

## **STRATEGIES FOR MENTORING BEGINNING PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the strategies for mentoring beginning physical education teachers for their professional development in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria. Using five mentoring practices/functions identified in literature, five specific objectives and their corresponding research questions were posed to guide the study. The research design for the study was the descriptive survey design. Data were collected from a population of 21 experts made up of professors, readers, senior lecturers, chief lecturers and principal lecturers in the field of physical education in tertiary institutions in South-east Nigeria. There was no sampling because the population was of a manageable size. Beginning Physical Education Teachers Mentoring Strategies Questionnaire (BPETMSQ) was used for data collection in the study. The BPETMSQ was validated by five experts in the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of BPETMSQ was established using the Cronbach's Alpha statistic. The instrument yielded an alpha coefficient of .79. The generated data were analysed using mean scores and standard deviations. The result of the study revealed that the thirty four-item mentoring strategies for the various mentoring practices of beginning physical education teachers were deemed appropriate by experts. Following from these finding, it was recommended that the managements of tertiary institutions should adopt the mentoring strategies that were formulated in this study for professional development of beginning physical education teachers.*

**Keywords:** Mentoring, Mentoring Strategy, Professional Development, Physical Education, Beginning Physical Education Teachers.

### **Introduction**

Mentoring has received a great deal of attention among researchers, yet they are still to reach consensus on a functional or scientific definition. This explains the existence of numerous definitions which are contained in literature. For example, Jeruchim and Shapiro (1992) defined mentoring as "a close, intense, mutually

beneficial relationship between someone who is older, wiser, more experienced, and more powerful with someone younger or less experienced". Further, Jeruchim and Shapiro defined mentoring as a complimentary relationship, within an organizational or professional context, that is built on both the mentor's and the mentees needs. The term 'mentoring' has come to refer to the acts of a person who serves as a trusted friend, guide, teacher, role model, approachable counselor, challenger, encourager, trusted adviser, and helper to another (Wolf, Retallick, Martin, & Steiner, 2008). Anderson and Shannon (1988) in Abiddin and Hassan (2012) defined mentoring as a nurturing in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. Mentoring has a long-term focus designed to foster personal growth and to help an individual place their creative, personal and professional development in a wider cultural, social and educational context.

Specific to Physical Education, mentoring can be a powerful tool to enhance the development of beginning physical educators. This may be because beginning physical educators have special needs and should be provided with mentoring that cater specifically for them (Wright & Smith, 2000). Yet, how do we know what mentoring practices and strategies are useful to beginning physical education teachers? Many beginning teachers experience isolation during their initial years of teaching (Callahan, 2016). Isolation may be further exacerbated in the area of physical education, as there may only be one physical educator at a school site (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Beginning physical education teachers are teachers with licensure in physical education and who are in their early years of a full-time teaching position (Stroot, 1996). There is therefore a need for proper guidance through mentoring with the appropriate strategies in place.

Strategy is at once the course we chart, the journey we imagine, and, at the same time, it is the course we steer, the trip we actually make. Even when we are embarking on a voyage of discovery, with no particular destination in mind, the voyage has a purpose, an outcome, an end to be kept in view. Strategy, then, has no existence apart from the ends sought. It is a general framework that provides guidance for actions to be taken and, at the same time, is shaped by the actions taken. This means that the necessary precondition for formulating strategy is a clear and widespread understanding of the ends to be obtained. Without these ends in view, action is purely tactical and can quickly degenerate into nothing more than a flailing about. Nickols (2012) defined strategy as a term that refers to a complex web of thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals, expertise, memories, perceptions, and expectations that provides general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends. Henry (1994) defined strategy as the overall approach in reaching objectives. He stressed that strategies furnish the framework for guiding thought and action. Similarly, Nickols (2012) defined strategy as a term that refers to a complex web of

thoughts, ideas, insights, experiences, goals, expertise, memories, perceptions, and expectations that provide general guidance for specific actions in pursuit of particular ends. Strategy in this study refers to the overall approach in mentoring for professional development of beginning physical education teachers. While mentoring strategy in the context of this study refers to the overall approach that provides general guidance for specific mentoring practices in pursuit of the goals of mentoring for professional development of beginning physical education teachers. Adopting mentoring strategies provides the structure that facilitates professional development of physical education teachers through mentoring practices.

