Teachers' Opinions about the Effects of Mentorship Programs on the Academic Motivation of

Students Living in Poverty

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on the academic motivation of students living in poverty. More specifically, do teachers feel that mentorship programs have an effect on students' academic assignments, their grades, their engagement, their focus, their attendance and their behavior?

The study used a survey to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs of students living in poverty on academic motivation in the Nanaimo Ladysmith School District in British Columbia. Teachers and administrators from eight elementary schools in School District #68, Nanaimo Ladysmith, were asked to participate in the study. All of the schools involved were located in vulnerable neighborhoods and the majority of the students attending these schools were living in poverty. The survey was given to informed anonymous teachers in October of the 2015/2016 school year. Of the 110 teachers invited to participate 28 responded, giving a response rate of 26%.

The results indicate that teachers believe that mentorship programs are beneficial, improve students' grades on report cards, improve students' scores on assignments, increase students focus, decrease behavioral challenges in the classroom, are not disruptive to the classroom and decrease the amount of days students are absent. On the other hand, teachers did not believe that mentorship programs increase the amount of assignments students complete.

The results also showed that as the amount of poverty in a class and the amount of experience a teacher has working in high poverty schools increases the perceived benefits of mentorship programs for students also increases. The study showed that mentorship programs increase the academic motivation of students living in poverty.

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Purpose of the Study

I have spent most of my career as a teacher working in inner city schools where the number of students living in poverty is high. I've always been aware that what happens in a student's home life has an effect on their ability to learn but I think of one incident that really made me aware of how true this is. Often I bring food from home to school for students in my classes who are hungry. One time, over a period of a week, I noticed that three big boxes of granola bars had all been eaten. In an attempt to figure out what was going on with the granola bars I asked the class about them. "Where are they all going? Is everybody just really hungry?" After school that day a student came to me and explained that he had been taking all the granola bars home to feed his three younger sisters. He was the oldest in the family at 13 and he had three little sisters at home that he cared for most of the time. He explained that his family didn't have much money and that his mom was rarely home, she had to work two jobs to pay their rent and there was not a lot left over for food at the end of the month. This story had an impact on me that changed me as an educator. I began to consider the importance of education to a child living in poverty and what it meant for that child to be in my classroom and the school system in general. We need to understand the challenges that our youth are facing at home and in their personal lives in order to make our efforts authentic and valid.

The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on academic motivation of students living in poverty. According to the 2013 Child Poverty Report Card, British Columbia has the highest poverty rate in Canada, with 18.6% of children living in poverty (First Call BC, p.4). Similarly, Fuller (2013) states, "Approximately 15% of the population of Nanaimo, including 1 in 4 children, are receiving

some form of income assistance" (para.4). The number of students living in poverty in the Nanaimo Ladysmith school district is high and the need to meet the needs of these students is imperative.

Students living in poverty have a higher dropout rate than that of students who are not living in poverty (Haveman, Wolfe, & Spaulding, 1991; Rumberger, 2014). As stated by the American Psychological Association (2012), "A strong link exists between poverty and high school dropout rates. Students from low-income families dropped out of high school five times more than students from high-income families in 2009" (p.1). Dropping out of school has numerous consequences in the adult years. High school completion is closely linked to economic and social success in adulthood and not completing high school increases the likelihood of not finding employment, criminal behaviour and social emotional disorders (Hair & Graziano 2003; Ladd, 2012). Many students living in poverty drop out of school due to the lack of positive relationships they form at school and in their communities. Mentorship programs have the potential to create a meaningful relationship for these students. The mentors are volunteers from the community who come into the school and work with students building a relationship and strengthening academic progress. Mentors have the unique ability to move from school to school within the community, allowing for these students, who are often transient (Shonkoff & Garner, 2012) to create a consistent bond with someone that could foster a positive relationship.

The goal of the study was to determine if teachers feel that mentorship programs in the school system have an effect on students living in poverty. A secondary goal was to investigate the view of mentorship programs from the teachers' perspective and give teachers information to assist them in creating a successful learning environment for students living in poverty.

Justification of the Study

There is a connection between high school success and positive social relationships formed with peers and adults (Szewczyk-Sokolowski, Bost, & Wainwright, 2005). Students living in poverty and lacking in social connection can often feel like outcasts (Rothman, 2007). Recently, research has shown that relationships formed between students and their teachers, their parents and any other adults can have a significant positive impact on behaviour in the classroom and academic achievement (Lauderdale, 2011). These relationships are viewed as an important determinant in academic success. It is shown that children who are lacking in strong positive relationships have a higher dropout rate because they often feel like no one will care if they do well in school or even attend (Mouton & Hawkins, 1996). These students are failing to create positive relationships in school or the relationships they form are broken. In many situations these students are lacking a positive relationship at home that would model a healthy relationship at school.

According to Attachment Theory by Bowlby (2012), children need to form positive, secure attachments with others to allow for positive relationships with their peers and other adults in the future. A child who forms a positive attachment will be secure in learning and create a successful positive environment at school. A child who does not form secure attachments will suffer social and emotional distress and will struggle to form positive relationships later in life. Research has shown that students coming from low income homes are less likely to have formed positive, secure relationships with their caregivers (Jensen, 2009). Research has found that parents living in poverty often fail to build strong healthy relationships with their children (Ahnert, Pinquart, & Lamb, 2006). These children are often left at home to

fend for themselves or care for other siblings while parents are working (Jensen, 2009). Positive

relationships are needed for students to be successful in the classroom and other areas of their

lives.

Research has shown that mentorship programs have had a positive effect on student's

attitudes toward school and their perception of their academic abilities (Converse &

Lignugaris/Kraft (2009). A study conducted by Coller and Kuo (2014) examined the effects of

mentorship programs in a low income Latino school in Los Angeles. The results showed that the

mentorship relationship was viewed as positive and that, "these relationships may improve youth

health through fewer risky behaviours and attitude improvements" (p. 316). Similarly, research

conducted by da Costa, Jose and Schinke (2000) found that mentorship programs showed a

significant increase in students' perception of the value of school and an increase in their

perception of self-worth. Increasing students' positive attitudes toward school and themselves is

an effective way of increasing students' academic motivation and positive feelings in the

classroom.

Students involved in mentorship programs are also more likely to report that they have an

important adult in their lives (Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, & McMaken, 2011). The relationship

that is formed with the mentor has a positive outcome on students' feelings of attachment.

Research conducted by Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch (2000) also reported an improvement in the

relationship between students and their caregivers as a result of mentorship programs. The

research concluded that mentorship programs provided skills and attitudes to the students

necessary to help them build positive relationships at home. Also, students' attendance

improved when they were involved in a mentorship program (Rhodes, Grossman, & Resch,

2000). Increasing the attendance of students living in poverty gives the student access to many programs available by the school to help the student succeed.

Mentorship programs are becoming more and more common in elementary schools as a way to help students who are struggling both academically and emotionally. Research has shown numerous positive effects of mentorship programs in schools to help students to succeed. The majority of the research done investigates mentorship programs by evaluating particular programs or looking at the relationship from the perspective of the student and the mentors. This study is looking at the perception of mentorship programs from the view of the teacher to provide information about the usefulness of mentorship programs in their schools and classrooms.

Research Question and Hypothesis

The high child poverty rate found in British Columbia is an area of great concern to educators in this province. These children are coming to school without the necessary tools to be successful in the classroom. Without adequate relationships and resources these students can display a lack of motivation and any number of negative behavioural characteristics. In order to explore what we can do to help the children who are living in poverty reach their potential in an academic environment, the current study asked: What are teachers' perceptions of the impact of mentorship programs on the academic motivation of students living in poverty?

It was hypothesized by the researcher that teachers would report that mentorship programs increased the academic motivation of students living in poverty. By forming a secure bond with an adult the student would become more motivated at school and there would be a decrease in negative behaviours seen in the classroom. The researcher hypothesized that teachers would report that mentorship programs are beneficial to students living in poverty and

that they would report an increase in students' completion of assignments, an improvement in scores on academic grades and assignments, an increase in focus and engagement, a decrease in negative behaviours and an increase in attendance.

Definition of Terms

According to Sarlo (2013), "Poverty is a state of severe privation. It means that people are lacking the necessities required for their physical wellbeing" (p.7). Other definitions of poverty state the same lack of or inability to obtain basic necessities; according to Vorster and Kruger (2007)

> the term poverty includes the different conditions of life that are associated with uncertainty whether essential basic needs will be met, and describes a lack of access to services and natural resources. Poverty is often characterised by a lack of freedom, education, capabilities, opportunities, employment and equity (p. 321).

Poverty is the lack of income to obtain life's necessities such as food and housing and is characterized by challenges in education (Hughes, 2013) and social emotional instability (Flouri, Midouhas, & Joshi, 2014).

In this study academic motivation was defined as the desire to succeed in the classroom and the school environment. Participants measured this by the number of assignments students completed, their scores on assignments, their ability to focus in the classroom, their engagement, their attendance and their behaviour.

Brief Overview of Study

The study used a survey to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs of students living in poverty on academic motivation in the Nanaimo Ladysmith

School District in British Columbia. Teachers from eight elementary schools in School District #68, Nanaimo Ladysmith, were asked to participate in the study. All of the schools involved were located in vulnerable neighborhoods and the majority of the students attending these schools were living in poverty. The eight schools' administrators were contacted and consent was given to contact the teachers and ask for their anonymous participation in the study.

The survey was given to informed anonymous teachers in October of the 2015/2016 school year. The survey consisted of closed and open-ended questions pertaining to three areas. The first section consisted of questions designed to obtain general information about the participant such as number of years teaching, time spent working with students living in poverty, gender, experience working with students living in poverty and experience with mentorship programs. The second section consisted of statements where participants answered, using a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, about positive and negative effects of mentorship programs. The third section of the survey was open-ended questions asking the participant any other information they wished to tell the researcher.

The surveys were collected and analysis was done to determine the teachers' perception of low socio economic students' motivation, focus, engagement, behaviour, grades, completed assignments and attendance trends. Data were also evaluated to determine the overall teachers' perspective of the effects of school based mentorship programs for students living in poverty. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained and examined.

