

**DISTRIBUTED MENTORING: PREPARING PRESERVICE RESIDENT TEACHERS
FOR HIGH NEEDS URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS**

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ABSTRACT

A distributed mentoring model was implemented to scaffold preservice teachers completing a residency in high needs urban turnaround high schools. In this situated learning context, expert faculty and peer mentors contributed confirmatory insights for promoting engaged evidence-based pedagogy, instructional differentiation, homework completion, classroom community building, student motivation, meaningful assessment, and student support, additive insights related to student attendance, meaning of school, and school personnel issues, and complementary insights regarding classroom management and student/teacher relationship building. The expert mentor demonstrated how theory and research inform classroom practice, recommended scholarly resources, and modeled evidence-based problem solving. Peer mentors validated one another's experiences, shared problem-solving strategies employed by local school personnel, and contributed instructional suggestions based on their situated learning encounters. The distributed mentoring model effectively addressed a broad range of knowledge and skills required for successful teaching in high needs urban high schools.

Introduction

Increasingly, urban teacher preparation programs are employing a residency training model. In this model, preservice teachers are situated in urban schools for an extended time (typically no less than a year) to observe and participate in teaching activities while simultaneously completing university coursework. This model thus combines elements of preservice teaching (university coursework) with that of beginning teaching (extended on-site direct teaching experience). Preservice resident urban teacher preparation programs are designed to "recruit, prepare, and retain bright and capable teachers for high-needs urban schools" (Berry, Montgomery, & Snyder, 2009, p. 1) and to insure that "preservice teachers...exit their teacher preparation program with a professional disposition toward equity and social justice as well as the knowledge and skills required to meet the needs of all students in their classroom" (Tindle, Freund, Belknap, Green, & Shotel, 2011, p. 1).

Research has found that both preservice and beginning teachers benefit from a distributed mentoring model in which knowledge and skills are acquired from a variety of expert and peer sources. These include "interactions with mentor teachers, university faculty, administration, parents and the community...interactions with each other and through introspection and reflection" (Kang & Nickel, 2012, p. 1). Expert mentoring is typically provided by university faculty and in-school mentor teachers for preservice teachers and by in-school mentor teachers, coaches, and administrators for beginning teachers. By definition, expert mentors have greater experience and expertise than mentees. Peer mentors for preservice teachers are usually other preservice teacher classmates, with mentors and mentees having similar levels of experience and expertise. Peer mentors for beginning teachers are most often in-service teachers at the beginning teacher's school who share an interest in instructional problem-solving and co-planning and who

function as co-equal colleagues regardless of their actual levels of experience and expertise.

Expert mentoring enhances preservice teachers' development of pedagogical practices in general (Frykholm, 2005) and specifically helps them acquire effective classroom management strategies (Kang & Nickel, 2012; Sempowicz, 2011). Expert mentoring fosters a strong and positive teacher identity that increases the likelihood that mentees will remain in the teaching profession (Walkington, 2005). Peer mentoring is equally efficacious, providing a forum for sharing teaching goals, discussing subject content, critiquing practice teaching videos, sharing classroom struggles, and celebrating successes (Frykholm, 2005). Some preservice teachers felt safer and more comfortable questioning peers than faculty or school-based mentors, and a majority believed they gained psychological support, feedback, and an exchange of ideas from peers (Kang & Nickel, 2012). Nguyen and Baldauf (2010) found that preservice teachers participating in a formalized peer mentoring program outperformed their non-peer mentored counterparts in instructional practice, while Sawchuk (2009) discovered that preservice teachers sought out peer mentors to discuss classroom successes and failures, reflect on their practice, and discuss problems arising in their academic content areas.

Expert mentoring is also a key component of beginning teachers' success (Conway, Hansen, & Schulz, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1999, Johnson, 2001; Smith & Evans, 2008; West, 2002), playing an essential role in increasing beginning teacher retention (DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013; Hallam, Chou, Hite, & Hite, 2012; Jones & Pauley, 2003; Kang, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Whitaker, 2000). Expert mentoring additionally increases beginning teachers' expertise and confidence (Evertson & Smithey, 2000; Fluckiniger, McGlamery, & Edick, 2006; Hanson, 2010; Langdon, 2011; Turley, Powers, & Nakai, 2006) and their processes of reflection (Forbes, 2004; Pedro, 2006). Showers and Joyce (1996) note that beginning teachers who were members of peer coaching groups that co-planned instruction "exhibited greater long-term retention of new strategies and more appropriate use of new teaching models over time" and that peer coaching groups frequently collaborated to identify pressing student needs, select appropriate curriculum content, and assess the impact of the curriculum on student performance (Showers & Joyce, p. 14).

Distributed mentoring is especially integral to the success of preservice and beginning teachers who teach in urban schools. A myriad of challenges exist in urban schools, including large class sizes, high rates of teacher turnover, low rates of long-term teacher retention, high student absenteeism, low student graduation, college attendance, and post-graduate employment rates, high rates of trauma and violence in students' home neighborhoods, and tenuous family-school partnerships. Expert mentoring of preservice urban school teachers increases these teachers' ability to recognize issues that impact children and families and to craft advocacy strategies for these issues, thus strengthening family-school partnerships (Catapano, 2006). Peer mentoring amongst preservice teachers increases subsequent teacher retention in urban schools (Hines, Murphy, Pezone, Singer, & Stacki 2003; Tobin & Roth, 2005), promotes greater critical reflective inquiry and ideological change (Mensah, 2009) and increases mutual social capital and respect between teachers and students in urban schools (Tobin & Roth, 2005).