Mentoring practices are those elements that will ensure that mentoring relationships thrive and endure. Nick, Delahoyde, Del Prato, Mitchell, Ortiz, Ottley, Young, Cannon, Lasater, Reising, and Siktberg, (2012) defined mentoring practices as those actions that produce the most desirable teacher outcomes, based on evidence and real life-experiences. They are essential characteristics that differentiate developmental relationships from other relationships, in which the mentor provides a variety of functions "that support, guide, and counsel the young adult" (Weng, Huang, Tsai, Chang, Lin, & Lee, 2010). Haggard, Dougherty, Turban, and Wilbanks (2011) defined mentoring functions as actions or behaviours that mentors have engaged in on behalf of the protégé. These functions and sub-functions provide an important first step in identifying explicit mentoring practices that currently exist among PE teachers in tertiary institutions. This identification can then serve a useful role in recognizing best practices, and developing a more concrete and complex understanding of PE teachers' interactions that can be used to help to develop beginning PE teachers professionally (Carpenter, Makhadmeh, & Thornton, 2015). The above definitions by Nick et al. (2012) and Haggard et al (2011) are adapted for the present study. Hence, mentoring practice(s) and function(s) are used interchangeably in this study to refer to those actions or behaviours of physical education teachers that bring about professional development of beginning physical education teachers in tertiary institutions. Although, it is difficult for anyone to provide actions or behaviours that will work in every mentoring situation (McCormack & Thomas, 2003), there are some practices or functions that should always guide mentoring relationships. Anderson and Shannon (1988) outlined a set of actions that represent a paradigm for mentoring practices.

The practices of mentoring as contained in their paradigm which was created specifically for training teachers include teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending. These are mentoring functions which a mentor may need to provide individually or collectively at any given time. Kram (1985) in Floyd (1993) noted that mentoring occurs through activities such as friendship, teaching, coaching and counseling. Carruthers (1993) explained that mentoring involves an individual being a parent-figure, teacher, role model, approachable counsellor, trusted adviser, challenger, and encourager. Tentoni (1995) adapting the work of Anderson and

Shannon (1988) developed a model for on-site mentoring. The model contained five mentoring functions of teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending together with certain basic behaviours for each function.(Upson, Koballa and Gerber, 2002; Quinn and Spreitzer, 2006; Pembridge and Paretti, 2011). Tentoni (1995) outlined teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling and befriending as mentoring functions practised by mentors for the purpose of mentoring the mentees. These practices or functions or actions as proposed and outlined by various authors (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Floyd, 1993; Carruthers, 1993; Tentoni, 1995; Daloz, 2000).)are adapted in this study. Hence, teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling and befriending formed the bedrock for this study in determining strategies for mentoring beginning physical education teachers that will enhance professional best practices in tertiary institutions.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Beginning teachers encounter numerous challenges and demands when beginning their teaching careers in schools. Each school presents a myriad of new relationships to foster, that is staff, students, parents, and administrators, which can be overwhelming. Additional issues reported in physical education literature cite the low status of physical education and the lack of respect given to the profession by members of the school community, physical isolation within the school setting, fewer colleagues available for support, and a lack of appropriate resources or teaching space as some of the issues affecting teacher performance and success attributed to lack of mentoring (McCormack & Thomas, 2003). Yet, there is insufficient documentation in the literature of institutionalized formal strategies for mentoring programmes specifically tailored towards the mentoring practices of beginning physical educators (Wright & Smith, 2000). Given this myriad of issues affecting teacher performance and success, school personnel have the need to understand and provide a framework of support such as mentoring that is unique to the professional development of beginning physical educators. Hence the need for this study to identify strategies for mentoring beginning physical education teachers for their professional development.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify strategies for effective mentoring of beginning physical education teachers in tertiary institutions in South-east Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. ascertain mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of teaching for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;
2. ascertain mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of sponsoring for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;

3. ascertain mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of encouraging for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;
4. ascertain mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of counseling for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;
5. ascertain mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of befriending for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;

### **Research Questions**

Based on the specific objectives of the study, the following research questions were posed:

1. what are the mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of teaching for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria?
2. what are the mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of sponsoring for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria?
3. what are the mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of encouraging for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria?
4. what are the mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of counseling for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria?
5. what are the mentoring strategies associated with the mentoring practice of befriending for professional development of beginning PE teachers in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria;?