Chapter Two: Review of Related Research

This chapter is presented in three sections: poverty, poverty and education and mentorship programs. The purpose of the section about poverty is to present the current statistics about the number of students living in poverty in British Columbia and more specifically the Nanaimo Ladysmith school district. Next the poverty and education section gives current research about the effects of poverty for students in the school system. Current research about how poverty can effect students learning and emotional wellbeing is presented to show the need to help these at risk learners. The final section, mentorship program, gives related research about mentorship programs effects on student learning. The majority of the research presented reviews a particular program and the value of that program. The research being conducted by the researcher is different in that it is examining the opinion of teachers about the effects of mentorship programs not a particular program in itself.

Poverty

Poverty is a problem that is very apparent in British Columbia and as stated in Chapter 1, British Columbia has the highest poverty rate in Canada (First Call BC, 2013) and the Nanaimo Ladysmith area has 25% of children living in poverty (Fuller, 2013). There are a significant number of children from low income families that are attending our schools in the Nanaimo Ladysmith school district. On average, in a classroom that has 30 students seven of them are low income. This could be substantially higher depending on the specific area of Nanaimo you are teaching in. According to A Community and School District Profile, research conducted by the British Columbia Teachers Federation (BCTF) examining the number of students in the Nanaimo Ladysmith school district that are living in poverty, the annual mean salary in a double income home in North Nanaimo is $66, 231 compared to $32, 023 in South Nanaimo (BCTF, 2006,

section 1). Thus, the mean salary in North Nanaimo is almost double the mean salary in South Nanaimo. From this you can conclude that there could be as many as double the students living in poverty in South Nanaimo as in North Nanaimo. This could mean that half of a class could be from a low income family home.

The BCTF has been researching the amount of poverty in school districts to find ways to help alleviate the effects of poverty in the classroom. In the 2012 Poverty and Education Survey: A Teacher's Perspective, done by the BCTF, 778 teachers were surveyed and asked questions about poverty and educational issues in their classes. The research concluded that, "one in three teachers (32.8% of the sample) teach in schools located in a low-income neighbourhood, almost half of respondents (47.2%) teach in schools located in mixed-income neighbourhoods" (White, 2012, p.10). This demonstrates that large numbers of children in the education system are living in poverty. Given the high level of poverty in the school system and the challenges these students face educators need to find useful strategies to help meet the needs of these learners.

Poverty and Education

Students living in poverty have a much higher chance of not graduating from high school and the consequences of dropping out are detrimental to many of these students (Haveman, Wolfe & Spaulding, 1991; Rumberger 2014). When comparing a high school graduate to someone who has not completed high school, graduates are more likely to obtain a job and earn a living wage whereas someone who has not completed high school is more likely to live in poverty, suffer from ill health, and have more social emotional challenges (Rumberger, 2011). The completion of high school can have lifelong effects for our youth and we need to cultivate learning and find ways to help our most vulnerable students to succeed. So, a child living in poverty is less likely to graduate and a non-graduate is more likely to be unemployed and suffer

from mental and physical illness and challenges. Therefore, children living in poverty are more likely to have more hardships in their adult years and so these students are our most vulnerable. Ladd (2012) states, "Study after study has demonstrated that children from disadvantaged households perform less well in school on average than those from more advantaged households" (para.9). The educational challenges experienced by students living in poverty and the lack of social emotional relationships these students create are major contributors to the high dropout rate.

Students living in poverty face educational challenges that stem from lacking in the basic necessities of life. In the 2012 Poverty and Education Survey: A Teacher's Perspective conducted by the BCTF, "8 out of 10 teachers responding to the survey report having students in their class(es) who start the day hungry (80.6%) and who do not bring food for lunch and snacks"(White, p. 3). The lack of good nutrition can be the cause of many of the problem behaviours you often see in the classroom. Clark (1982) states, "adequate nutrition is necessary to the proper growth and development of the body and all its functioning parts. Learning development in the child is necessarily dependent on the brain" (p.304). Poor nutrition can have negative effects on brain development in utero. A mother who is unable to obtain a sufficient amount of food and vitamins during pregnancy can have an effect on the fetus's developing brain, making cognitive functioning and focusing a challenge (Prado & Dewey, 2014). The development of a human brain begins at the time of conception and a mother living in poverty would not always have access to proper nutritional food. If the developing brain is not receiving sufficient nutrition it cannot develop into a fully working brain that is capable of engaging in higher order thinking and reasoning that is associated with learning (Gamin, Chapman, & Lyon, 2010).

Not only does the lack of adequate nutrition have an effect on the developing brain, causing more educational challenges in children coming from low income homes, it also affects their behaviour. A student who has not had any breakfast or who is unsure as to whether or not they will have any dinner can appear to be tired, irritable and lacking motivation. The anxiety caused by worrying about your ability to obtain food is called food insecurity and it is linked with poor school performance and a decrease in motivation (Frongillio, Jones, & Jyoti, 2005). The lack of food or proper food makes attending to an activity in a classroom very challenging. Students living in poverty, by the definition, lack the ability to obtain sufficient nutrition. You need food in order to live and without it or the confidence that you will be able to eat later you will not be able to focus or attend to an educational environment.

Students that live in poverty often lack social emotional relationships that are linked to academic success. Students are more successful when they have peer relationships and healthy relationships with adults in their lives (Jensen, 2009). Teachers, family members and neighbors can all have a relationship with students that strengthens academic success. Many students living in poverty become transient in nature or homeless (Shonkoff & Garner, 2012). There are numerous reasons for these relocations: eviction, family disputes, looking for more affordable housing. Students living in poverty change residences frequently because of the need to find affordable housing on a limited income (Ladd, 2012). When students are moving from one residence to another they are living in a constant state of uncertainty and disorganization. Moving can cause a lot of stress for students and make learning difficult. In a 1994 report to the House of Representatives by the General Accounting Office (as cited in Wright, 1999), "student mobility has had an increasing impact on the performance of individual students and school systems" (p.347).

As stated above, many children who grow up in low income homes have adult lives characterised by a lack of employment and can suffer from physical and mental illnesses. When these children grow up they often become parents who suffer from many challenges such as alcohol abuse, homelessness, stress and domestic violence (Shonkoff & Garner, 2012). Jensen (2009) states, "Common issues in low-income families include depression, chemical dependence, and hectic work schedules—all factors that interfere with the healthy attachments that foster children's self-esteem, sense of mastery of their environment, and optimistic attitudes" (p.9). These will ultimately weaken the bond formed between the parent and child resulting in a child who does not know how to form positive healthy relationships.

The social and emotional stress experienced by students living in poverty is extremely high. They are constantly battling to find sufficient resources to make daily life acceptable. Worrying about food, where you will be living and your safety are all valid stressors in their lives. The amount of stress in a low income home is significantly greater than that of students living in middle-high income homes and research suggests that these children in low income homes experience six stressors in comparison to zero in a middle/high income home (Evans, 2004). These children often live in homes where their caregivers are living in distress and often not home due to working or other commitments. Students who live in poverty are often exposed to harsh physical and social situations and left to look after themselves (Hilferty, Redmond, & Katz, 2010). The stress of poverty goes much deeper than what can be described here and it can be noted that many students living in these environments are also experiencing issues of substance abuse and have lives characterised by crisis (Jensen, 2009).

Research conducted by Lee (2009) found that poverty has an effect on reading scores. Similarly, research conducted by Eamon (2002) found that poverty has an effect on reading

scores, math scores and behaviour in the classroom. Both of the researchers used data from the

National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY). The NLSY data involved 12 686 people aged

14 – 21years. The participants were interviewed every year from 1979 to 1994 and every two

years after that. Participants completed assessments related to reading level, economic status,

and mathematics as well as many more. After 1986 assessments were administered to the

original female participants and their biological children. To see a full description of the NLSY

refer to Ohio State University, Center for Human Resource Research (1980). The researchers

analyzed the data collected from the NLSY and determined that there was an inverse relationship

between poverty and reading scores. Eamon (2002) also found that poverty had a direct effect

on problem behaviors in the classroom but did not have an effect on mathematical scores.

Given the vast effects poverty has on students, educators have been researching

interventions that can assist in alleviating some of the negative effects these students encounter.

Many high poverty schools have implemented food programs, parenting classes, afterschool

programs, and a variety of different reading intervention strategies. These initiatives are

imperative to the success of these students and they are incredibly valuable. Most of these

strategies do not address the lack of social emotional relationships students living poverty

experience. Mentorship programs give these students access to a peer or an adult who they can

build relationship with and learn from.

Mentorship Programs

Mentorship programs are becoming more common as an option for helping

students to meet their full academic potential and to help increase the likelihood of academic

success for struggling learners. When I started teaching 9 years ago mentorship programs were

just being introduced as a strategy to help vulnerable students. Now, most schools in Nanaimo

Ladysmith School District are using mentorship programs to help support vulnerable students. The majority of the research about mentorship programs consists of examining and evaluating specific mentorship programs and determining the program's effectiveness in schools.

Research conducted by Coller and Kuo (2014) examined the effects of mentorship programs in a low income Latino school in Los Angeles and found that mentorship programs can have positive effects on students living in poverty. The researchers were investigating the development and evaluation of the Youth Empowerment Program (YEP) in the school. The program involved participants who were in grade 4, reading just below grade level and likely to stay at the school for the next 2 years. The mentors were UCLA graduates who were committed to the project for a minimum of 1 year. The mentors worked with the students once a week for a minimum of 60 minutes. The mentors focused on the students' academic work, social skill development and building a relationship with the student.

Statistical analyses were done on participation data such as the number of mentor/mentee pairs, the length of the relationship, the genders of the mentor/mentee, and the relationship quality scores obtained from a questionnaire. The relationship quality assessment tool used by the YEP program was closely related to the questionnaire used by the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program but was adapted to be used with older students to measure the relationship quality.

The results indicated that the program was successful and that there were positive outcomes in the three domains measured by the relationship quality assessment tool. The domains measured if the students felt the program was youth centered, emotionally engaging and if they were satisfied with the program. The researchers also said that the teacher participants reported that classroom behaviour and reading level improved but there was no discussion about how many participants reported this or how they measured this. Results also indicated that 1

year seems to be an important amount of time for the relationship to show benefits, male

mentor/mentee relationships have a higher rate of failure and that mentors and students need to

be matched effectively in order for the relationship to be successful.

