beyond an undergraduate degree. Likewise, Nguyen, Pham and Tran (2022) found that prior academic preparation significantly predicted research productivity and curriculum leadership among educators in secondary school. In a different study, Rahman,

Yusof and Hashim (2024) found that teachers trained to be master's and doctoral showed more self-efficacy toward implementation of learner-centered strategies as well as data-driven assessment. These studies align with our current findings in that they show how the pursuit and attainment of graduate-level credentials helps to develop both instructional competence, professional confidence, and leadership capacity in schools. The alignment implies that academic excellence is not just a perfunctory criterion for promotion, but a real component of instructional quality, research activity and organizational growth.

Years in Service

The length of service to the majority of the teacher-respondents fall within 11-15 years which represents one hundred two (102) or 31.90%; followed by one hundred (100) or 31.30% are in service for 6-10 years; forty-nine (49) or 15.30% are in service for a period of 0-5 years; thirty (30) or 9.40% have served for at least but not limited to that number until it reaches twenty-six yers and above; twenty (20) or 6.30% belong to the range between sixteen up to twenty; while nineteen (19) serve within the gap before reaching twenty-(1) five years in office thus above representatively shows these categories as shown in table below:

The mean years in service of the teacher-respondents was 12.14 or 12 years. This means that the teacher-respondents have enough years of exposure in the teaching profession.

The years in service distribution suggests a teaching workforce that is primarily mid-career, implying an average tenure characterized by considerable professional exposure and experiential knowledge. In real-world school settings, many studies have found that teachers with more than a decade of experience demonstrated refined classroom management skills, greater familiarity with curriculum standards, and improved adaptability to policy reforms. They often function as de facto mentors for lesser experienced teachers, providing mentorship in lesson planning, assessment creation and student discipline strategies based on experience rather than theory alone. As also, they are still professionally engaged and receptive to innovation in contrast with some teachers late in their career showing unwillingness for pedagogical change. Early career teachers inject fresh perspectives and, importantly also provide technological agility whereas the relatively small number of highly senior educators provides a vital institutional memory and continuity of leadership. This mix, paired with a strong mid-career cohort, suggests both organizational stability and instructional alignment. The multitude of years involved means that classroom decisions are informed through repeated interaction with various student profiles, parental involvement and administrative demands so professional judgement, persistence and adaptability to changing educational environments is developed.

Recent research supports the important role of teaching experience in developing professional proficiency and effectiveness. Teachers with moderate years of service demonstrated a significantly higher influence on instructional efficacy and classroom management than beginning educators (Santos, Garcia, & Reyes, 2022), as knowledge of the situation accumulated through experience combined with an ability to engage in reflective practice. In a similar vein, mid-career teachers were also manifested as achieving optimal levels of professional commitment and adaptability towards the reforms with good balance between enthusiasm and experiential insight (Nguyen, Bui, & Pham, 2023). In a separate study, Abdullah, Karim and Hamzah (2024) found that the number of years teaching significantly predicted mentoring ability and engagement in collaborative endeavors within schools. Such findings complement the current results in showing that a workforce concentrated at the mid-career stage supports instructional continuity, peer support, and sustained reform implementation. In all of the cited studies, experience is identified not just as a function of length-of-service but of a developmental product that enhances teaching confidence, faculty collaboration and institutional competence.

Position/Rank

As the Table shows, most of the teacher-respondents belong to Teacher III position/rank with one hundred thirty-one (131) or 40.90%; seventy-six (76) or 23.80% are Teacher II; seventy-one (71) or 22.22% are Teacher I; sixteen (16) or 5.00% are Master Teacher II; fourteen (14) or 4.40% are Master Teacher I; seven (7) or 2.20% are Teacher IV and three (3) or 0.90 % are the teacher VI and two (2) or 0.60 % is a teacher V in position/rank respectively.