### **Methods**

The descriptive survey design was used in the study. O'Connor (2011) explained descriptive survey design as being useful for studying a variety of problems involving data collection for either testing hypothesis or answering questions concerning present status of subjects. The population for the study consisted of 21 experts made up of professors, readers, senior lecturers, chief lecturers and principal lecturers in the field of physical education in tertiary institutions in South-east Nigeria offering physical education programme as at 2018/2019 academic year. There was no sampling for the study because the entire population was used. This is consistent with the submission of Israel (2013) which posited that where the number in the target population is small, it is preferable to use all the subjects in order to ensure representativeness and generalizability of the findings.

The instrument for the study was the researcher-designed Beginning Physical Education Teachers Mentoring Strategies Questionnaire (BPETMSQ). This was used to generate quantitative data from experts in Physical Education. The BPETMSQ consisted of 34 items formulated so as to provide possible strategies needed for effective practices of mentoring beginning physical education teachers in tertiary institution. It was on the basis of the specific objectives of the study that the experts were requested to adjudge the items on the BPETMSQ. The response options for this instrument were Very Appropriate (3 points), Appropriate (2 points) and Not Appropriate (1 point). Other researchers (Dike, 2007; Elendu, 2009; Ugwu, 2013; & Burbwa, 2016) adopted the three point scale to establish appropriateness of the formulated strategies in their respective studies. The BPETMSQ was sent to five experts in the Department of Health and Physical Education, University of Nigeria Nsukka for face validity. The experts in the field of physical education were better positioned for a critical examination of the content of the instrument. The reliability of BPETMSQ was established using the Cronbach's Alpha statistic. The instrument yielded an alpha coefficient of .79 and was considered reliable for the study. The reliability index satisfy Udegbe's (2007) recommendation that when the reliability coefficient ( $r$ ) is equal or above .67, the instrument should be adjudged reliable. Twenty-one (21) valid copies of BPETMSQ were distributed to experts in the field of physical education in tertiary institutions in south-east Nigeria.

Data was analysed using mean score. A criterion mean of 2.00 was. Any item with a mean score of 2.00 and above was considered as "Appropriate" (A), while any item with a mean score below 2.00 was considered as "Not Appropriate" (NA). In other words, all items that had mean score of 2.00 and above were included as mentoring strategies, while all the items that had mean scores below 2.00 were not included as strategies for various mentoring practices.

## Results

### Research question one.

What are the strategies for teaching as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teachers? Data answering this research question are contained in Table 1.

**Table 1: Strategies for Teaching as a Mentoring Practice**

S/N	STRATEGIES	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Provision of opportunities to team-teach, observe and learn from experienced PE teachers and with others.	3.00	0.00	A

2.	Exhibition of attitudes, values, and behaviours that the beginning PE teachers seek to emulate	2.73	0.46	A
3.	Provision of well-planned and modelled lesson by experienced PE teachers that will enable beginning PE teachers to objectively observe experienced PE teachers and engage in critical self-reflection (Model Teaching).	2.73	0.46	A
4.	Asking guided questions and offering suggestions and ideas that would allow beginning PE teachers to succeed.	2.91	0.30	A
5.	Dissemination of information regarding mentoring and the mentoring system by the institutions through teacher training, seminars and meetings.	2.82	0.40	A
<b>Cluster</b>		<b>2.84</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>A</b>

Data in table 1 above revealed an overall mean and SD score of ( $\bar{X} = 2.84 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.32$ ). These indicate that the items of the strategies for teaching as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teacher were appropriate.

#### Research question two.

What are the strategies for sponsoring as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teachers? Data answering this research question are contained in Table 2.

