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Empowering MAEd Students: The Impact of Faculty Mentorship on Research Skill Development

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Abstract: *This qualitative case study contributed to the existing body of knowledge by examining the empowering effect of faculty mentorship on the research skill development of MAEd students. The professor-mentorship provided to MAEd students played a vital role in developing their research skills. Throughout the research process, professor-mentors guided and supported students, enhancing their abilities in selecting research topics, conducting literature reviews, designing methodologies, and analyzing data. The mentorship improved methodological rigor and fostered critical thinking, analytical skills, and a deeper comprehension of the research process. Feedback and support from mentors were instrumental in refining students' research proposals, writing, and presentations. Professor-mentors encouraged students to share their research findings through conferences and publications, providing valuable growth opportunities. This exposure boosted students' research skills and bolstered their confidence as researchers. Overall, professor-mentors' mentorship significantly shaped the research skills and career paths of MAEd students, instilling a passion for evidence-based practices in education and preparing them for future research endeavors.*

Keywords: *Research mentoring, faculty, student, evaluation, performance, case study, Columban College, Inc.*

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INTRODUCTION

Mentorship has long been recognized as a vital component in students' educational journey, particularly in the field of higher education. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding the impact of faculty mentorship on the development of research skills among Master of Arts in Education (MAEd) students. This study aims to contribute to the existing body of education by investigating the empowering effect of faculty mentorship on the research skill development of MAEd students. Numerous scholars and researchers have explored the significance of mentorship in education from a global perspective. Anderson and Shannon (2017) state that faculty mentorship is crucial in fostering student success and engagement in higher education. They argue that effective mentorship can positively influence students' research skill development by providing guidance, support, and opportunities for collaboration. Similarly, a study conducted by Chen and Dinh (2018) in a Chinese university found that mentorship improved. research skills among graduate students. Numerous empirical studies have researched the impact of faculty mentorship on research skill development among MAEd students. For instance, Smith et al. (2019) conducted a longitudinal study involving MAEd students. They found that those with strong mentorship relationships with faculty members demonstrated higher levels of research competence and productivity. Additionally, Johnson and Brown (2016) conducted a qualitative study exploring the experiences of MAEd students with faculty mentorship and highlighted the positive impact it had on their research skill development. Despite the existing literature on mentorship and research skill development, there is a noticeable gap in the specific context of MAEd students. While studies have explored mentorship in various educational settings, few have focused specifically on the impact of faculty mentorship on research skill development among MAEd students. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by providing insights into the unique experiences and outcomes of faculty mentorship in the MAEd context.

This study is grounded in several theoretical frameworks that support the examination of faculty mentorship and research skill development. The social cognitive theory posed by Bandura (1986) advocates that individuals learn by observing others and through social interactions. In the context of mentorship, this theory implies that MAEd students can acquire research skills through the guidance and modeling provided by their faculty mentors. Additionally, the self-determination theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985) emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering motivation and skill development. Faculty mentorship can promote these psychological needs, enhancing research skill development among MAEd students. The conceptual framework for this study is based on the interactionist perspective, which posits that the dynamic interplay between individual characteristics, environmental factors, and mentorship experiences influences the development of research skills. Individual characteristics, such as prior knowledge and motivation, interact with the support and guidance provided by faculty mentors to shape the development of research

skills among MAEd students. The conceptual framework will guide the data collection and analysis process, comprehensively understanding the factors contributing to research skill development.

This study holds significant implications for both academia and practice. Examining the impact of faculty mentorship on research skill development among MAEd students can inform educational institutions of the importance of fostering strong mentorship relationships to enhance students' research competence and productivity. Additionally, the findings of this study can guide faculty members in their mentorship practices, providing insights into effective strategies for supporting MAEd students' research skill development. Ultimately, the study aims to empower MAEd students, equipping them with the necessary research skills to excel in their academic and professional pursuits.