Similarly, both expert (Metz, 2007; Saffold, 2006; Shakrani, 2008; Waddell, Edwards, & Underwood, 2008; Wilkinson, 2009) and peer mentoring (Malow-Iroff, O'Connor, & Bisland 2007) of beginning urban school teachers increases teacher retention. Expert mentoring furthermore builds teacher self-confidence, competence in the ability to teach, and the ability to engage with collegial networks that support teaching (Saffold, 2006) while peer mentoring helps beginning teachers overcome their sense of inexperience and isolation (Hines et al., 2003).

Although studies of expert and peer mentoring exist in the urban teacher preparation literature, rarely are these two types of mentoring examined comparatively within a single study. In the present study, the contributions of expert and peer mentors are examined within a single study sample, as are the ways in which these different types of mentoring provide confirmatory, additive, and/or complementary contributions to preservice resident urban teachers' knowledge and skill base. For purposes of this study, a confirmatory contribution is one in which expert and peer mentors both address an issue and do so in highly similar ways. An additive contribution occurs when one type of mentor raises and expounds upon an issue that the other type of mentor does not. A complementary contribution is present when expert and peer mentors both address an issue but do so in very different ways. Thus, the present study provides insights regarding how expert and peer mentors jointly reinforce and/or uniquely enhance knowledge and skills acquired by novice urban teachers.

Method

Participants

Twenty-five preservice teachers who had no previous teaching experience and who participated in a residency program within a network of high needs urban turnaround high schools in a large Midwestern city were studied. These turnaround schools have made low annual yearly progress toward student academic achievement and have experienced large-scale replacement of school administrators, teachers, and staff—but they have also added academic programs and upgraded physical facilities in an attempt to boost student success. Forty percent of participants were male and 60% were female. Fifty-six percent of participants were White, 24% were African American, 12% were Asian, and 8% were Hispanic. Participants taught in the disciplines of language arts, mathematics, science, social science, and special education. Preservice resident teachers observed and engaged in teaching activities on a daily basis four days per week while attending university classes to obtain their Master's of Arts in Teaching one day per week or evenings over the course of a year. Following the residency year, a majority of these resident teachers are offered employment within the turnaround public high school network for the next three years, and 90-95% of them are hired in this capacity.

During their residency year, preservice teachers receive three types of expert mentoring: mentor teacher coaching (from the resident teacher's on-site classroom teacher, who provides a model of teaching, coaching, feedback, and opportunities for reflection), mentor resident coaching (from an on-site full-time veteran teacher who provides both resident teachers and their mentor teachers coaching and who makes linkages between on-site residency and university coursework experiences), and university faculty mentoring (from university faculty who provide instructional coursework designed to enable resident teachers to succeed in urban classrooms and who help resident teachers make linkages between university coursework and on-site experiences while providing reflective opportunities.) Resident teachers are enrolled in a cohort that remains together as a unit through both the preservice residency and the post-residency first-year beginning teacher sequences, thus providing a powerful transitional network of peer-mentored support. Two forms of mentoring were examined in the present study: expert mentoring provided by a university faculty mentor (who is also the author of this study) and peer mentoring by cohort preservice resident classmates.

Instruments and Procedures

Data was collected from preservice resident urban teachers when they were students in the university faculty mentor/study author's introductory, blended learning educational psychology course. Prior to the start of class, each preservice resident was randomly assigned the responsibility to create and post a case study in week 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 of the 10-week course. Thus, in each of the first five weeks of the course, five case studies were posted and available to receive expert and peer feedback. Case studies were privacy-protected and depicted real world situations that preservice residents encountered at their residency high school placements. In the week that a preservice resident posted their case study, they were responsible for providing at least one response to a peer's posted case study. In weeks where they did not post their case study, they were responsible for posting at least two responses to peers' posted case studies.

Each of the first five weeks, the expert faculty mentor responded publically on the discussion board to at least one of each preservice resident's posts. Preservice residents and their expert mentor were enjoined to discuss, critique, and augment case studies in light of theory, scholarly research, and experiential situational knowledge designed to advance preservice residency teachers' insights about situated urban classroom instruction.