**Table 2: Strategies for Sponsoring as a Mentoring Practice**

S/N	STRATEGIES	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1.	Protecting beginning PE teachers from undesirable assignment and internal politics, to help them to concentrate on their professional development.	2.36	0.67	A
2.	Reducing unnecessary risks that could threaten the possibility of beginning PE teachers advancing in the field.	2.64	0.50	A
3.	Introducing beginning teachers to professional networks and other individuals who may be valuable resources or future collaborators.	2.55	0.68	A
4.	Provision of opportunities to share teaching practice through peer observation of self and others and through professional conversations.	2.18	0.87	A

5.	Nominating and supporting beginning PE teacher for research scholarships and for further studies.	2.64	0.50	A
6.	Provision of opportunity to beginning PE teachers to exhibit their abilities and performance with other senior members of the institution.	2.18	0.87	A
7.	Organizing workshops/seminars on mentoring to enable beginning PE teachers participate and acquire the skills and training required for professional growth.	2.45	0.52	A
8.	Giving beginning PE teachers responsibilities that will increase personal contact with professional colleagues and other individuals in and outside the institution.	2.45	0.82	A
<b>Cluster</b>		<b>2.43</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>A</b>

Data in table 2 above revealed an overall mean and SD score of ( $\bar{X} = 2.43 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ). These indicate that the items of the strategies for sponsoring as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teacher were appropriate.

### Research question three.

What are the strategies for encouraging as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teachers? Data answering this research question are contained in Table 3.

**Table 3: Strategies for Encouraging as a Mentoring Practice**

	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	Provision of guidance and constructive feedbacks to enable beginning PE teachers to identify their current strengths and weaknesses.	2.45	0.82	A
2.	Provision of opportunities to participate in professional growth and development experiences to enhance the work of beginning PE teachers.	2.18	0.87	A
3.	Allowing beginning teachers to make decisions and to work on their own without much interference from the experienced PE teachers.	2.36	0.92	A
4.	Co-authoring publications with beginning PE teachers.	2.55	0.52	A
5.	Encouraging beginning PE teachers to attend academic conferences.	2.73	0.46	A



6.	Encouraging beginning PE teachers to turn papers into research presentations and publications	2.27	0.64	A
7.	Providing challenging assignments to beginning PE teacher to increase their current skill and develop new ones.	2.64	0.67	A
<b>Cluster</b>		<b>2.45</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>A</b>

Data in table 3 above revealed an overall mean and SD score of ( $\bar{X} = 2.45 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ). These indicate that the items of the strategies for encouraging as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teacher were appropriate.

#### Research question four.

What are the strategies for counselling as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teachers? Data answering this research question are contained in Table 4.

**Table 4: Strategies for Counselling as a Mentoring Practice**

	<b>STRATEGIES</b>	<b><math>\bar{X}</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1.	Provision of a support network or forum for beginning PE teachers to seek confidential advice on issues or concerns related to their professional development.	2.18	0.75	A
2.	Exhibition of supportive and attentive behaviour by experienced PE teachers to allow for constructive dialogue with beginning PE teachers	2.55	0.52	A
3.	Provision of feedback and alternative perspectives on issue and concerns of beginning PE teachers.	2.09	0.83	A
4.	Asking probing questions.	2.18	0.60	A
5.	Demonstration of effective listening skill by experienced PE teachers in conversation with beginning PE teachers.	2.36	0.80	A
6.	Helping beginning PE teachers to clarify their career goals.	2.64	0.50	A
<b>Cluster</b>		<b>2.33</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>A</b>

Data in table 4 above revealed an overall mean and SD score of ( $\bar{X} = 2.33 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.67$ ). These indicate that the items of the strategies for counselling as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teacher were appropriate.

**Research question five.**

What are the strategies for befriending as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teachers? Data answering this research question are contained in Table 5.

**Table 5: Strategies for Befriending as a Mentoring Practice**

	STRATEGIES	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Keeping discussions confidential. This is essential for developing mutual trust and will ensure that beginning teachers are comfortable sharing their ideas or concerns.	2.55	0.82	A
2	Provision of opportunities for experienced PE teachers to discuss and understand the challenges, problems and concerns of beginning teachers.	2.36	0.80	A
3	Sharing personal experiences to help beginning PE teachers with their problems.	2.27	0.78	A
4	Discussing experienced PE teacher's career history with beginning PE teachers.	2.00	0.77	A
5	Regular and effective communication between experienced and beginning PE teachers.	2.36	0.67	A
6	Facilitating conversations with other beginning teachers.	2.09	0.83	A
7	Interacting with beginning PE teachers socially outside of work.	2.73	0.46	A
8	Showing interest in beginning PE teachers' activities outside of work.	2.91	0.30	A
	<b>Cluster</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>A</b>

Data in table 5 above revealed an overall mean and SD score of ( $\bar{X} = 2.75 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ). These indicate that the items of the strategies for befriending as a mentoring practice for professional development of beginning PE teacher were appropriate.