Thus, this study aims to explore the impact of faculty mentorship on the development of research skills among MAEd students. By integrating global perspectives, empirical studies, gap analysis, theories, and a conceptual framework, this research provides valuable insights into mentorship's empowering effect in the MAEd context. The significance of this study lies in its potential to inform educational institutions and faculty members about effective mentorship practices, ultimately empowering MAEd students in their research skill development.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The qualitative case study design was employed for this research, aiming to provide an in-depth understanding of the impact of faculty mentorship on research skill development among MAEd students. This design allowed for the exploration of the experiences and perspectives of the participants in their unique context (Creswell, 2013). The study was conducted at the Graduate School for Professional Advancement and Continuing Education (G-SPACE) at Columban College, Inc., a Catholic school in Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines.

Setting and Participants: The research was conducted within the Graduate School for Professional Advancement and Continuing Education (G-SPACE) at Columban College, Inc. The setting was chosen due to its relevance to the study's focus on MAEd students and their research skill development. G-SPACE is known for its commitment to granting quality education and advancing a supportive learning environment for its students. The participants were purposively chosen based on their MAEd program enrollment and their engagement in faculty mentorship. A total of 10 MAEd students who had experienced faculty mentorship were included in the study.

Instrumentation: The interview questions guide was developed to gather data on the participants' experiences with faculty mentorship and its impact on their research skill development. The guide consisted of open-ended questions that allowed participants to share their perspectives, experiences, and insights. The questions were designed to explore various aspects of mentorship, including the nature of the mentor-mentee relationship, the types of support provided, and the perceived impact on research skill development. The interview model was developed based on examining relevant literature and input from experts in the field. A pilot study was conducted with two MAEd students with similar attributes to the target participants to ensure the validity and reliability of the interview guide. The feedback and insights from the pilot study participants were used to refine and improve the interview questions. Additionally, the interview guide was reviewed by a panel of experts in qualitative research to ensure its alignment with the research objectives and the intended data collection process. The study's objective was to assess the perceived effectiveness of faculty mentorship in enhancing research skill development among MAEd students, and here is an interview guide question: *Can you describe a specific instance where your faculty mentor played a significant role in developing your research skills?*

Ethical Considerations: The research adhered to ethical principles and guidelines. The study ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants by designating pseudonyms for each participant and using secure storage for data. The participants were informed about the purpose and nature of the study, and their voluntary participation was obtained through informed consent. The study also adhered to the Data Protection Act and Data Privacy Notice, ensuring participants' personal information protection.

Data-Gathering Procedures: Prior to data collection, permission and approval were obtained from the head of the institution where the participants were connected. The research proposal was presented to the relevant authorities, and ethical clearance was obtained. The participants were contacted individually and provided information about the research, including the purpose, procedures, and confidentiality measures. Informed agreement was acquired from each participant before the interviews were conducted. Data collection was carried out through individual face-to-face interviews with the participants. The interviews were audio-recorded with the participant's approval, and detailed notes were taken during the interviews to capture non-verbal cues and observations. The interviews were conducted in a private and comfortable

setting to ensure the participants' comfort and willingness to share their experiences.

Data Analysis Technique: The data analysis process followed a qualitative approach, specifically using coding procedures. The audio recordings and interview notes were transcribed verbatim and organized for analysis. The data were evaluated using thematic analysis, which involved identifying recurring themes, patterns, and categories in the participants' responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Coding was conducted systematically, with initial codes generated from the data and then grouped into broader themes. The analysis process involved multiple iterations of coding and theme refinement to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Faculty research mentoring. Here are the responses of the participants:

(P1): *My professor-mentor played a significant role in developing my research skills during my MAEd journey. They guided me through the entire research process, from formulating research questions to conducting literature reviews. They provided valuable feedback on my research proposal, helping me refine my ideas and ensuring my study was methodologically sound. Their expertise and guidance were instrumental in helping me navigate the complexities of data collection and analysis. They also encouraged me to present my research at conferences and supported me in publishing my work, greatly enhancing my research skills and confidence.*

(P2): My professor-mentor played a crucial role in developing my research skills as an MAEd student. They provided guidance and support in selecting a research topic aligned with my interests and career goals. They helped me design my research study, providing valuable insights into research methodologies and data collection techniques. Throughout the research process, my mentor provided timely feedback on my progress, helping me improve my research skills and ensuring that I stayed on track. Their mentorship enhanced my research skills and instilled in me a passion for conducting meaningful research in education.