Data were analyzed using a phenomenological research approach in order to understand core elements of the lived experience of distributed mentoring in high needs urban turnaround high schools (Cresswell, 1998). A deep understanding was sought of (a) the types of knowledge and skills expert and peer mentors contributed to the urban high school preservice resident teacher preparation experience (b) the extent to which this knowledge and skill set functioned in confirmatory, additive, and/or complementary ways, and (c) how expert and peer mentors applied evidence-based theory and research to teaching in urban classrooms within a climate of increased instructional accountability. Preconceived theories, hypotheses, "taken for granted" assumptions, and conventional wisdom about the nature of the phenomenon under study were suspended (bracketed, Lester, 1999, or epoched, Cresswell, 1998) in order to reduce distortion and allow the natural structure of the phenomenon to emerge from the actor's point of view (Moustakas, 1994). A multiple participant research design was employed in order to increase the strength of inferences drawn (Lester, 1999). Data consisted of written student (peer) and instructor (expert) narratives in the form of online discussion board postings. Rapport and empathy was maintained between researcher and participants (Lester, 1999) via online and face-to-face instructional mentoring and support delivered by the researcher to the participants over a ten-week time period. Themes were abstracted from preservice resident teachers' and their university faculty mentor's online postings in ways that provided essential meaning—that is, that exemplified the principle of "without which the experience would not have been the same" (Waters, n.d., p. 1). All abstracted themes represent collective themes that occurred across a majority of study participants (Waters, n.d.). Themes were abstracted using the multi-step process outlined by Moustakas (1994) as follows: (a) read through all data to obtain a sense of the whole (b) re-read all data to identify transitions in meaning to facilitate meaning-making (c) eliminate redundancies, relate themes to each other, and relate themes to the whole (d) transform themes into the language of science (e) synthesize and integrate insights (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13-14).

Results

Knowledge and Skills Contributed by Expert and Peer Mentors

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate expert and peer mentors' most frequently-discussed content topics in online case study postings.

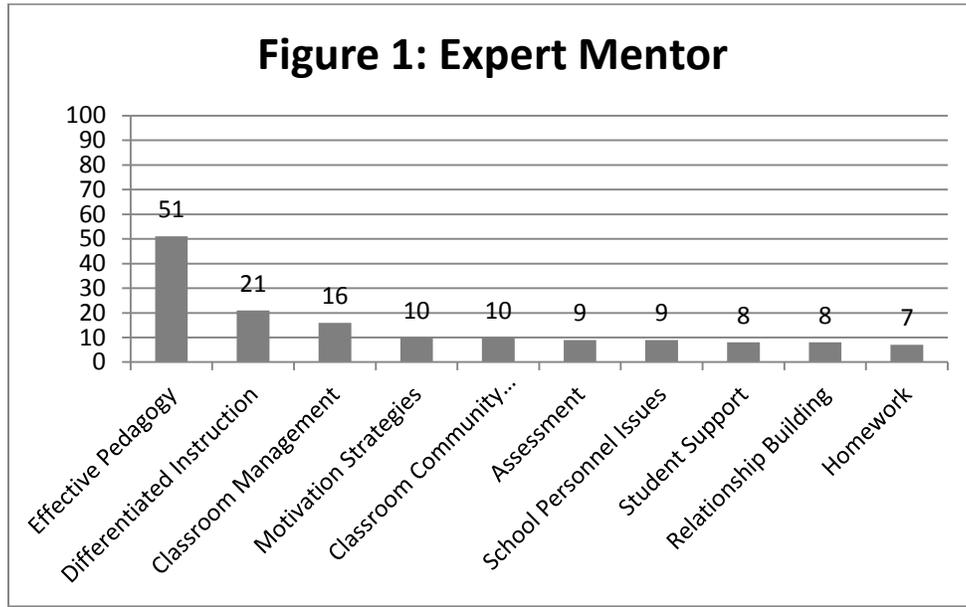


Figure 1. Number of Expert Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Topics (Total number of times the expert mentor posted on all topics = 179)

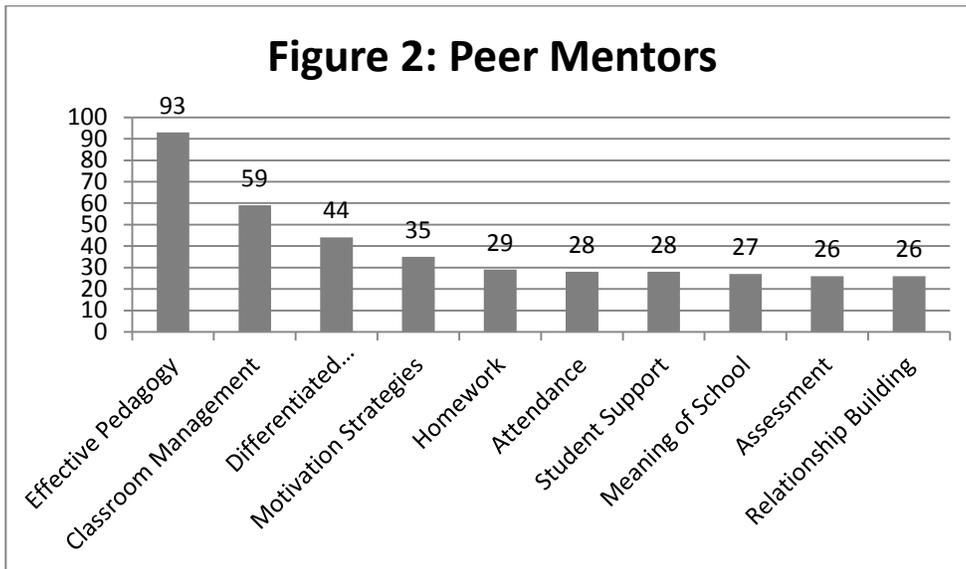


Figure 2. Number of Peer Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Topics (Total number of times peer mentors posted on all topics = 476)

In qualitatively analyzing this data, three primary themes emerged. The first theme involves “fostering student learning.” Topics related to this theme included strategies for bolstering student attendance, designing differentiated instruction, engaging in effective pedagogy, encouraging students to complete homework, and finding ways to motivate students to perform school-related tasks. Both the expert and peer mentors placed high importance on discussing methods of differentiating instruction, engaging in effective pedagogy, increasing student homework completion, and employing effective motivational strategies with students, and did so in confirmatory ways. However, peer mentors raised a unique issue that they discussed extensively with each other that the expert faculty mentor did not: The negative impact of high student absenteeism on academic achievement, thus bringing an additive element to the discussion. A sampling of expert and peer mentoring comments related to this theme are presented in Table 1.