**Discussion**

Data in Tables 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 show an overall mean and SD scores of ( $\bar{X} = 2.84 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.32$ ), ( $\bar{X} = 2.43 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ), ( $\bar{X} = 2.45 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.70$ ), ( $\bar{X} = 2.33 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.67$ ) and ( $\bar{X} = 2.75 > 2.00$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ) respectively which indicate that the identified strategies for mentoring practices of teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counselling and befriending respectively were all appropriate.

The result from research question 1 indicated that the strategies for teaching as a mentoring practice include: Provision of opportunities to team-teach, observe and learn from experienced PE teachers and with others, Exhibition of attitudes, values, and behaviours that the beginning PE teachers seek to emulate, Provision of well-planned and modelled lesson by experienced PE teachers that will enable beginning PE teachers to objectively observe experienced PE teachers and engage in critical self-reflection (Model Teaching), Asking guided questions and offering suggestions and ideas that would allow beginning PE teachers to succeed, and Dissemination of information regarding mentoring and the mentoring system by the institutions through teacher training, seminars and meetings. This finding is in line with the assertion of Upson, Koballa and Gerber (2002) that mentors must always assist the mentees to reflect on specific teaching practices. Quinn and Spreitzer (2006) suggested that questioning helps to change one's perspective by moving from a passive state to an active state. Also Pembroke and Paretti (2011), revealed that modeling, which is one of the sub-functions of teaching function, is one of the most commonly reported of the mentoring functions, in which the mentor exhibits the attitudes, values, and behaviours that the mentee seeks to emulate.

The result from research question 2 indicated that the finding revealed that the strategies for sponsoring as a mentoring practice include: Protecting beginning PE teachers from undesirable assignment and internal politics, to help them to concentrate on their professional development, Reducing unnecessary risks that could threaten the possibility of beginning PE teachers advancing in the field, Introducing beginning teachers to professional networks and other individuals who may be valuable resources or future collaborators, Provision of opportunities to share teaching practice through peer observation of self and others and through professional conversations, Nominating and supporting beginning PE teacher for research scholarships and for further studies, Provision of opportunity to beginning PE teachers to exhibit their abilities and performance with other senior members of the institution, Organizing workshops/seminars on mentoring to enable beginning PE teachers participate and acquire the skills and training required for professional growth, and Giving beginning PE teachers responsibilities that will increase personal contact with professional colleagues and other individuals in and outside the institution. This finding is in line with that of other researchers. Kram (1985) noted that sponsoring within education would include nominating students for scholarships, writing of letters of recommendation for future jobs (promoting), and allowing the student to build a reputation. Wolfe, Retallick, Martin, and Steiner (2008), also revealed that protection should be given to mentee in situations where it is not appropriate to expose the mentee to the larger community.

The result from research question 3 indicated that the finding revealed that the strategies for encouraging as a mentoring practice include: Provision of guidance and constructive feedbacks to enable beginning PE teachers to identify their current

strengths and weaknesses, Provision of opportunities to participate in professional growth and development experiences to enhance the work of beginning PE teachers, Allowing beginning teachers to make decisions and to work on their own without much interference from the experienced PE teachers, Co-authoring publications with beginning PE teachers, Encouraging beginning PE teachers to attend academic conferences, Encouraging beginning PE teachers to turn papers into research presentations and publications, and Providing challenging assignments to beginning PE teacher to increase their current skill and develop new ones. This finding is in agreement with that of Weng, Huang, Tsais, Chang, Lin and Lee (2010). Their study revealed that as part of the mentoring process, mentors often assign challenging and learning tasks to mentees in order to improve the mentees' knowledge and skills, provide career guidance, support the advancement of job position, help in resolving task-related problems, and further promote their overall growth.