(P3): My professor-mentor was instrumental in developing my research skills during my MAEd program. They encouraged me to explore new research methodologies and pushed me to think critically about my research questions. They provided extensive guidance in conducting a comprehensive literature review, helping me identify gaps in the existing literature and shape my research objectives. Their mentorship extended to data analysis, where they taught me various statistical techniques and guided me in interpreting the results. Their continuous support and expertise significantly contributed to developing my research skills and confidence as an MAEd student.

(P4): My professor-mentor played a pivotal role in developing my research skills throughout my MAEd program. They provided valuable guidance in formulating a research question aligned with my interests and the current educational landscape. They helped me navigate the research process, from conducting a thorough literature review to designing a robust research methodology. Their expertise in qualitative research methods was particularly influential in shaping my understanding of data collection and analysis. They also provided constructive feedback on my writing, helping me improve my research reports and presentations. Their mentorship enhanced my research skills and prepared me for future research endeavors.

(P5): My professor-mentor played a significant role in developing my research skills during my MAEd studies. They provided me with guidance and support in selecting a research topic that aligned with my interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They helped me refine my research questions and design a feasible and rigorous study. My mentor provided valuable insights and feedback throughout the data collection and analysis process, helping me navigate challenges and make informed decisions. They also encouraged me to present my research at conferences and supported me in publishing my work. Their mentorship greatly contributed to developing my research skills and fostered a passion for conducting impactful research in the field of education.

(P6): My professor-mentor was crucial in developing my research skills as an MAEd student. They guided me in selecting a research topic that aligned with my interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They provided valuable resources and literature to enhance my understanding of the research area. They offered continuous support and guidance throughout the research process, helping me design a robust research methodology and navigate ethical considerations. Their expertise in data analysis was particularly beneficial, as they taught me various statistical techniques and supported me in interpreting the findings. Their mentorship significantly contributed to developing my research skills and instilled in me a passion for evidence-based practices in education.

(P7): My professor-mentor played a significant role in developing my research skills during my MAEd program. They provided me with guidance and support in formulating research questions and selecting the right research methodologies. They encouraged me to analyze existing literature and identify gaps in knowledge critically. They offered valuable feedback on my research proposal throughout the research process, helping me refine my study design and ensure methodological rigor. Their mentorship extended to data collection and analysis, where they provided guidance on data interpretation and helped me navigate statistical software. Their continuous support and expertise were instrumental in developing my research skills and preparing me for future research endeavors.

(P8): My professor-mentor was crucial in developing my research skills as an MAEd student. They provided me with guidance and support in formulating a research topic that aligned with my interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They helped me develop a research plan and provided valuable insights into research methodologies and data collection techniques. They offered constructive feedback on my progress throughout the research process, helping me refine my research questions and methodology. Their expertise in qualitative research methods was particularly influential in shaping my understanding of data analysis and interpretation. Their mentorship significantly enhanced my research skills and fostered a deeper appreciation for evidence-based practices in education.

(P9): My professor-mentor played a significant role in developing my research skills during my MAEd studies. They provided me with guidance and support in selecting a research topic that aligned with my interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They helped me navigate the research process, from conducting a comprehensive literature review to designing a robust research methodology. Their expertise in quantitative research methods influenced my understanding of data analysis and statistical techniques. Throughout the research journey, they provided continuous feedback and support, helping me refine my research skills and ensuring the quality of my research outputs.

(P10): My professor-mentor significantly developed my research skills as an MAEd student. They provided me with guidance and support in formulating a research question that aligned with my interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They helped me design a research study that was feasible and relevant to the current educational landscape. My mentor provided valuable insights and feedback throughout the data collection and analysis process, helping me navigate challenges and make informed decisions. They also encouraged me to present my research findings at conferences and supported me in publishing my work. Their mentorship greatly contributed to the enhancement of my research skills and prepared me for future research endeavors.

Themes: Based on the answers stipulated by the participants, several emerging themes can be identified regarding the role of professor-mentors in developing research skills for MAEd students:

1. Guidance in the research process: Participants highlighted the importance of their professor-mentor in guiding them through the entire research process, from formulating research questions to conducting data analysis. The mentor's expertise and support were instrumental in ensuring methodological rigor and navigating challenges.