The second theme embodies “building positive school climate.” Topics addressed within this theme included classroom community building, classroom management, and creating positive teacher-student relationships. Both expert and peer mentors were equally concerned with establishing positive classroom communities and effective classroom management systems. Preservice resident teachers were mandated by their turnaround high schools to implement an authoritarian, zero-tolerance, behavior-based discipline strategy. While adhering to this requirement, both expert and peer mentors were equally aware in a confirmatory way that relationship-building was a crucial element in building positive classroom community, as research indicates that building relational trust, respect, and personal regard for students are central to developing effective educational communities in urban schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2004).

However, expert and peer mentors provided complementary approaches to classroom management, with the expert mentor stressing student empowerment and belongingness as effective classroom management tools and peer mentors making numerous suggestions to each other about ways to adhere to the behavior-based discipline strategy as charged by their schools. Furthermore, while the expert mentor gave general advice on how to establish teacher-student relationships, peer mentors drew attention in a complementary way to the challenge of creating and sustaining teacher-student relationships in schools with high student turnover, a topic of high interest amongst all resident teachers. A sampling of expert and peer mentoring comments related to this theme are presented in Table 2.

The third identified theme is “navigating the school as system.” Every school is complex, but high needs turnaround urban high schools face unique challenges in terms of being staffed by new teachers, administrators, and support staff, all who are attempting to produce success in a school that has been labeled as underperforming. In this regard, both the expert and peer mentors flagged the need for meaningful assessment of student progress and support of academically and socially struggling students in a confirmatory way. However, the expert mentor additively addressed issues related to school personnel (including teacher retention, professional development, and support), building collegial relationships, navigating inconsistencies in school policy implementation, and addressing classroom problems using a systems approach, while peer mentors discussed how to demonstrate the relevance of schooling to students who had few adult role models who had either graduated from high school or attended college, a topic that generated a great deal of peer-to-peer discussion. A sampling of expert and peer mentoring comments related to this theme are presented in Table 3.

Table 1

Expert and Peer Mentor Sample Comments: Fostering Student Learning

Content Topic	Expert Mentor Comments	Peer Mentor Comments	Contribution Type
Attendance	-	“There's always one guy who misses school for three days and then shows up late on the fourth day and acts like he doesn't want to be there. My goal as a teacher is to never budge on one principle: Meet them half way.”	Additive
Differentiated Instruction	“If you see an intervention that has potential but needs some tweaking, go ahead and tweak it. Then collect data on how well it works. This is what being a practitioner-researcher in your classroom is all about.”	“If we approach our students as "shepherds" seeking to guide them to whatever resources they need to be successful in their learning, then we will do our best to investigate what it is that is at the root of their behavior.”	Confirmatory
Effective Pedagogy	“Good teachers build lessons around learning objectives and goals—not around instructional materials and instructional strategies.”	“Truly transformative uses for technology exist but they simply don't fit into five out of five lessons per week. I think we should concentrate on finding one or two fantastic uses for them a week per class.”	Confirmatory
Homework	“In-school study halls and flex in-school work periods are powerful aids to helping students complete their homework. Research on the appropriate level of difficulty for assigned homework suggests that students should be able to complete 90-95% of a homework assignment on their own—which means homework is supposed to offer opportunities to practice reasonably well-learned skills, not present new and unfamiliar content.”	“Consider an internet based homework assignment due the next day in a school where 90% of students do not have internet access outside of school. Most would agree this is an unrealistic expectation—but the same assignment with a 5-day deadline would be reasonable. You haven't changed the educational value of the assignment and you have maintained the integrity of student responsibility, but by considering the entire demographic you have employed a realistic journey.”	Confirmatory
Motivation	“Many [disengaged] students are indeed high achievers who could be empowered to be leaders inside and outside of school if they are mentored to do so and appropriate venues can be found for their talents.”	“I'm wondering: Can we jump start [this disengaged student's] interest, or is that up to him? Are we just there as an obligated babysitter to keep him off the streets? When does our role stop and his own self-efficacy begin?”	Confirmatory