Similarly, research conducted by da Costa, Jose and Schinke (2000) found that

mentorship programs have a positive effect on low socioeconomic students and that the students

can see improvements in their attendance, their academic achievement as well as their self-

esteem and feelings of self-worth. The authors of the study are all in the education field and

prepared the report for the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the implementation and development of a

mentorship program in the Norwood School in the United States. The researchers used

numerous data collection techniques such as interviews, questionnaires and the Highest Level of

Achievement Test (HALT) scores. There were 136 mentor/mentee pairs and 10 teachers

involved in the study.

The findings of the HALT scores show a substantial improvement in reading and writing

scores for the participants in the 1 year they were measured. Also the researchers noticed an

increase in attendance on the days the students were to see their mentors.

Nunez, Rosario, Vallejo and Gonzalez-Renda (2013) conducted a longitudinal study

examining the effects of School Based Mentorship programs on middle school students in

Portugal. The study examined the effects of a mentorship program on the students' self-

regulated learning and academic achievement four times through the school year. Specifically

the researchers investigated the effects of the mentorship program on the students' math and

language achievement, their use of self-regulation strategies, their belief that they could regulate

their learning using self-regulation strategies, and whether or not they felt the self-regulation

strategies were useful. The self-regulation strategies helped students to regulate their behaviour and focus in the classroom.

The study involved four grade 7 classes in two schools in northern Portugal where all the families were considered low socioeconomically. Each school had one grade 7 class as a control group and the other as an experimental group. Each group was evaluated at the beginning of the study and it was found that there were no differences in the areas being measured. Each group was then revaluated at 3, 6 and 9 months into the program to assess differences from the previous evaluation and differences from each other.

The mentorship program that the experimental groups received consisted of 12 mentors who had an average of 8 years teaching experience and who had participated in a training session about how to work with the students on self-regulation strategies. The mentors were given lessons to teach and were given the same amount of time each week with each student. The mentors were given the freedom to adjust how much time they spent on each area if they felt a student needed extra support in a particular area.

The results of the study showed that the experimental groups had an increase in all areas measured in comparison to the control groups. The students in the experimental groups reported being able to use self-regulation strategies to help them learn and that the self-regulation strategies were useful significantly more than the control group. The researchers also found that over time the program effect increased. After 3 months there was reported a significant small change, followed by a significant medium change at 6 months.

Research suggests that mentorship programs have a positive effect on students both academically and emotionally. The use of mentorship programs to increase the likelihood of student success is showing to be an effective strategy.

Chapter Three: Procedures and Methods

Research Design

The study was designed to examine teachers' perspectives about the effects of mentorship programs for students living in poverty in their schools. An action research approach was used to explore the opinions of teachers. According to Mills (2011) the goal of action research is, "gaining insight, developing reflective practices, effecting positive changes in the school environment (and on educational practices in general), and improving the student outcomes and the lives of those involved" (p.5). According to Fuller one in four students are living in poverty in the Nanaimo Ladysmith School District (2013). Since there are a significant number of children from low income families that are attending schools in Nanaimo Ladysmith improving on knowledge and gaining insight as to how to effectively improve the academic outcomes of students living in poverty is beneficial for educators. A survey was conducted of teachers in School District #68 about the effects of mentorship programs.

Sample

Participants for the research study included teachers in the Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools District #68 on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. The teachers were from eight different elementary schools in the school district and were both part time and full time. All of the schools consisted of kindergarten to grade 7 students.

The teachers who were invited to participate all worked at schools where the student population was considered vulnerable. The Early Development Instrument (EDI) data was used to determine which schools in School District #68 had a high population of students living in poverty. According to Dunn & Forer (2015) the vulnerability rate of a school and poverty are positively related. The higher the vulnerability rate in a school the higher the amount of poverty

(Dunn & Forer, 2015). The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) researches the vulnerability rate of students across British Columbia and developed the Early Development Instrument. Using the EDI the researchers investigate the rate of vulnerability of kindergarten students in particular neighborhoods across the province. In the EDI Wave 5 (2011/12 - 2012/13), Nanaimo Ladysmith school district had an overall rate of 35% compared to the provincial average of 32%. The participants of this study taught at schools that are located in neighborhoods where the EDI data states that the vulnerability of the students attending the schools is above 45%. The schools are located in the Townsite Nanaimo Downtown neighborhood which has a vulnerability rate of 46% and South Nanaimo that has a vulnerability rate of 47%.

The researcher examined the opinions of teachers to investigate if they felt mentorship programs had an effect on students in their schools. There were 110 teachers working at the eight schools in the 2015/2016 school year. All teachers in the sample were invited to participate in the study. Of the 110 surveys distributed 28 were returned, giving a response rate of 26%. Mentorship programs in School District #68 are becoming more common and most schools in the district have a number of mentors working within their schools. As a teacher in this district the information provided by the study will provide useful information about the effects of mentorship programs.

Instrument

This study used a self-reporting anonymous survey (Appendix A) designed to determine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs for students living in poverty. The survey was a paper survey and consisted of three sections. Section one consisted of six open-ended questions designed to obtain general information about the participant such as number of

years teaching, gender, experience working with students living in poverty and experience with mentorship programs.

The second section consisted of 10 statements where participants answered using a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree about positive and negative effects of mentorship programs. The Likert scale allowed for the analysis of individual statement responses and enabled the researcher to determine mode and mean of the opinions in specific areas.

The statements were designed to gain insight into teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on students' behavioural challenges, absences, number of completed assignments, grades, focus and engagement in the classroom. The design of the statements were influenced by research conducted by da Costa, Jose and Schinke (2000) that suggests that mentorship programs produce improvements in student attendance, their academic achievement as well as their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth. As well, research done by Rhodes, Grossman and Resch (2000) that suggests that students have improvement in academic grades, a decrease in absences and an increase in positive emotional relationships due to their involvement in mentorship programs influenced the design of the statements.

Section three of the survey was two open-ended questions asking the participant any other information that they wished to tell the researcher. The first question asked the participant to list any other positive or negative effects that they felt mentorship programs had for students living in poverty and the second invited the participant to share a personal story or experience that they may have had in relation to mentorship programs. This allowed for the researcher to acquire more in-depth information about the effects of mentorship programs.

Procedures

Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the Vancouver Island University Ethics

Board and the Superintendent of School District #68. Principals in the school were contacted by

email (Appendix B) inviting them to participate in the study and permission was obtained by

them to invite teachers in their schools to participate in the study. The researcher delivered paper

surveys to each school and placed them in individual teachers' mailboxes.

A letter of consent (Appendix C), the survey, a chocolate and a plain envelope with no

marking were placed in individual teachers' mail boxes. Every school received the same

envelopes with their surveys to help insure anonymity. The letter of consent explained that

participation in the study was anonymous and to not put any markings identifying themselves or

their school on the survey that would be returned. It also explained that participation was

voluntary and that there were no repercussions for not completing or returning the survey.

Teachers were given 4 weeks to complete the survey and completed copies were placed in a pink

sealed drop box in the teachers' mail room and the researcher returned to each school and

collected the surveys in November, 2015. To insure anonymity of the participants and the

schools the researcher collected all identical boxes on the same day and the completed surveys

were dumped into a pile and mixed around before any data was looked at.

Validity

The survey consisted of both closed and open-ended questions and some of the

statements were asking the same thing but worded differently to improve the construct reliability.

The opportunity for the participants to give any other comments and share a personal story

allowed for any occurring themes to be recognized and analysed.

The researcher collected both qualitative and quantitative data on the survey. Extensive socioeconomic data and vulnerability data was explored by the researcher to ensure that the schools involved in the study consisted of many students living in poverty. To increase the response rate and number of completed surveys returned the researcher made sure the survey would take minimal time to complete and administered it to other teachers in other school districts known to the researcher to get feedback about the understanding of the statements prior to the study.

Analysis

The researcher inputted quantitative data collected from surveys into Microsoft Excel and analyzed the open-ended responses looking for reoccurring themes. The researcher calculated the mode and mean of each individual statement on the Likert Scale. The researcher determined the percentage of teachers that responded that were male vs female and examined the percentage of teachers that responded who had been teachers for less than 5 years, 5-10 years and 10 years plus. The percentage of teachers that had experience working with students who lived in poverty and had experience with mentorship programs was also investigated. The researcher looked at the overall teachers' opinions about mentorship programs both positive and negative. Then the researcher looked at any differences that may have occurred due to participant differences.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

The purpose of the study was to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of

mentorship programs on the academic motivation of students living in poverty. The data

collected gives insight into how teachers feel mentorship programs affect students in their

classrooms. The researcher distributed a paper survey (Appendix A) to educators in School

District #68 (Nanaimo Ladysmith Schools District) in the fall of 2015. The educators invited to

participate were teachers from eight different vulnerable schools in the Nanaimo Ladysmith

School District. Of the 110 educators invited to participate 28 responded, giving a response rate

of 26%. The survey was divided into three sections: general information about the participants

and their teaching experiences, a 5 point Likert Scale containing statements related to mentorship

programs and an open-ended question section. Findings will be divided into the same three

sections.