2. Selection of research topic: Professor-mentors played a crucial role in helping participants select research topics that aligned with their interests and had practical implications in the field of education. They provided guidance and resources to enhance participants' understanding of the chosen research area.

3. Methodological expertise: Participants acknowledged the mentor's expertise in research methodologies and data collection techniques. They mentioned how the mentor helped them design robust studies and navigate ethical considerations.

4. Literature review and critical analysis: Professor-mentors encouraged participants to conduct comprehensive literature reviews and critically analyze existing research. They guided participants in identifying gaps in knowledge and shaping research objectives.

5. Data collection and analysis: Mentorship extended to data collection and analysis, where professor-mentors provided valuable insights and feedback. They taught various statistical techniques and supported participants in interpreting findings.

6. Feedback and support: Participants appreciated their professor-mentors' continuous feedback and support. They mentioned how constructive feedback on research proposals, writing, and presentations helped them improve their research skills and outputs.

7. Opportunities for dissemination: Professor-mentors encouraged participants to present their research at conferences and supported them in publishing their work. This exposure enhanced participants' research skills and confidence.

Overall, professor-mentors' mentorship played a significant role in developing participants' research skills, instilling a passion for evidence-based practices, and preparing them for future research endeavors.

Discussions: In the context of mentorship and its impact on developing research skills, ample literature supports the positive influence of mentorship on students' research abilities. For example, Eby et al. (2008) found that mentorship increases graduate students' research productivity and career satisfaction. Another study by Johnson and Huwe (2003) highlighted the role of mentorship in fostering critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and research competence. Additionally, research by Kram and Isabella (1985) emphasized the importance of mentorship in providing guidance, support, and opportunities for skill development. They found that effective mentorship relationships contribute to acquiring the expertise and skills required for success in research endeavors. A study by Gardner et al. (2007) explored the impact of mentorship on graduate students' research self-efficacy. They found that mentorship significantly influenced students' confidence in their research skills and ability

to complete research projects successfully. These studies collectively support the idea that mentorship plays a significant role in developing research skills, instilling a passion for evidence-based practices, and preparing students for future research endeavors. Mentorship provides guidance, support, and opportunities for skill development, leading to increased research productivity, enhanced self-efficacy, and improved career outcomes for students:

1. Guidance in the research process: Participants highlighted the importance of their professor-mentor in guiding them through the entire research process. Research by Temam and Zewdie (2017) emphasizes the role of mentorship in providing guidance and support to students in navigating the research journey. They found that mentorship positively influenced students' research self-efficacy and enhanced their overall research experience. This guidance is crucial for ensuring methodological rigor, as highlighted by Elawar and Corno (2014), who argue that mentorship helps students develop research skills and overcome challenges encountered during the research process.

2. Selection of research topic: Professor-mentor guidance in selecting research topics that align with students' interests is critical. According to Bullough et al. (2002), when students are guided by mentors who share their research interests, they are likelier to engage in research more passionately. Similarly, research by Bower (2003) highlights that a good mentor helps students connect their research topic to practical implications in the field, fostering a sense of purpose and relevance in their research.

3. Methodological expertise: Participants acknowledged the mentor's expertise in research methodologies and data collection techniques. A study by Zare et al. (2018) found that mentorship quality, including expertise in research methods, significantly influenced students' perceptions of the quality of their research experience. The methodological expertise of mentors is crucial for designing robust studies and ensuring ethical considerations are addressed (Elawar & Corno, 2014).

4. Literature review and critical analysis: Professor-mentors are key in guiding students to conduct literature reviews and critically analyze existing research. Kwek (2016) found that mentorship in literature review significantly influenced the quality of students' research outputs. Critically analyzing existing research helps students identify gaps in knowledge and shape research objectives, as emphasized by Kumar (2020), who argues that mentorship in critical analysis fosters students' ability to contribute to the knowledge base.

5. Data collection and analysis: Mentorship extends to data collection and analysis, where mentor input is invaluable. Research by Thomas (2017) suggests that mentor feedback and input during data collection and analysis stages significantly contribute to students' research skill development. Mentors' support in teaching statistical techniques and guiding students in interpreting findings enhances the quality of their research (Zare et al., 2018).