Table 2

Expert and Peer Mentor Sample Comments: Building Positive School Climate

Content Topic	Expert Mentor Comments	Peer Mentor Comments	Contribution Type
Classroom Community Building	“That guy in class,” from psychologist Alfred Adler’s point of view, is engaging in the mistaken goal of power. Power is tremendously important for students who want to feel that they control important and meaningful aspects of their lives.”	“My consequences tended to be framed in terms of “I need you to do X” or “X is unacceptable.” Not, “You have a choice, do X or suffer a consequence,” or “You need to do X in order to learn.” I think students would give me much less pushback if they felt like they had agency and felt like this was “our” classroom.”	Confirmatory
Classroom Management	“The more classroom community building that takes place, the less classroom management is required.”	“Sometimes my students have a general lack of respect for me as a teacher and towards my abilities as a resident. They also think/have learned they are more likely to be able to get away with things when I am teaching than when my mentor—who has a super tight Behavior Management Cycle—is teaching.”	Complementary
Teacher-Student Relationships	“Students read the message of caring and reliable teacher involvement even if they test you by repeatedly asking the ‘Silent Question’: ‘People say I’m bad. I worry that I’m bad. Will my teacher think I’m so bad that he/she will give up on me?’ Once students learn to trust a teacher’s high expectations and high support, they stop asking the ‘Silent Question’.”	“Think of new ways to reach the new students: conferences, appointments, check-ins. Reach out, ask around your departments; talk to teachers and learn how the veterans have handled this stuff in the past.”	Complementary

Table 3
Expert and Peer Mentor Sample Comments: Navigating the School as System

Content Topic	Expert Mentor Comments	Peer Mentor Comments	Contribution Type
Assessment	“As you teach the lessons you have prepared, can you use the ACT questions as a formative assessment to determine how much your students have learned and will be able to demonstrate on the ACT?”	“I truly believe that trying to train students how to answer certain types of questions fails to teach them the thinking skills which naturally allow them to think their way through a problem.”	Confirmatory
Meaning of School	-	“Students expect to go to college, but they are simultaneously incapable of bringing a writing instrument or notebook to class. They expect to go to college, but to get them to read 10 pages for homework is a painful struggle.”	Additive
School Personnel Issues	“The school principal has to establish meaningful, attainable, and consistent standards and then train all school personnel (teachers, specialists, staff, and administrators) to implement these standards with students.”	-	Additive
Student Support	“If school is a place where students not only learn academic skills but also a place where they practice real-world demands, a student who steps up to responsibilities will ultimately keep a real-world job.”	“As secondary educators we truly have a responsibility to teach the students good academic behavior, as they are so close to either attending college or choosing a vocational career.”	Confirmatory

Additional topics highlighted by both expert and peer mentors in confirmatory ways included providing high school students with mentors and positive role models, helping combat students’ learned helplessness, defining high but realistic teacher expectations for students, and building effective family-school partnerships.

Application of Evidence-Based Theory and Research to Urban Classroom Instruction

Figures 3 and 4 detail theoretical paradigms referred to by name (most characteristic of the expert mentor) or by inference (most characteristic of peer mentors).

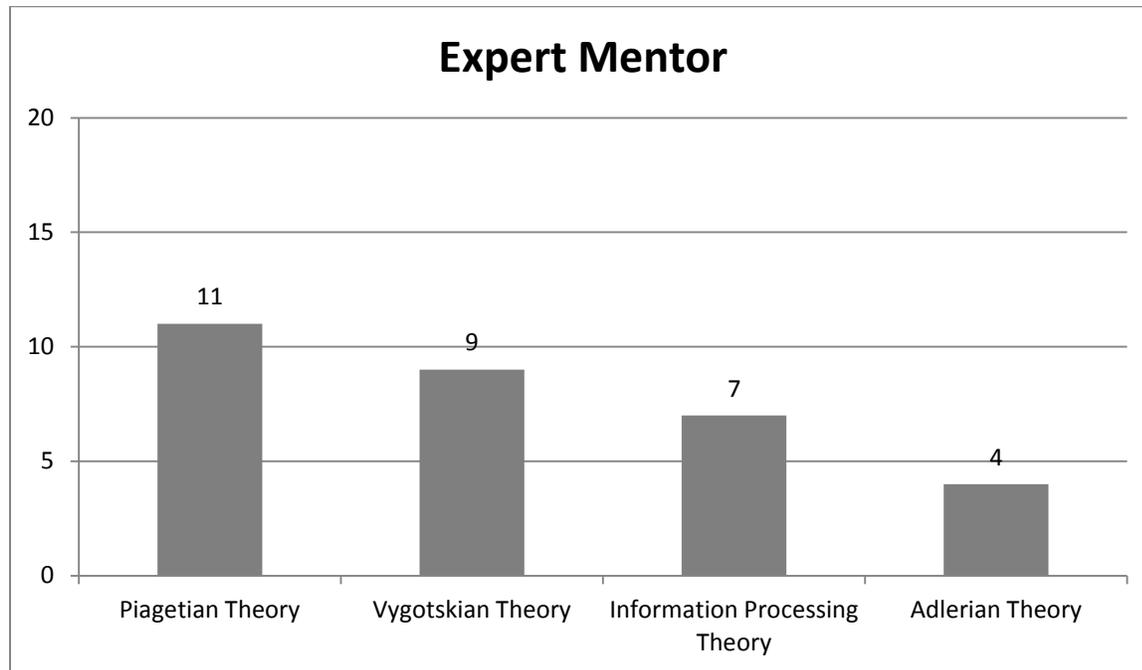


Figure 3. Number of Expert Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Theories (Total number of times the expert mentor posted on all theories = 53).