General Information about Participants

Figures 4.1-4.5 show the distribution of teaching experience of the participants and all

other general information about the participants. Of the 28 participants in the survey six (21%)

were male and 22 (79%) were female. The years of experience of the educators who participated

was reported in three choices 0-5 years, 5-10 years and 10 or more years. Twenty (71%) of the

participants had been teaching for 10 years or more, seven (25%) had been teaching for 5-10

years and one (4%) educator had been teaching for less than 5 years. In reporting the number of

years that the participants had been working in schools with a high number of students living in

poverty 17 (61%) reported over 10 years of experience, four (14%) reported 5-10 years and

seven (25%) reported 0-5 years of experience. When asked if their school currently had a

mentorship program in place 21 (75%) responded yes, five (18%) responded no and two (7%)

were unsure. Of the 28 participants 16 (57%) reported having students in their classes in the last 5 years who were involved in a mentorship program, 10 (36%) responded no, one (4%) was unsure and one participant did not respond. In reporting the percentage of students living in poverty in their classrooms three participants responded 0%-20% of their class was living in poverty, 10 reported 20%-40% of their class, eight responded 40%-60% of their class, three responded 60%-80% and two responded that between 80%-100% of their class was living in poverty. Two of the participants did not respond.
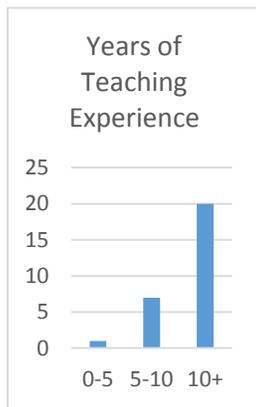
Figure 4.1 Teaching Experience
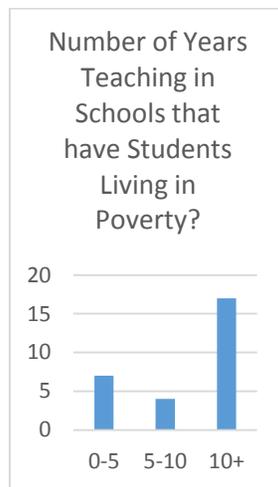
Figure 4.2 Experience Teaching in High Poverty Schools
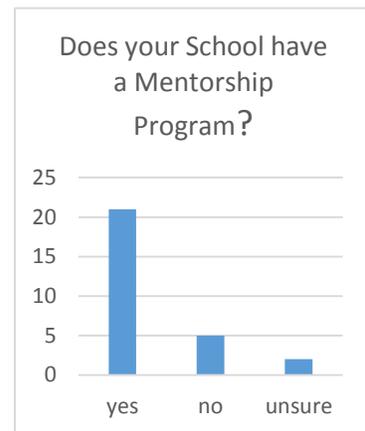
Figure 4.3 Schools with Mentorship Programs
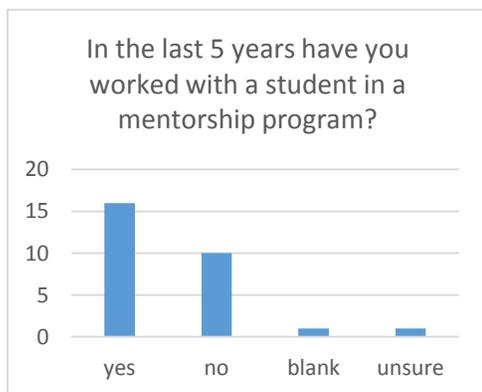
Figure 4.4 Student in a mentorship program in the last 5 years
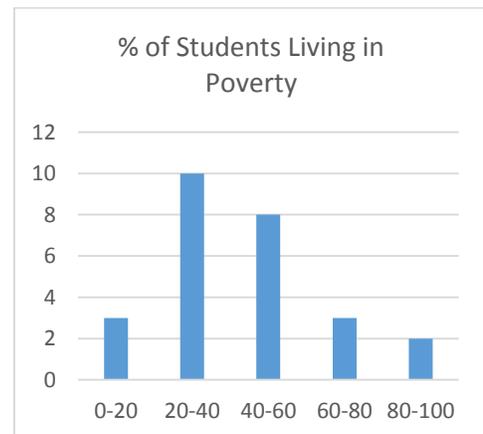
Figure 4.5 Percentage of Students Living in Poverty

Likert Scale Findings

The second part of the survey was designed to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs for students in their classrooms. Participants could respond using a 5 point Likert scale where 5 meant strongly agree, 4 meant agree, 3 was undecided, 2 was disagree and 1 was strongly disagree. Although there are 28 participants in the study some participants did not answer all the Likert statements. A summary of the frequency of responses for the 10 Likert scale statements is in table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Total frequency responses for 10 Likert Statements

Statement	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Undecided 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
1. Mentorship programs increase the number of assignments a student completes.	3 11%	5 19%	13 48%	6 22%	0 0%
2. Mentorship programs are beneficial to students.	0 0%	1 4%	2 7%	10 37%	14 52%
3. Mentorship programs improve students' grades on report cards.	0 0%	6 23%	12 46%	8 31%	0 0%
4. Mentorship programs improve students' scores on assignments.	0 0%	6 23%	12 46%	8 31%	0 0%
5. Students have less behavioural challenges in the classroom when they are involved in a mentorship program.	0 0%	4 15%	10 37%	10 37%	3 11%
6. When a student returns from a meeting with a mentor they are more focused on the classroom activities.	1 4%	3 11%	11 41%	11 41%	1 4%
7. Students are more engaged in classroom activities when they are involved in a mentorship program.	1 4%	5 19%	9 33%	12 44%	0 0%

8. Students who are part of mentorship programs have less behavioural issues in the classroom.	1 4%	1 4%	8 30%	16 59%	1 4%
9. Mentorship programs decrease the amount of days a student is absent.	0 0%	4 15%	10 38%	11 42%	1 4%
10. Mentorship programs cause disruption in the classroom.	10 37%	10 37%	4 15%	3 11%	0 0%

The first nine statements in the Likert Questionnaire were stated positively in terms of effects for students involved in mentorship programs. As seen in table 4.1 more participants agreed or strongly agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial, improve students' grades on report cards, improve students' scores on assignments, increase students focus, decrease behavioural challenges in the classroom and decrease the amount of days students are absent. On the other hand more participants reported that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that mentorship programs increase the amount of assignments students complete.

The final statement in the Likert section was stated negatively in terms of the effect of students being involved in mentorship programs. For this statement the vast majority of respondents reported that they disagree or strongly disagree that mentorship programs cause disruption in the classroom.

The 10 Likert statements referred to seven different themes related to the effects of mentorship programs for students. Statements 1 and 4 were related to the outcome of mentorship programs on students' assignments, statements 5 and 8 related to the effects on students' behaviours, statements 6 and 7 referred to the effects on students focus, statement 3 related to students' grades, statement 2 related to the overall benefits of mentorship programs, statement 9 related to students attendance and statement 10 elicited information about the disruption of mentorship programs in the classroom. The results will be examined in terms of these themes.

Statement 1 and 4 were designed to elicit information about teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on students' assignments. The responses are summarized in Figure 4.6. The responses show that the majority of teachers were undecided as to whether or not mentorship programs increased the number of assignments completed or improved the scores on assignments, respectively. The responses were very similar on the number of respondents who agreed and those who disagreed that students completed more assignments or improved their scores on assignments due to being involved in a mentorship program.
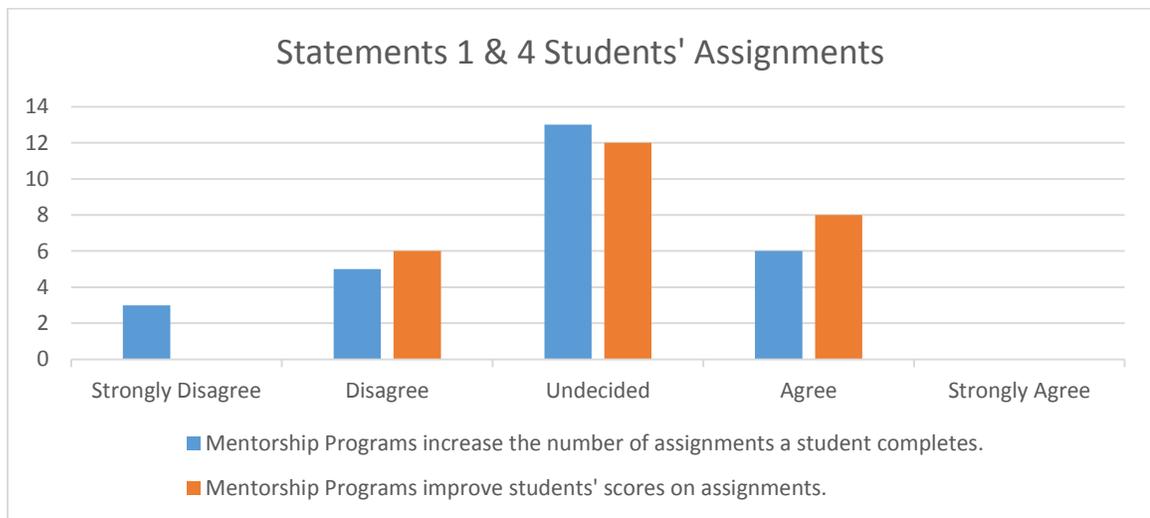
Figure 4.6 The effects of mentorship programs on students' assignments

The statements designed to gain information about the effects of mentorship programs on students' behaviour were statements 5 and 8. The two statements were almost exactly the same and the responses elicited similar data. Figure 4.7 summarizes the distribution of responses for these statements. A majority of the participants agreed or strongly agreed that mentorship programs had a positive effect on students' behaviour.

Statements 5 & 8 Students Behaviour

■ Students have less behavioural challenges in the classroom when they are involved in mentorship programs.

■ Students who are part of a mentorship program have less behavioural issues in the classroom.
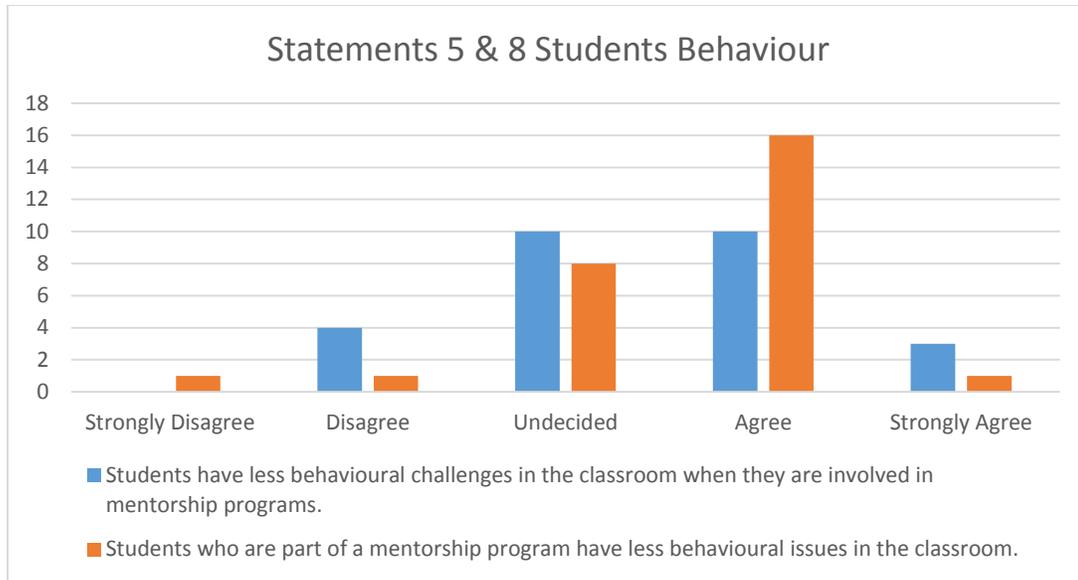
Figure 4.7 The effects of mentorship programs on students' behaviour.