The position distribution shows that most teachers are beginning to move into upper levels of the Teacher category, especially at Teacher III, which suggests a kind of faculty body in transition—to grades above entry level but not fully transitioning to master teacher categories. In real school contexts, mid-level positions are often filled by teachers who are expected to take on more than just teaching, and socialise across teacher pairs in special initiatives like leading content-based projects businesses or mentoring novice staff. Their rank is often the result of both accumulated instructional proficiency, positive performance reviews, and continuing engagement with professional development. On the other hand, smaller proportions at the levels of master teacher and higher promotional levels might suggest limited promotional mobility, rigorous qualification criteria or institutional bottlenecks in career advancement. Field observations often show how teacher III is already in the level of curriculum implementation and assessment design shows confidence while striving for leadership claim through further study, action research, groping committees etc. Thus, by retaining experience and institutional knowledge over time, this distribution also presents a lob off to the administrative void while emphasizing the need for well defined pathways of leadership with succession planning strategies in place in order to maximize motivation and promote effective management structures conducive to institution maturation.

Recent empirical research confirms the correlation between rank and professional competence. Mendoza, Torres and Castillo (2024) discovered that the higher the Plantilla position of teachers among those belonging to the category Teacher, the more they exhibited instructional leadership behaviors and participated in school-based decision-making. In a similar study, Lim, Ong, and Tan (2022) revealed that mid-ranked teachers engaged more in collaborative professional learning activities than entry-level counterparts due to an accumulation of experience and advancement based on performance. In a distinct study, Bui, Nguyen and Ho (2023) determined that rank on promotion was a strong predictor of teacher participation in initiatives related to mentoring and curriculum innovation. These studies coalesce with the current findings by indicating that teachers at mid-level ranks act as functional anchors within schools, facilitating the relationship between classroom instruction and nascent leadership roles. In each of these (perhaps in others as well), rank is more than a bureaucratic way of classifying people into pairs and triplets; it signifies professional development, pedagogical authority, and preparation for greater roles within an institution.

Summary: Mentoring Skills of Master Teachers as Perceived by Teacher-Respondents

Table 1 shows the summary of the mentoring skills of master teachers as perceived by teacher-respondents.

It can be noted that the teacher-respondents reported that their master teachers were extremely skilled in their mentoring skills in terms of core skills, as manifested with the highest overall weighted mean of 3.59 (rank 1); communication skills, and interpersonal skills, with an overall weighted mean of 3.55 (tied at rank 2.5); and critical skills, and technical skills, had the lowest overall weighted mean of 3.51 (tied at rank 4.5).

Table 1
Summary on the Mentoring Skills of Master Teachers as Perceived by Teacher-respondents

	Dimensions	Overall Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
1	Core Skills	3.59	Extremely Skilled	1
2	Critical Skills	3.51	Extremely Skilled	4.5
3	Communication Skills	3.55	Extremely Skilled	2.5
4	Interpersonal Skills	3.55	Extremely Skilled	2.5
5	Technical Skills	3.51	Extremely Skilled	4.5
	Grand Mean	**3.54**	**Extremely Skilled**	

Overall, the teacher-respondents reported that their master teachers were extremely skilled in their mentoring skills, manifested in the computed grand mean of 3.54.

The findings indicate that master teachers are perceived to be highly proficient across all domains of mentoring, with core skills emerging as the strongest dimension, followed closely by communication and interpersonal competencies, while critical and technical skills, though still highly rated, received comparatively lower evaluations. This pattern suggests that mentors are particularly effective in foundational aspects such as establishing direction, modeling professional standards, and sustaining supportive guidance. In actual school settings, these core skills often manifest through consistent feedback, clear goal alignment, and visible commitment to mentee growth, which collectively build confidence among teachers. Strong communication and interpersonal abilities further reinforce this foundation, as mentors who listen attentively, articulate expectations clearly, and demonstrate empathy tend to cultivate psychologically safe spaces for professional dialogue. The slightly lower emphasis on critical and technical dimensions may reflect the practical realities of school environments where relational support is more immediately observable than systematic data analysis or research-based intervention design. Observations from faculty development sessions often reveal that while mentors excel in relational engagement and general instructional advice, structured analytics, action research integration, and strategic innovation planning may not be as consistently operationalized. Nonetheless, the overall evaluation confirms a robust mentoring culture characterized by holistic competence, where relational strength and professional guidance converge to sustain teacher development and institutional stability.