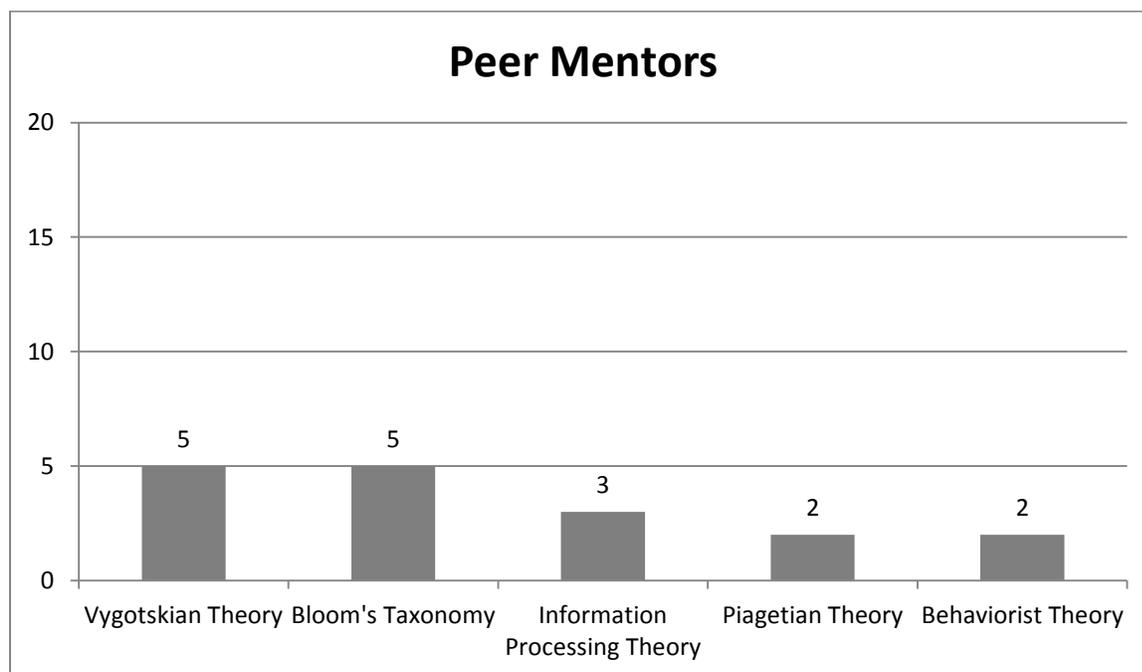


Figure 4. Number of Peer Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Theories (Total number of times peer mentors posted on all theories = 21)

Table 4

Expert and Peer Mentor Sample Comments: Theoretical Paradigms

Theory	Expert Mentor Comments	Peer Mentor Comments	Contribution Type
Adlerian Theory	“Here we likely have one of Adler's mistaken goals: Inadequacy, in which a student erroneously believes that “I cannot belong. I am helpless and unable to do things for myself.”	-	Additive
Bloom's Taxonomy	-	“Discovery-based learning and pushing higher Bloom's levels is hard stuff. I don't fully have a grasp on increasing the amount of such activities in my math lessons.”	Additive
Information Processing Theory	“You may want to consider factors that increase student attention to what you are teaching. Paying attention is the first step towards remembering from an information processing point of view.”	“We review material every day and try to incorporate previous topics into lessons to increase the retention rate. Still, if I were to ask students about a particular topic from a few weeks ago, only a few students would remember.”	Confirmatory
Piagetian Theory	“Piaget says that to be able to learn anything new, we have to know which existing conceptual schema to place this new learning into or have to know it is necessary to create a new schema if no previous schema exists.”	“According to Piaget, stimulating curiosity and promoting discovery based learning deepens knowledge.”	Confirmatory
Vygotskian Theory	“Any time we place students as mentors (experts) for younger students (novices; Vygotsky), we typically see gains in both our expert and novice groups. Hence one reason why the letter-writing approach works.	“One intervention had students write letters to younger, middle school students about how intelligence is malleable and can improve with individual effort. Students who wrote these letters had improved GPAs.”	Confirmatory

Thematically, both expert and peer mentors' discussions focused primarily on theories related to cognitive learning, with discussion of theories related to social-emotional learning representing a distant second-tier topic of conversation. Overall, the expert mentor contributed the majority of specifically-identified theory-based discussion, indicating that more effort needs to be directed towards encouraging novice teachers to apply evidence-based theories to classroom practice, especially in a national school climate that compels teachers to engage in evidence-based decision-making. The low annual yearly progress, graduation, and college attendance rates that characterize many high needs urban high schools makes focusing on student academic gains inevitable.

It is therefore not surprising that both expert and peer mentors referenced the cognitive learning theories of Vygotsky, Piaget, and Information Processing Theory in a confirmatory way, especially since these learning theories were directly taught in the context of the educational psychology course. Since novice teachers spend long hours engaged in lesson planning, Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain was a popular additive topic of discussion amongst peer mentors. Peer mentors also additively advised each other to implement operant conditioning strategies to deal with social-emotional issues (as required by their residency schools) while the expert mentor additively augmented the peer mentors' behavior-based strategy by offering a relationship-building approach to student social-emotional growth via Adlerian theory. Additional theories cited additively included Bandura's modeling theory, Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory, Dewey's and Montessori's experiential learning theories, and Gardner's and Sternberg's multiple intelligence theories (introduced by the expert mentor) and constructivist theory and discovery learning (discussed amongst peer mentors). A sampling of expert and peer mentoring comments related to this theme are presented in Table 4.