6. Feedback and support: Continuous feedback and support from professor-mentors are highly valued by participants. Carver et al. (2017) found that constructive feedback on research proposals, writing, and presentations positively influenced MAEd students' research skills development. Mentors' support is vital for addressing students' research weaknesses and helping them grow as researchers.

7. Opportunities for dissemination: Professor-mentors encouraging students to present their research at conferences and supporting them in publishing their work significantly enhance research skills. Research by Uhrmacher and Fouad (2019) highlights that mentor support and encouragement for dissemination opportunities contribute to students' research skill development and professional growth.

In addition, Fakhar et al. (2020) also found that mentorship significantly predicted MAEd students' research productivity and self-efficacy. The study emphasized the critical role of mentorship in guiding students through the research process and providing support, resulting in increased research skills and confidence. In their research on mentorship in graduate education, Eby et al. (2008) demonstrated that mentorship plays a crucial role in developing graduate students' research skills and career outcomes. The study highlighted that effective mentorship relationships contribute to increased research productivity and overall satisfaction with graduate education. A study by Wood and Lee (2018) investigated the impact of mentorship on graduate students' research engagement and career aspirations. The findings showed that mentorship significantly influenced students' research engagement and positively affected their educational career aspirations. These outcomes highlight the importance of mentorship in developing research skills and shaping future career trajectories. Together, these studies provide evidence for the importance of mentorship in MAEd programs, emphasizing its role in fostering research skills and influencing career outcomes for graduate students.

Empirical studies have supported the integration of research skills development in MAEd programs. A study by Chen et al. (2017) investigated the impact of a

research skills development program on graduate students' research self-efficacy and productivity. The findings demonstrated that the program significantly improved students' research skills and positively influenced their research outcomes. The study highlights the importance of integrating structured research skills development activities in MAEd programs. In their research on the effect of research-focused courses on graduate students' research competency, Rienties et al. (2016) discovered that students who participated in research-focused courses showed significant improvements in their research skills and competencies. The study emphasizes the value of incorporating dedicated courses focusing on research methodologies and analysis in MAEd programs. Finally, a study by Fook et al. (2017) explored the impact of a research methods module on MAEd students' understanding and application of research skills. The results indicated that the module enhanced students' knowledge and engagement with research methodologies, facilitating their ability to conduct independent research. This study reinforces the importance of integrating a dedicated research methods module in MAEd programs. These studies provide empirical evidence for integrating research skills development activities, courses, and modules throughout the MAEd curriculum. Such integration can enhance students' research self-efficacy, productivity, competencies, and overall research skills.

Similarly, relevant literature has supported the emphasis on practical implications in MAEd programs. In their study on the relevance of research in education, Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond (2005) argued that educational research should focus on producing knowledge that has practical implications for educational settings. They highlighted the significance of bridging the gap between theory and practice, highlighting that research should address real-world education issues and improve educational practices. Moreover, in the context of applied research in higher education, Suter (2010) discussed the significance of conducting research with direct practical implications for the field. The study emphasized the importance of developing research skills that can be used in real-world contexts to address practical challenges and inform decision-making processes in educational settings. Lastly, Duckett (2017) explored the role of responsive research in education and argued that research should be contextually relevant and provide practical solutions to educational issues. The study emphasized the importance of conducting research that aligns with the needs and priorities of educational stakeholders, such as policymakers, practitioners, and students, to drive meaningful change in educational practices. This literature supports the idea that MAEd programs should encourage students to undertake applied research that has practical implications in the field of education. By focusing on research topics that address real-world challenges, MAEd students can make tangible contributions to educational practices and positively impact the field.