The result from research question 4 indicated that the finding revealed that the strategies for counselling as a mentoring practice include: Provision of a support network or forum for beginning PE teachers to seek confidential advice on issues or concerns related to their professional development, Exhibition of supportive and attentive behaviour by experienced PE teachers to allow for constructive dialogue with beginning PE teachers, Provision of feedback and alternative perspectives on issue and concerns of beginning PE teachers, Asking probing questions, Demonstration of effective listening skill by experienced PE teachers in conversation with beginning PE teachers, and Helping beginning PE teachers to clarify their career goals. This finding is in line with that of Daloz Parks (2000), who noted that as a strategy for mentoring practice, mentors should provide support by serving as a guide to resources and a source of comfort and healing to mentees. Wroblewski (2018) noted that active listening is a learned skill, and good coaches can elevate it to an art form with practice. Also Kennedy and Dorman (2002) reported that mentors need to be supportive and attentive to the mentee's communication thereby ensuring effective communication and sharing of ideas. The author further stressed that while feedback is important, it really should be secondary to securing someone's confidence by assuring them that they are being heard. The finding of this study is also in line with the views of Marion (2007) who noted that there is no substitute for active listening, and mentors need to be particularly astute listeners. Therefore as a mentoring strategy, it is important to read between the lines and anticipate the stresses, doubts, and concerns mentees are struggling to cope with on a day to day basis. Rather than immediately interrupt with solutions, it is more effective to get all of the problems, issues and troubles out, and then help the mentee work through a process to come up with their own solutions. Patience, compassion and understanding are great skills for mentors to utilize.

The result from research question 5 indicated that the finding revealed that the strategies for befriending as a mentoring practice include: Keeping discussions

confidential. This is essential for developing mutual trust and will ensure that beginning teachers are comfortable sharing their ideas or concerns, Provision of opportunities for experienced PE teachers to discuss and understand the challenges, problems and concerns of beginning teachers, Sharing personal experiences to help beginning PE teachers with their problems, Discussing experienced PE teacher's career history with beginning PE teachers, Regular and effective communication between experienced and beginning PE teachers, Facilitating conversations with other beginning teachers, Interacting with beginning PE teachers socially outside of work, and Showing interest in beginning PE teachers' activities outside of work. This was not surprising considering the findings of Carpenter, Makhadmeh and Thornton (2015) that mentors spent time with their mentees during conference and also socialize with them outside the academic setting by so doing, they will be able to discuss and understand the challenges, problems and concerns of beginning teachers and as well share personal experiences to help beginning PE teachers with their problems. The finding is also in line with the view of Carpenter, S., Makhadmeh, N. & Thornton, L. (2015): that social interaction allows new teachers to share personal experiences and escape the pressures of work. Kesselheim (1998) agree that mentoring programmes should allow beginning teachers to interact with someone more skilful and knowledgeable, thereby developing mutual trust. Also Callahan (2016) asserted that a strong, well-trained mentor will work with new teachers to develop reflective practices through dialogue about classroom management and pedagogy, emphasizing the importance of building relationships with students and of developing caring values, such as respect, in the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

The managements of tertiary institutions are under increased pressure to create opportunities for professional guidance and development of their academic staff to avert a slide in academic performance as there is a growing concern about raising academic standards and a desire for tertiary institutions in Nigerian to compete favourably with their counterparts in other parts of the world. One way to maintain academic standards and performance is mentoring. This is because it provides the possibility of enhancing the qualifications of beginning teachers. Apart from being a vehicle for accelerating the education reform process, it provides a medium through which professional development activities can be made available to beginning teachers on a continual basis. This process however is only made possible when appropriate strategies for mentoring are adopted. These strategies will be most beneficial to school authorities and those who have always wanted to start a mentoring programme but do not know how. They will equally help to ameliorate the challenges to mentoring and also serve as a guide to the tertiary institutions authorities in implementing mentoring programmes in the schools.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings, discussions and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. A robust, effective and functional mentoring system and mentoring policies should be provided, formulated and effectively implemented by tertiary institution authorities and PE departments based on their peculiarities.
2. Management of tertiary institutions should adopt the mentoring strategies that were identified in this study for professional development of beginning physical education teachers in this study.

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