Figures 5 and 6 highlight the types of evidence-based research that expert and peer mentors cited most often to inform classroom instruction.

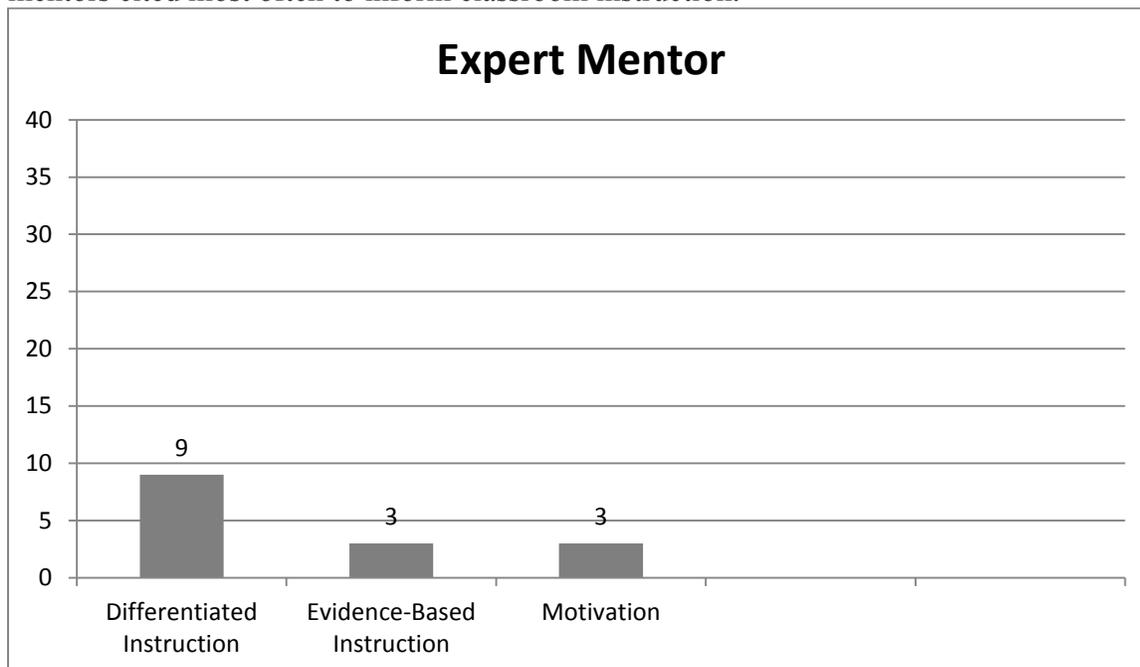


Figure 5. Number of Expert Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Evidence-Based Research (Total number of times the expert mentor posted on all evidence-based research = 38)

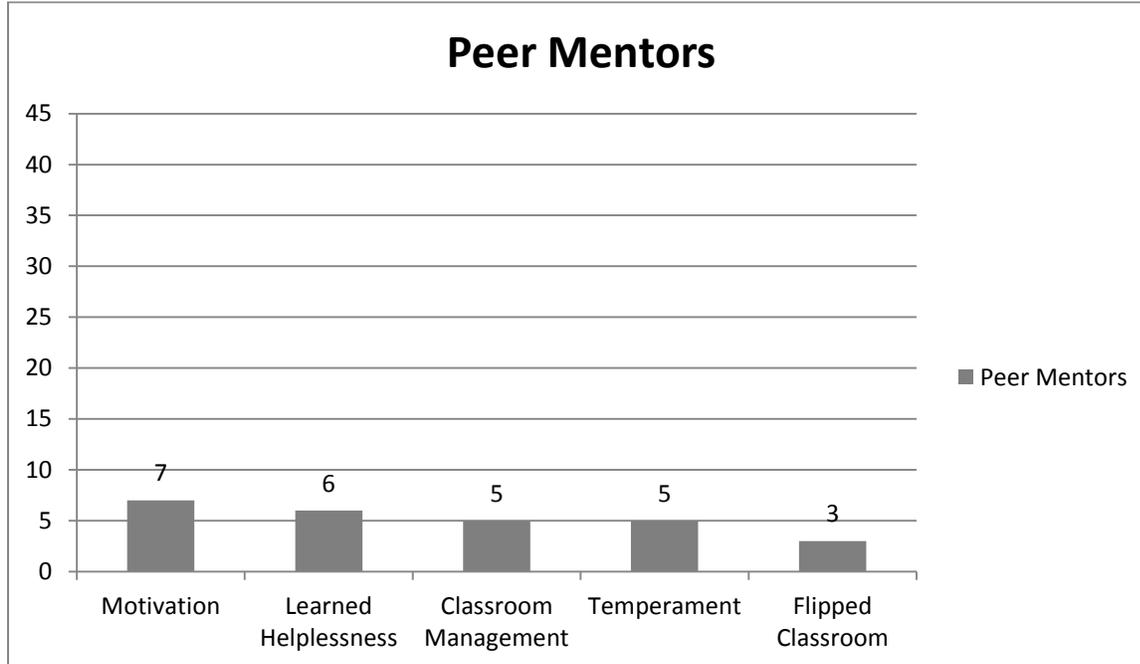


Figure 6. Number of Peer Mentor Postings for Most Frequently Discussed Evidence-Based Research (Total number of times peer mentors posted on all evidence-based research = 43)

Overall, the expert and peer mentors applied scholarly research with near-equal frequency, a nod to both the course requirements and to the increased evidence-based instructional climate currently prevalent in schools that serve preschool through age 21 learners in the US. Both the expert and peer mentors referenced scholarly research pertaining to motivational strategies, but did so in complementary ways by referencing different scholarly readings. In additive fashion, the expert mentor focused on research related to differentiated and evidence-based instruction, two mandates of the new Common Core State Standards these novice teachers must meet.