Statement 6 and 7 in the Likert questionnaire related to students focus as a result of being involved in mentorship programs. Figure 4.8 displays the data collected from these two statements. The majority of respondents agreed that involvement in a mentorship program increased focus in the classroom and felt that focus was increased directly after returning from a meeting with a mentor. Again many teachers were undecided about the effects of mentorship programs on student focus in the classroom and as to whether students were more focused directly after a mentor visit. Only one of the respondents felt that students were less focused when they are involved in mentorship programs and directly after a visit with a mentor.

One Likert statement was designed to gather information about teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on students' grades. The data collected from this statement can be found in Figure 4.9. The majority of participants responded that they were undecided if mentorship programs had an effects on students grade. The second most frequent response was

that participants agreed that mentorship programs improved students' grades. No respondents

strongly disagreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
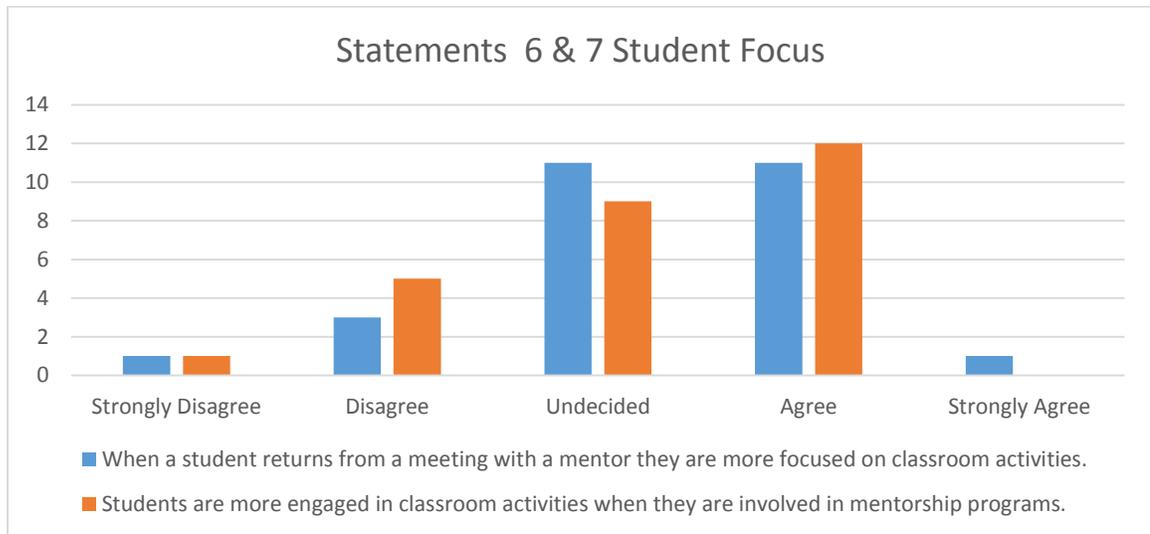
Figure 4.8 Student Focus
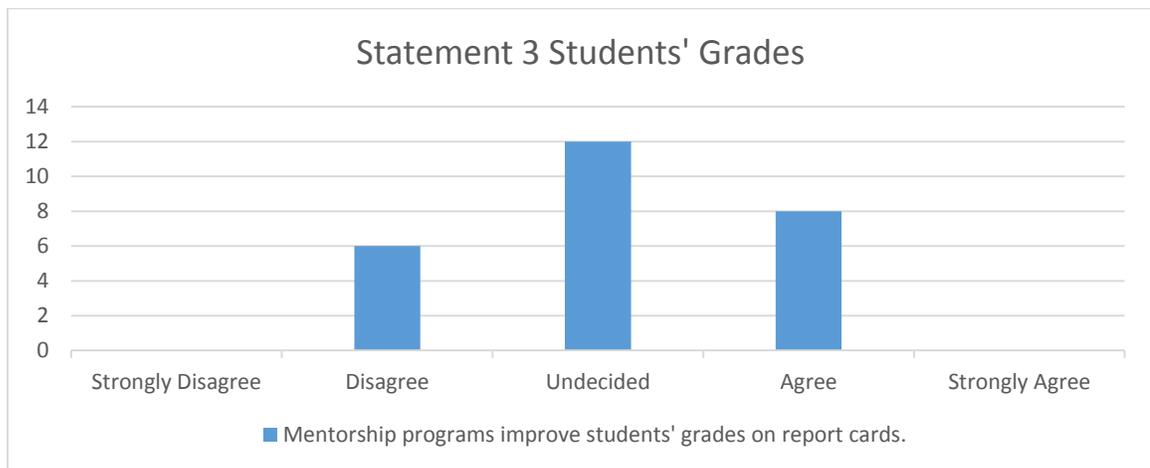
Figure 4.9 Students Grades

Statement 2 was a general statement regarding the benefits of mentorship programs. A

summary of the data can be found in figure 4.10. This statement received more strongly agree

responses than any other statement. The vast majority of respondents felt that mentorship

programs were beneficial to students.
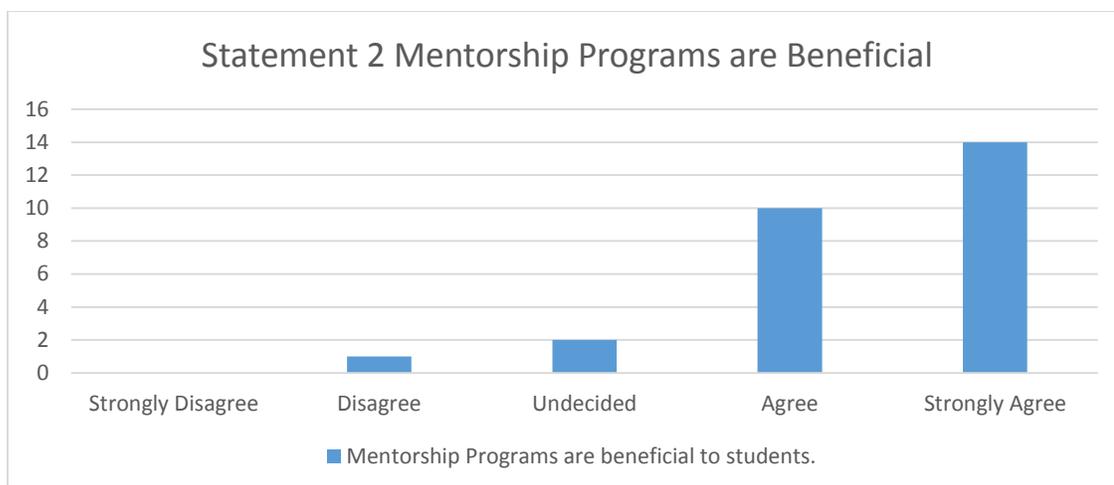
Figure 4.10 Mentorship programs are beneficial to students

Statement 9 was designed to elicit information as to whether teachers felt that mentorship

programs had an effect on students' attendance. The data collected from the responses to this

statement are in Figure 4.11. A majority of the participants responded that they agreed or

strongly agreed that involvement in a mentorship programs increased the attendance of students

involved in mentorship programs. One respondent wrote that a student's attendance increased

only on the days that the student was scheduled to see the mentor.
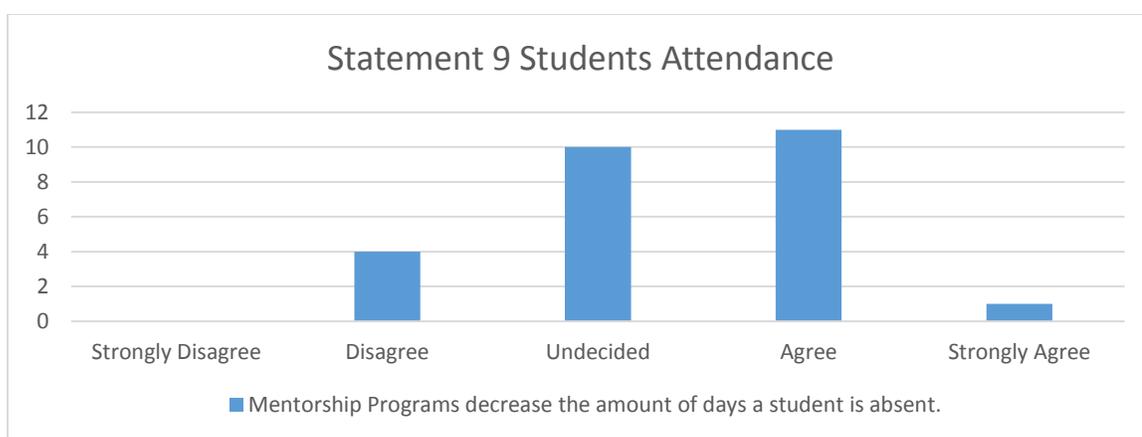
Figure 4.11 Students Attendance

The final statement was the only statement worded negatively in terms of effect.

The majority of participants responded that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed that

mentorship program caused disruption in the classroom. On the other hand three respondents felt that mentorship programs did disrupt the classroom. Figure 4.12 show the data collected for the responses to Statement 10.
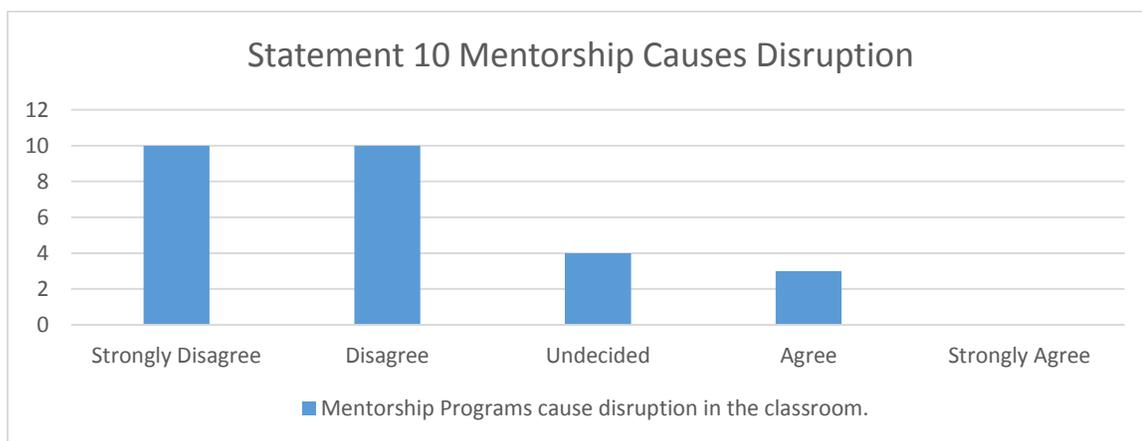
Figure 4.12 Mentorship programs disrupt the classroom

The researcher also examined the differences that may have occurred in the data as a result of gender, the existence of a mentorship program in the school, teaching experience, the participants experience working with students involved in mentorship programs in the last 5 years, teaching experience in high poverty schools, and the differences in responses of participants who reported different percentages of poverty in their classrooms.