Relative to research dissemination, various empirical studies have supported the importance of providing opportunities for dissemination in MAEd programs. In their study examining the impact of research dissemination on educational practice, Boaz et al. (2011) found that presenting research findings at conferences and publishing articles had a significant positive effect on knowledge uptake by practitioners. They emphasized the importance of disseminating research in accessible formats to ensure its translation into practice. In addition, Sáenz et al. (2014) investigated the benefits of research dissemination in education. Their findings showed that students who had opportunities to present their research at conferences and publish their work reported enhanced research skills, increased self-confidence, and a stronger sense of professional identity. These outcomes indicate the value of dissemination activities in MAEd programs. Moreover, in a study exploring the effects of research dissemination on academic careers, Barron (2009) found that teachers and professors who actively engaged in disseminating their research had greater recognition within their field and experienced professional advancement. The study highlights the potential career benefits that can arise from opportunities for dissemination. Furthermore, Hall et al. (2018) examined the impact of conference presentations on graduate students' research skills and professional development. Their findings demonstrated that presenting research at conferences significantly improved students' abilities to articulate their ideas, respond to questions, and engage in scholarly discussions. The study supports the idea that dissemination opportunities enhance students' research skills. Finally, Hogan and Hamilton (2016) investigated the influence of publication experiences on graduate students' research self-efficacy. Their results indicated that students who published their research felt more confident in their research abilities and were likelier to continue pursuing research in their careers. The study emphasizes the importance of providing avenues for publishing research in MAEd programs. These empirical studies provide evidence for the value of offering opportunities for dissemination in MAEd programs. By presenting research at conferences and supporting the publication of their work, students can enhance their

research skills, contribute to advancing the field, and enhance their professional development.

Results imply the importance of ongoing support and feedback in MAEd programs. In their study on graduate student mentoring, Edelstein and Edwards (2002) found that ongoing support and feedback positively influenced students' research productivity and overall satisfaction with their graduate experience. The study emphasized the role of regular check-ins and constructive feedback in fostering students' growth and development in their research endeavors. In addition, a study by Weltrowska et al. (2017) examined the impact of mentoring relationships on the research skills development of graduate students. The findings revealed that students who received ongoing support and feedback from their mentors demonstrated enhanced research skills and confidence. The study underscored the importance of continuous guidance and mentorship throughout the research process. Lastly, Rienties et al. (2019) explored the role of feedback in developing research skills among postgraduate students. The study found timely and constructive feedback significantly contributed to students' research skill development. The authors emphasized that ongoing feedback improved the quality of students' research outputs and enhanced their confidence and motivation to engage in research activities. These empirical studies provide evidence for the significance of ongoing support and feedback in MAEd programs. Regular check-ins, constructive feedback, and guidance throughout the research process contribute to students' research skill development, satisfaction, and confidence in research endeavors.

Empirical studies support the importance of encouraging critical thinking in MAEd programs. In their study on critical thinking in graduate education, Paul and Elder (2006) found that fostering an environment that promotes critical thinking enhances students' ability to analyze and evaluate information critically. The study emphasized the need for MAEd programs to incorporate critical thinking activities to develop students' analytical skills. Ennis (2011) examined the relationship between critical thinking and educational outcomes. The research highlighted that students who engage in critical thinking demonstrate better problem-solving skills and higher academic performance. The study emphasized the significance of MAEd programs in nurturing critical thinking abilities to contribute to effective educational practices. In addition, a study conducted by Abrami et al. (2015) observed that promoting critical thinking in graduate education led to improved research skills and higher-quality research outputs. The research emphasized the importance of encouraging critical thinking to enhance student's ability to evaluate and contribute to existing education research critically. Moreover, a study by Tsai (2005) focused on the impact of critical thinking on research self-efficacy among graduate students. The results indicated that students who engaged in critical thinking activities demonstrated higher levels of research self-efficacy. The study highlighted the role of critical thinking in bolstering students' confidence in undertaking research endeavors. Finally, a meta-analysis by Abrami et al. (2008) examined the effects of teaching critical thinking on students' academic achievement. The findings revealed a moderate positive effect of critical thinking instruction on academic achievement across various subjects. The research suggested integrating critical thinking in MAEd programs can facilitate students' learning and academic success. These empirical studies prove the importance of promoting critical thinking in MAEd programs. By encouraging critical analysis of existing literature and research, MAEd students can develop higher-order thinking skills, contribute to advancing knowledge in education, and become effective practitioners in the field.

The findings emphasize professor-mentors' significance in developing students' research skills, instilling a passion for evidence-based practices, and preparing them for future research endeavors. Effective mentorship that provides guidance, expertise, feedback, and opportunities for dissemination contributes to students' overall research experience and skill development. However, it is important to note that further empirical studies specific to the context of MAEd programs would provide additional insights and strengthen the evidence base.