Peer mentors additively cited research related to combating learned helplessness, exploring implications of this vital issue for successfully teaching adolescents in high needs schools (many of whom have encountered various types of uncontrollable negative events). Biological temperament (an idea introduced by the expert mentor that was discussed amongst peer mentors) and the flipped classroom, a pedagogical strategy many high needs urban high schools are currently experimenting with to increase homework completion and classroom engagement, were highlighted additively within peer mentor discussions. Other scholarly research topics explored additively by the expert mentor included using advance organizers, purposive curriculum design, effective family-school partnership building, fear of failure/success, homework, metacognition, mentoring, a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), negotiation strategies, situated cognition, and student engagement models. Peer mentors additively contributed research regarding brain-behavior development/connections, correlations between attendance and graduation rates, demoralized school cultures, instructional assessment, peer tutoring, socioeconomic status and schooling, student-teacher relationship building, and universal design of learning.

It is not surprising that preservice resident urban teachers' decisions about classroom practice are informed to a greater extent by suggestions emanating from their own, peers', and on-site mentor teachers' experiences than they are by theory. More curricular emphasis on applying evidence-based theory to classroom practice is needed to provide these teachers with insights regarding why their classroom interventions might be succeeding or failing. Nevertheless, the amount and diversity of scholarly research referenced in relation to decision-making in high needs urban high schools by both expert and peer mentors is highly encouraging and reiterates the need for teacher induction curricula to provide opportunities for novice teachers to locate, read, and apply relevant research to classroom practice throughout their university experience.

Discussion

Results of this study suggest that distributed expert/peer mentoring is effective in providing confirmatory, additive, and complementary knowledge and skills to preservice resident teachers working in high needs turnaround urban high schools. Identifying topics of shared interest amongst expert and peer mentors allows pre-eminent concerns in the areas of fostering student learning, building positive school climates, and navigating the school as system to emerge as important foci of study in preservice residency urban teacher induction curricula. Naming less frequently-referenced but highly relevant topics of discussion in additive and/or complementary ways suggests that some subset of these less-often included topics might judiciously be added to urban teacher induction curricula where they are currently absent.

Distinctly absent from the currently-studied model of urban teacher induction is any reference to critical theories such as social justice theory, critical pedagogy theory, and/or critical race theory. Implementation of core principles of these theories has been found to enhance the urban teaching experience for both teachers and students (Picower, 2007; Porfilio & Malott, 2011; Waddell et al., 2008). While a critical theory approach is not addressed within the currently-configured educational psychology course, the opportunity exists to do so. The course presently contains a week-long module devoted to issues of diversity in urban schools. Adding a critical theory perspective could substantially enrich the preservice resident urban teacher preparation experience. Based on this insight, a module that explores critical theory has been added to the next iteration of the educational psychology course.

Interestingly, although a number of the preservice resident teachers in this study were of the same ethnicity as their students, many experienced a socioeconomic and/or cultural divide from their pupils. This made these novice teachers particularly interested in locating research about culturally-sensitive effective pedagogy and classroom management strategies designed to help high needs urban youth succeed in school. A number of promising approaches could be highlighted in this regard within the context of the educational psychology course. One would be to use popular culture as a critical pedagogy tool to promote increased sensitivity to relevant diversity issues. Practitioners of this approach include Hatch (2008), who used rock music to promote a critical pedagogy perspective of urban teaching, and Porfilio and Malott (2011) who employed hip-hop and punk music to help White preservice and beginning in-service urban teachers

...understand the social, political and historical dimensions of schooling, recognize how neoliberal globalization is the chief culprit behind the growing intensity of human suffering, misery, and environmental destruction pervading the planet, unpack the unearned privileges they

themselves and other members of the dominant society accrue from their racial class status, and yearn to join other concern [sic] citizens in a pro-social movement earmarked to build a more just and humane society. (p. 78).

Another pathway involves establishing social justice critical inquiry groups that engage preservice and beginning teachers in scholarly inquiry, practice, and expert and peer support. Critical inquiry groups enable teachers to continuously implement a social justice approach to teaching and curriculum development while functioning as change agents within their schools (Picower, 2007). Involving preservice and beginning in-service teachers in service learning projects within urban school neighborhoods is yet another way to promote social justice, as is having teacher candidates engage in community walks that assay an urban community's assets.

A distributed expert-peer mentoring model that provides confirmatory, additive, and complementary contributions to the induction process for preservice resident teachers is a powerful and promising approach. Future studies of this highly adaptive model could profitably explore how distributed mentoring could be modified to benefit preservice and beginning teachers working in variably-resourced, variably-aged urban, rural, and suburban school settings.

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