The number of male participants in the survey were six (21%) and female participants was 22 (79%). Male participants disagreed with the Likert statements more than the female participants. Both male and female participants agreed or strongly agreed that mentorship programs were beneficial, increased student focus directly after a meeting, decreased behavioural challenges and that they did not cause disruption in the classroom. Female participants also agreed or strongly agreed that students are more engaged and are absent less due to mentorship programs. In contrast male participants didn't agree that mentorship programs improved students' grades, students' scores on assignments and that students are more focused in the

classroom. Female participants didn't disagree with any of the Likert Statements. A bar graph of

the mode of responses for each Likert statement comparing male and female participants is in

figure 4.13.

Mode of Responses to Likert Statments Comparing Male and Female

■ Female   ■ Male

Statement	Female	Male
1. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS A STUDENT COMPLETES.	3	3
2. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS ARE BENEFICIAL TO STUDENTS.	5	5
3. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' GRADES ON REPORT CARDS.	3	2
4. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' SCORES ON ASSIGNMENTS.	3	2
5. STUDENTS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES IN THE CLASSROOM WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.	3	4
6. WHEN A STUDENT RETURNS FROM A MEETING WITH A MENTOR THEY ARE MORE FOCUSED ON THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.	4	4
7. STUDENTS ARE MORE ENGAGED IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.	4	2
8. STUDENTS WHO ARE PART OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.	4	3
9. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF DAYS A STUDENT IS ABSENT.	4	3
10. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS CAUSE DISRUPTION IN THE CLASSROOM.	1	2

1(Strongly Disagree) 2(Disagree) 3 (Undecided) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Agree)

Figure 4.13

The number of participants who responded that their schools had mentorship programs was 21 (75%), participants that stated there was no mentorship program were five (18%) and two (7%) were unsure. Participants who did not have mentorship programs in their schools agreed or strongly agreed substantially more than respondents that have mentorship programs in their schools. The mode of responses for each Likert statement comparing participants who have a mentorship program in their school and those who don't is in Figure 4.14.

Participants that reported that their school did not have a mentorship program agreed or strongly agreed to eight of the first nine Likert statements and strongly disagreed with statement 10 that mentorship programs cause disruption in the classroom. Whereas participants that reported not having mentorship programs in their schools only agreed with two of the first nine Likert statements and were undecided on all the other statements except they disagreed with statement 10 that mentorship programs cause disruption in the classroom.

There were little to no differences between responses from teachers who had worked with a student involved in a mentorship program in the last 5 years and those that had not and the comparison between responses from teachers who had been teaching for less than 10 years and teachers who had over 10 years teaching experiences showed only one difference. The teachers with 10 years or more teaching experience agreed that students are more engaged in classroom activities when they are involved in a mentorship program, whereas teachers with less than 10 years teaching experience disagreed that students are more engaged.

Mode of Responses to Likert Statments for Schools with Mentorship Programs compared to without

- No Mentorship Program at the school
- Mentorship Program at the School

Statement	No Mentorship Program	Mentorship Program
1. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS A STUDENT COMPLETES.	4	3
2. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS ARE BENEFICIAL TO STUDENTS.	5	5
3. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' GRADES ON REPORT CARDS.	4	3
4. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' SCORES ON ASSIGNMENTS.	4	3
5. STUDENTS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES IN THE CLASSROOM WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.	4	3
6. WHEN A STUDENT RETURNS FROM A MEETING WITH A MENTOR THEY ARE MORE FOCUSED ON THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.	3	3
7. STUDENTS ARE MORE ENGAGED IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.	4	3
8. STUDENTS WHO ARE PART OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.	4	4
9. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF DAYS A STUDENT IS ABSENT.	4	3
10. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS CAUSE DISRUPTION IN THE CLASSROOM.	1	2

1(Strongly Disagree) 2(Disagree) 3(Undecided) 4(Agree) 5(Strogly Agree)
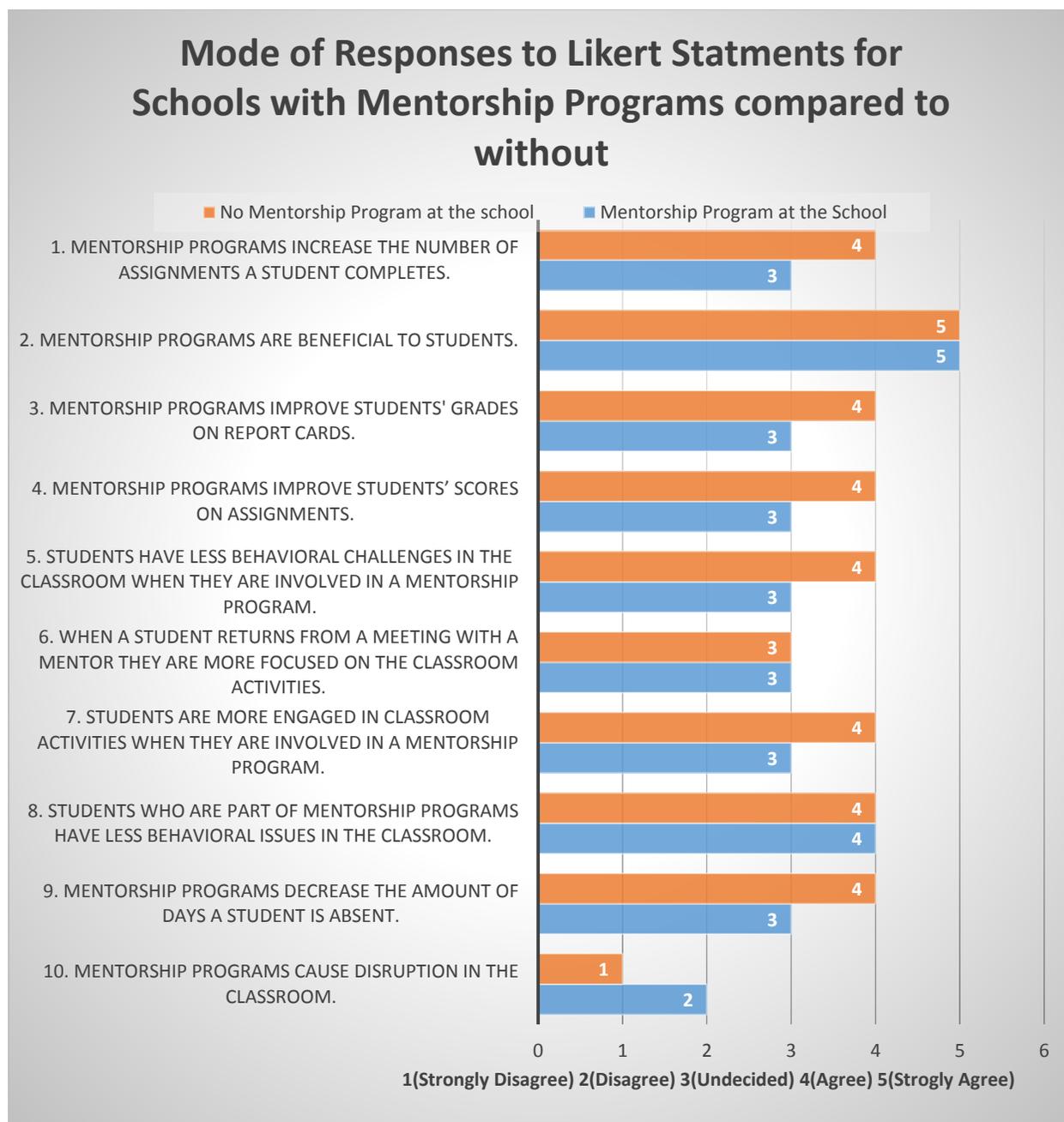
Figure 4.14

The number of participants who reported to have been working in high poverty schools for 0-5 years was seven (25%), 5-10 years was four (14%), 10 or more years was 16 (57%) and one participant didn't respond to this question. The comparison of the mode of responses from each Likert statement for these three groups can be found in Figure 4.15. The participants who

had been working in high poverty schools for more than ten years agreed or strongly agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial, decrease behavioural issues in the classroom, increase students focus in the classroom, increase student engagement, decrease student absences and are not disruptive to the class. The participants who had been working in high poverty schools for 5-10 years agreed or strongly agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial, increase students engagement in classroom activities, decrease behavioural issues and do not disrupt the class.

On the other hand, teachers who had been teaching in high poverty schools for 0-5 years only agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial, increase focus and do not cause disruption in the class. They disagreed that mentorship programs, improved grades, improved scores on assignments and that students are more engaged when they are involved with a mentorship program. As the number of years' experience working in high poverty schools increases the number of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with the positively stated Likert statements increases whereas the number of disagree and strongly disagrees decreases.