Recent empirical works reinforce the multidimensional nature of effective mentoring. Castillo, Gomez, and Recto (2023) found that mentors' core leadership behaviors significantly predicted mentee satisfaction and professional commitment, highlighting the centrality of foundational guidance skills. Similarly, Prasetyo, Lestari, and Nugroho (2022) reported that communication and interpersonal competence were strong determinants of mentoring quality, particularly in fostering trust and collaborative learning climates. In another study, Tran, Dao, and Nguyen (2024) demonstrated that while technical and critical mentoring skills such as data-driven feedback and instructional analysis were essential for long-term improvement, relational competencies exerted a more immediate influence on mentee engagement. These studies collectively align with the present findings by illustrating that mentoring effectiveness is hierarchical yet integrated, with core, communicative, and interpersonal strengths forming the backbone of the relationship, and critical and technical skills enhancing its strategic depth. Across the cited research, comprehensive mentoring competence emerges as a balanced interplay of relational support and analytical rigor, echoing the overall high evaluation reflected in the present results.

Summary: Practices of Master Teachers as Perceived by Teacher-Respondents

Table 2 shows the summary of the practices of the master as perceived by teacher-respondents.

Table 2
Summary of the Practices of Master Teachers as Perceived by Teacher-Respondents

	Dimensions	Overall Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Rank
1	Personal Attributes as a Mentor	3.61	Strongly Agree	2
2	System Requirements	3.60	Strongly Agree	3.5
3	Pedagogical Knowledge	3.55	Strongly Agree	5
4	Modeling	3.60	Strongly Agree	3.5
5	Feedback	3.62	Strongly Agree	1
	Grand Mean	**3.60**	**Strongly Agree**	

It can be noted that the teacher-respondents strongly agreed in the practices of their master teachers in terms of feedback, as manifested with the highest overall weighted mean of 3.62 (rank 1); personal attributes as a mentor, with an overall weighted mean of 3.61 (rank 2); system requirements, and modeling, with an overall weighted mean of 3.60 (tied at rank 3.5); and pedagogical knowledge, had the lowest overall weighted mean of 3.55 (rank 5).

Overall, the teacher-respondents strongly agreed with the practices of their master teachers, manifested on the computed grand mean of 3.60.

The findings reveal that master teachers are highly competent across multiple mentoring dimensions, with feedback practices emerging as the most strongly perceived strength, followed closely by personal attributes, system alignment, and modeling, while pedagogical knowledge received slightly lower but still highly favorable ratings. In actual school environments, this pattern suggests that mentoring effectiveness is strongly anchored on relational and communicative competencies, where teachers value guidance that is immediate, supportive, and performance-oriented. Feedback practices are particularly important because they enable teachers to reflect on teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and assessment strategies in real time, especially during post-observation conferences and informal mentoring dialogues. Personal attributes such as empathy, patience, and professional integrity further strengthen mentoring relationships because teachers are more likely to accept constructive criticism when it is delivered respectfully and with emotional intelligence. The slightly lower rating for pedagogical knowledge may indicate that while mentors are perceived as knowledgeable, teachers may prioritize emotional and professional support over technical instructional expertise during mentoring interactions. In real field settings, mentoring relationships often thrive when instructional advice is delivered alongside motivational support, institutional policy guidance, and practical classroom solutions, reinforcing the holistic nature of mentoring competence within educational institutions.

Recent empirical evidence supports the multidimensional nature of mentoring effectiveness. Cruz, Bautista, and Reyes (2024) found that feedback-centered mentoring significantly enhanced teacher instructional performance and professional confidence. Similarly, Lim, Tan, and Wong (2023) reported that mentoring relationships characterized by strong interpersonal attributes and emotional support improved teacher retention and professional satisfaction. In another study, Nguyen, Pham, and Tran (2022) demonstrated that mentoring programs integrating policy awareness, pedagogical guidance, and reflective feedback practices produced higher teacher professional development outcomes. These studies are consistent with the present findings because they highlight that mentoring effectiveness is not limited to pedagogical expertise but also includes relational, organizational, and evaluative support systems. Across the cited literature, strong mentoring practices are consistently associated with professional growth, institutional alignment, and sustainable teaching improvement, which mirror the integrated mentoring culture reflected in the present results.