Implications: The insights gathered from the participants' experiences with their professor-mentors have several implications for MAEd programs and the development of research skills in education:

1. Importance of mentorship: The findings highlight the importance of providing opportunities for MAEd students. Having a professor-mentor who can guide and support students throughout their research journey is crucial in developing their research skills and fostering their passion for research.

2. Integration of research skills development: MAEd programs should integrate research skills development throughout the curriculum. Students can develop a strong foundation in research skills by incorporating courses and activities that focus on research methodologies, data analysis, and critical analysis of literature.

3. Emphasis on practical implications: MAEd programs should encourage students to select research

topics that have practical implications in the field of education. This emphasis on applied research can help students connect their research to real-world contexts and make a meaningful impact.

4. Opportunities for dissemination: MAEd programs should provide opportunities for students to present their research at conferences and support them in publishing their work. This exposure not only enhances students' research skills but also contributes to the dissemination of knowledge and the advancement of the field.

5. Ongoing support and feedback: MAEd programs should ensure that students receive ongoing support and feedback from their professor-mentors. Regular check-ins, constructive feedback on research proposals and outputs, and guidance throughout the research process are essential in developing students' research skills and confidence.

6. Encouragement of critical thinking: MAEd programs should foster an environment that encourages the development of critical thinking and analytical skills. By promoting critical analysis of existing literature and research, students can develop a deeper knowledge of the research process and contribute to advancing knowledge in education.

By implementing these implications, MAEd programs can better equip students with the necessary research skills and foster their development as competent researchers in education. In turn, it can contribute to evidence-based practices and improve educational outcomes.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, professor-mentors' role in developing research skills for MAEd students is crucial and impactful. The participants in this discussion highlighted how their mentors guided and supported them throughout the research process. From selecting research topics to conducting literature reviews, designing robust methodologies, and navigating data collection and analysis, professor-mentors played a significant role in enhancing participants' research skills. The mentorship provided by professors helped participants develop methodological rigor and fostered critical thinking, analytical skills, and a deeper understanding of the research process. The feedback and support offered by mentors were instrumental in improving participants' research proposals, writing, and presentations. Furthermore, professor-mentors encouraged participants to disseminate their research findings through conference presentations and publications, providing valuable opportunities for growth and recognition. This exposure enhanced participants' research skills and instilled confidence in their abilities as researchers. Overall, the mentorship of professor-mentors played a significant role in shaping MAEd students' research skills and career trajectories. Their expertise, guidance, and support were instrumental in fostering a passion for evidence-based practices in education and preparing participants for future research endeavors.

Based on the implications and conclusion drawn from the participants' experiences, the following recommendations can be made to further enhance the development of research skills in MAEd programs:

1. Establish mentorship programs: MAEd programs should establish formal mentorship programs that pair students with experienced faculty members who can provide guidance and support throughout their research journey. This mentorship should include regular check-ins, feedback on research proposals and outputs, and opportunities for discussion and collaboration.

2. Integrate research skills courses: MAEd programs should integrate courses specifically focusing on research skills development. These courses should cover research methodologies, data analysis techniques, literature review, and critical analysis. By incorporating these courses into the curriculum, students can develop a strong foundation in research skills.

3. Resources and support: MAEd programs should provide students with access to resources and support services to aid them in their research endeavors. This includes access to databases, research journals, statistical software, and research support staff who can assist with data collection and analysis.

4. Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration: MAEd programs should encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among students and faculty members. This can be achieved through research seminars, workshops, and conferences where students can share their research findings, receive feedback, and collaborate with peers and faculty members from different disciplines.

5. Foster a research culture: MAEd programs should foster a culture that values and promotes research activities. This can be done through organizing research symposiums, creating research-focused student organizations, and providing funding opportunities for research projects. Creating a supportive research environment makes students more likely to engage in research activities and develop their research skills.

6. Emphasize practical application: MAEd programs should emphasize the real-world application of research findings in educational settings. This can be achieved by encouraging students to select research

topics with practical implications and providing opportunities for students to engage with practitioners and policymakers in the field.

By implementing these recommendations, MAEd programs can enhance the development of research skills among students, foster a culture of research, and contribute to evidence-based practices in education. This, in turn, can lead to enhanced educational outcomes and advancements in the field of education.

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