Of the 28 respondents two (7%) responded that between 75%-100% of their class was living in poverty, seven (25%) reported that 50%-75% of their class was living in poverty, 10 (36%) stated that 25%-50% of their class was living in poverty, seven (25%) reported that 0%-25% of their class was living in poverty and two (7%) did not respond to this question. All four groups strongly agreed or agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial and disagreed that they cause disruption in the class. The 0%-25% group agreed that students were more focused in class when involved in mentorship programs and disagreed that mentorship programs improved grades, improved scores on assignments or increased engagement in the classroom. The 25%-50% group agreed that mentorship programs cause less behavioural issues in the classroom.
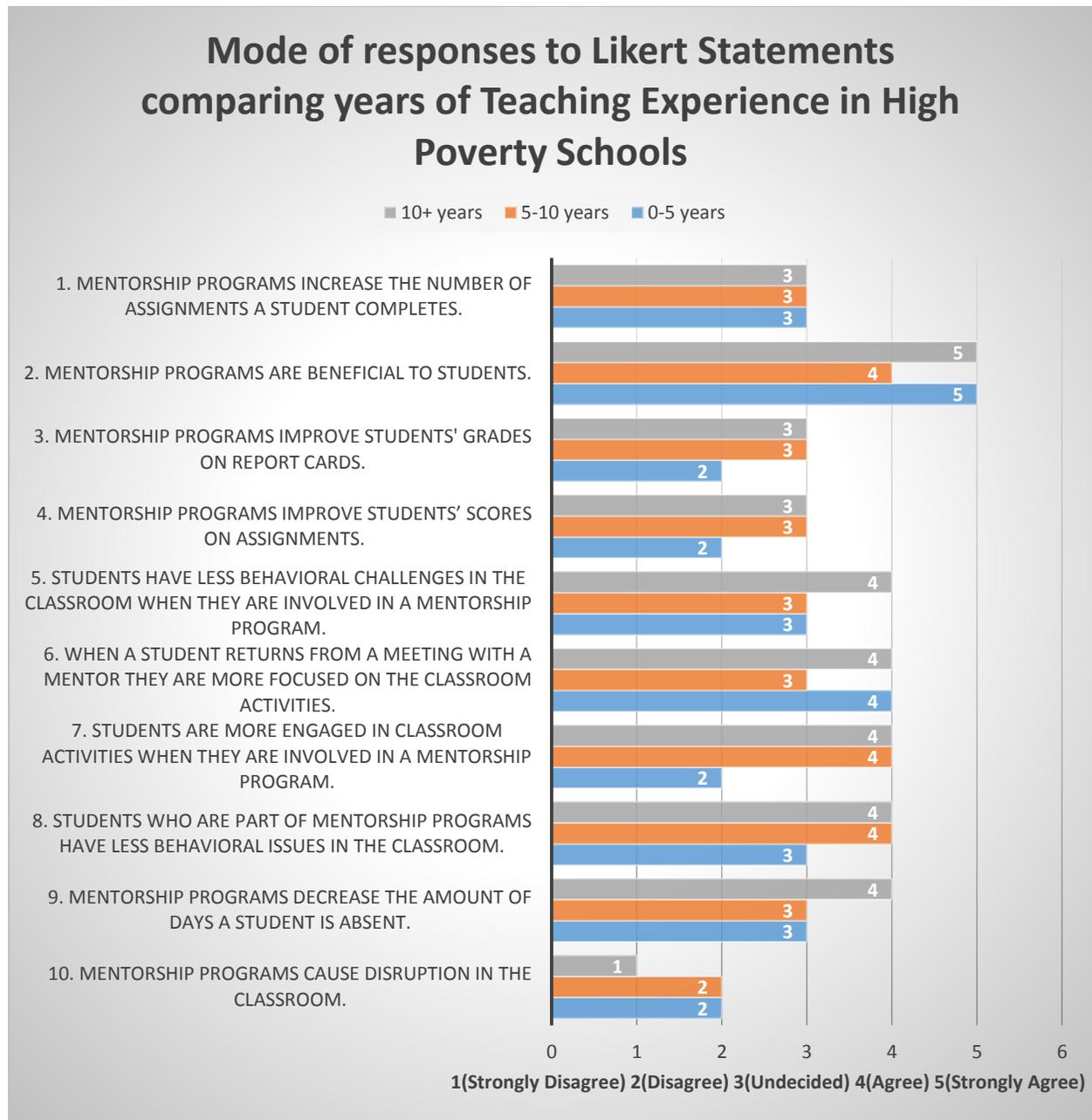
Mode of responses to Likert Statements comparing years of Teaching Experience in High Poverty Schools

Legend: ■ 10+ years ■ 5-10 years ■ 0-5 years

1. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS A STUDENT COMPLETES.
 - 10+ years: 3
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 3

2. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS ARE BENEFICIAL TO STUDENTS.
 - 10+ years: 5
 - 5-10 years: 4
 - 0-5 years: 5

3. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' GRADES ON REPORT CARDS.
 - 10+ years: 3
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 2

4. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS IMPROVE STUDENTS' SCORES ON ASSIGNMENTS.
 - 10+ years: 3
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 2

5. STUDENTS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGES IN THE CLASSROOM WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.
 - 10+ years: 4
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 3

6. WHEN A STUDENT RETURNS FROM A MEETING WITH A MENTOR THEY ARE MORE FOCUSED ON THE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES.
 - 10+ years: 4
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 4

7. STUDENTS ARE MORE ENGAGED IN CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES WHEN THEY ARE INVOLVED IN A MENTORSHIP PROGRAM.
 - 10+ years: 4
 - 5-10 years: 4
 - 0-5 years: 2

8. STUDENTS WHO ARE PART OF MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS HAVE LESS BEHAVIORAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM.
 - 10+ years: 4
 - 5-10 years: 4
 - 0-5 years: 3

9. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF DAYS A STUDENT IS ABSENT.
 - 10+ years: 4
 - 5-10 years: 3
 - 0-5 years: 3

10. MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS CAUSE DISRUPTION IN THE CLASSROOM.
 - 10+ years: 1
 - 5-10 years: 2
 - 0-5 years: 2

1(Strongly Disagree) 2(Disagree) 3(Undecided) 4(Agree) 5(Strongly Agree)

Figure 4.15

The 50%-75% group reported that mentorship programs decrease behavioural issues in the classroom and increase student engagement. Whereas the 75%-100% group strongly agreed or agreed that mentorship programs increase the number of assignments completed, improve grades, improve scores on assignments, decrease behaviour issues, increase focus and increase

engagement. As the reported amount of poverty in the class increased the number of respondents that strongly agreed and agreed to the Likert statements also increased. The mode of each Likert statement collected from these groups is summarized in Figure 4.16.
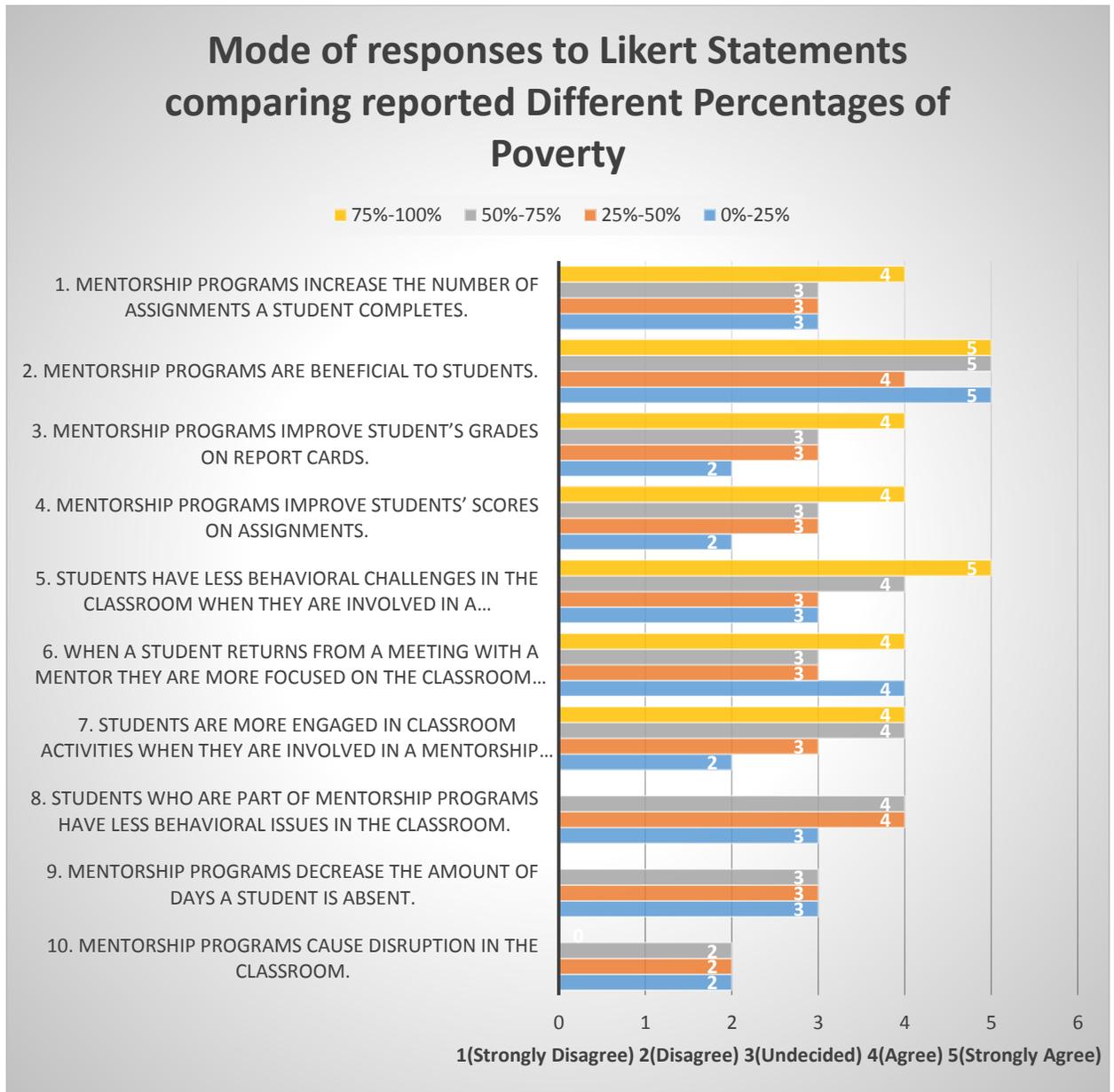

Figure 4.16

Open Ended Responses

The open-ended section of the survey consisted of two questions. The first question asked participants to list any other opinions they may have about the positive and negative effects they felt mentorship programs in their schools have on students. Twenty six of the 28 participants responded to this statement and listed at least one comment in this section. The second question asked respondents to report any personal story about a student and a mentorship program. For this statement only three participants responded. The researcher was able to combine data collected from these two statements because of the similarity in responses. The researcher then divided the data into three different categories, positive effects, negative effects, and organizational challenges.