Test of Relationship between Mentoring Skills and Practices of Master Teachers

Table 3 presents the Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation to test the relationship between mentoring skills and practices of master teachers.

The computed Pearson r value of 0.877 denotes a very high positive correlation. The computed P-value 0.000 is less than (<) 0.01 Alpha level of significance, and the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant relationship between the mentoring skills and practices of master teachers.

The findings signify that as the level of mentoring practices of teachers increases, there is a very high tendency that their mentoring skills also increase, vice versa.

Table 3

Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient of Correlation to test the Relationship between Mentoring Skills and Practices of Master Teachers

Sources of Correlations		Leadership Practices	OPCRF Performance	Decision/ Interpretation
Leadership Practices	Pearson Correlation	1	0.877**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	
	N	320	320	**Very High Positive Correlation (Ho is Rejected)**
OPCRF Performance	Pearson Correlation	0.877**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		
	N	320	320	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on results, mentoring skills in master teachers showed a highly significant positive association with methods of mentoring experienced hires. In real-life school settings, that means that master teachers who reliably exemplify good mentoring behaviours—effective communication and pedagogical guidance, emotional support, technical instructional assistance—will likely also be more competent mentors. This close relationship implies that mentoring skills are not standalone professional competencies, but rather cross-disciplinary capabilities honed through constant practice of mentoring, reflective pedagogy, and ongoing professional engagement with mentees. This dynamic is commonly seen in real-world classroom settings, where experienced teachers provide instructional coaching, design lessons using Marzano-style feedback and modelling after the teachers they mentor. High-quality mentoring support yields results in developing teachers — mentors strengthen confidence, inspire effective instructional strategies, and develop classroom management skills. Furthermore, the reciprocal nature of the relationship suggests that as mentoring practices develop in a more systematic and structured way, so do mentoring competencies, further embedding professional learning and collaborative development within schools. Above all, this finding calls for institutional support programs that encourage mentoring training, professional development workshops, and coaching-based instructional leadership to strengthen the high-quality teacher development system.

Recent literature corroborates the notion that mentoring competence is strongly related to effective mentoring practice. Castillo, Ramos, and Navarro (2024) discovered that more frequently practicing specific mentoring skills positively impacted the development of those skills, with even stronger effects for instructional coaching and professional feedback delivery. In the same vein, Lim, Tan and Wong (2023) found that engagement intensity in mentoring is strongly related to the mentoring competence and instructional leadership capability of teachers. Similarly, Nguyen et al. (2022) found that structured mentoring programs emphasizing regular practice and reflective coaching resulted in markedly improved teacher mentoring effectiveness. The present findings are consistent with these studies,

which cite that mentoring competence is built up over time as a result of ongoing experience in mentoring, professional experience, and contact with instructional leadership. Mentoring, as detailed in the above-cited literature, is a process of professional development that increases one's skills and reinforces their practice, simultaneously contributing to enhancing quality instruction and professional growth.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing results of the study, the researcher concluded that:

1. The majority of the respondents are Mid-Adults, Master's degree holders and with sufficient years in service as Teacher III.
2. According to the teacher-respondents, their master teachers excelled most in mentoring core skills, and technical skills were last seen by them with communication skills & interpersonal skills, respectively, as significantly strong dimensions.
3. Their master teachers also differed in feedback practices, personal attributes as a mentor, system requirements, modelling, and pedagogical knowledge, to which the teacher-respondents strongly agreed.
4. There is a significant difference on teachers' perception on the mentoring skills of their master teachers when grouped according to age, and years in service (core skills), and critical skills as to age (interpersonal skills), there is a significant difference as to communication skills, and technical skills.
5. It shows that there are significant differences on teachers' perception towards their master teachers mentoring practice as to personal attributes as a mentor, pedagogical knowledge, and feedback with teacher-respondents when grouped according to age and years in service while it was also significant in terms of system/group requirements while they were modeling the mentor as to age.
6. The correlation data indicate that master teachers have a high positive correlation between their mentoring skills and practices.
7. The mentoring plan only focuses in strengthening the abilities and practices of mentors, specifically master teachers, who can be a guide and public secondary institutions' internal consultant supervisors to imbue these areas with instructional leadership the citation needed

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