Positive effects were statements that showed the respondent felt mentorship programs were beneficial to students in some way, negative effects were statements that showed the respondent felt mentorship programs were harmful to students in some way and organizational challenges were statements that respondents made about concerns/problems with mentorship programs.

The two open-ended questions elicited a total of 47 comments from respondents. Of these 47 comments 24 (51%) were positive, four (9%) were negative and 19 (40%) were organizational challenges. A pie graph showing the percentages of responses is in Figure 4.17. The researcher also looked at the total responses that were negative versus positive without the organizational challenges. Figure 4.18 shows the percentages of responses for positive and negative comments.
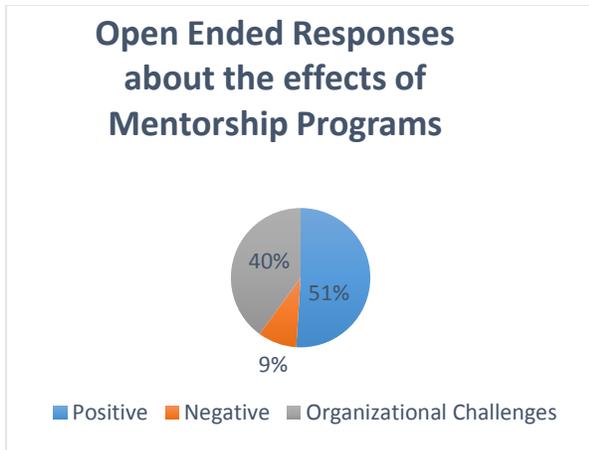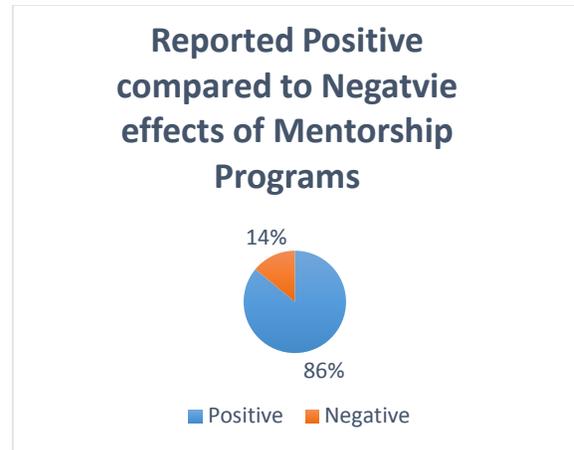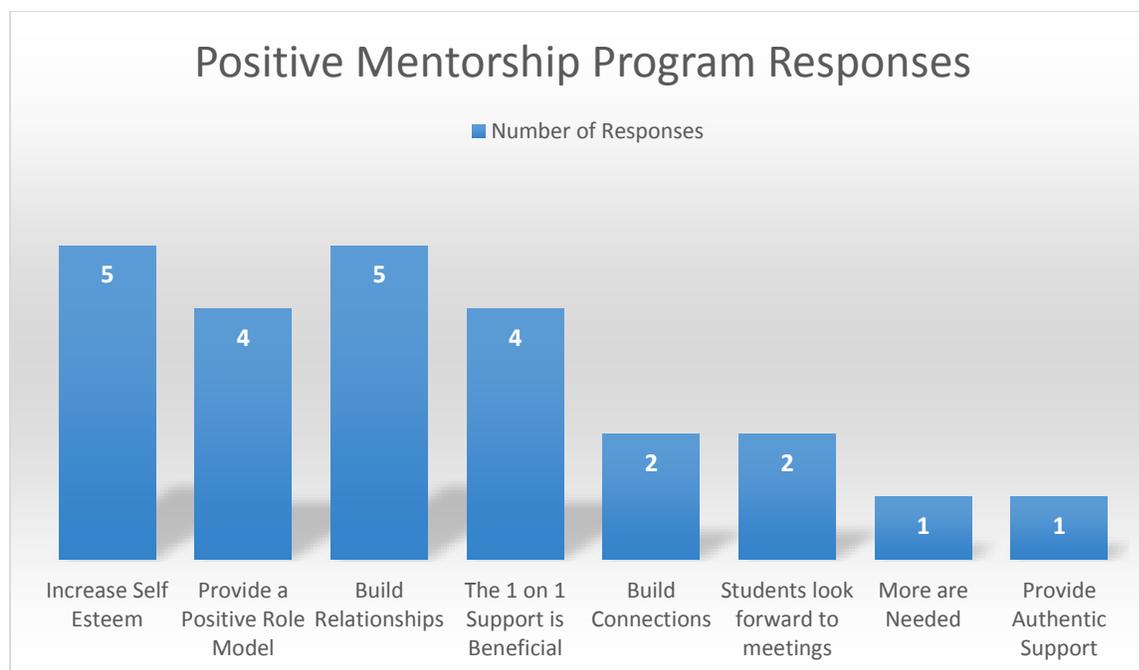
Figure 4.17

Figure 4.18

The open ended questions elicited a number of different positive effects of mentorship programs for students. There were two most frequently reported benefits to students among the positive benefits reported by participants. The first was that mentorship programs increased students' self-esteem and confidence and the second was that mentorship programs created a trusting relationship for students where they could work on problem solving and discuss life issues. Other responses were that mentors provide authentic support, that more mentors are needed, that students look forward to meeting with mentors, that the one on one support is beneficial, that mentorship programs build a student's sense of belongingness/connectedness, and that they provide a positive role model. A bar graph showing the number of responses for the positive statements can be found in figure 4.19.

Figure 4.19

There were four responses from participants that were categorized into negative effects for students and teachers. Each of the four response that described a negative effect was reported by one participant. The statements from these respondent were that students are reluctant to work with mentors, schools shouldn't pay for mentorship programs but that they should be paying for other resources, that students suffer negative effects when the mentorship program stops and that teachers feel that they are not doing their job effectively if a mentor is needed.

Other statements made by participants about mentorship programs showed concerns about the efficiency and organization of mentorship programs. Of the 47 comments made by respondents 19 (40%) of them referred to these organizational challenges. The most frequent response was that mentors needed to be properly matched with students. Either the mentors were working with students and they weren't compatible, or the wrong students, for example behaviour students, were being put into mentorship programs. Other statements made by

respondents were about how mentors needed to be trained, needed to be reliable, needed to be

good role models and needed time to meet with teachers to plan and organize meeting times. A

summary of the responses that are organizational challenges can be found in figure 4.20.

Figure 4.20

Chapter 5 Discussion and Conclusions

Brief Summary of Research

The goal of this study was to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs on the academic motivation of students living in poverty. More specifically, do teachers feel that mentorship programs have an effect on students' academic assignments, their grades, their engagement, their focus, their attendance and their behavior?

The study used a survey to examine teachers' opinions about the effects of mentorship programs of students living in poverty on academic motivation in the Nanaimo Ladysmith School District in British Columbia. Teachers from eight elementary schools in School District #68, Nanaimo Ladysmith, were asked to participate in the study. All of the schools involved were located in vulnerable neighborhoods and the majority of the students attending these schools were living in poverty. The eight schools administrators were contacted and consent was given to contact the teachers and ask for their anonymous participation in the study. The survey was given to informed anonymous teachers in October of the 2015/2016 school year. Of the 110 educators invited to participate 28 responded, giving a response rate of 26%.

The surveys were collected and analysis was done to determine the teachers' perception of low socio economic students' motivation, completed assignments and attendance trends. Data were also evaluated to determine the overall teachers' perspective of the effects of school based mentorship programs for students living in poverty. Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained and examined.

The survey consisted of closed and open-ended questions pertaining to three areas. The first section consisted of questions designed to obtain general information about the participant such as number of years teaching, time spent working with students living in poverty, gender,

experience working with students living in poverty and experience with mentorship programs. The second section consisted of statements where participants answered, using a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, about positive and negative effects of mentorship programs. The third section of the survey was open-ended questions asking the participant any other information they felt they needed to tell the researcher.

Discussion of Findings

There are a significant number of students living in poverty in British Columbia. These students are faced with challenges in the classroom that are disrupting their academic success. These students are often behind academically (Ladd, 2012), lack motivation (Frongillio, Jones, & Jyoti, 2005), lack social emotional relationships needed for academic success (Bowlby, 2012) and drop out of school more (Haveman, Wolfe & Spaulding, 1991; Rumberger 2014). Any benefits these students may experience due to mentorship programs that will increase their likeliness of academic success are positive.

The findings of this study will be discussed in three sections with a number of sub sections within each. The first section will examine the Likert statements and open-ended responses in terms of their effects. The second section will discuss the differences in responses due to participant differences and the final section will discuss the organizational challenges that respondents referred to in the open-ended section.

Likert Statements and Open-ended. Participants were given 10 statements where they could respond as strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree. The statements referred to the effects of mentorship programs on students' grades, assignments, behaviour, attendance, focus and engagement. The participants were also given two open-ended questions asking them to tell any other effects that they wished to report about the effects of

mentorship programs and to share a personal story if they wished. The responses in these two

sections produced a number of themes that will be examined. These themes are the effects of

mentorship programs overall, on assignments, on grades, on behaviour, on focus and

engagement, on attendance, on disruption to the class, on relationships and on self-esteem and

will be discussed in these sections.

 Benefits Overall. As a group the participants felt that the effects of mentorship programs

were beneficial to students. In this study, the researcher found that overall 89% of respondents

felt that mentorship programs were beneficial to students. Similarly, in the open-ended

responses participants commented on how more mentors are needed and that students look

forward to their meeting with mentors showing that they believe they are producing positive

results. When looking at mentorship programs as a whole teachers believe they are beneficial.

This is apparent in the increased use of mentorship programs in schools in the last number of

years. The findings of this study are consistent with findings found by Coller and Kuo (2004)

that mentorship programs have positive effects for students. This is also supported by

Attachment Theory by Bowlby (2012) that when children form secure attachments with adults it

creates a positive learning environment.

 Assignments. This study found that teachers do not believe that mentorship programs

have an effect on the amount of assignments a student completes. Only 22% of respondents

agreed that the number of assignments a student completes increases when they are involved in a

mentorship program. More respondents, 30% disagreed with this statement and even more,

46%, were undecided. The researcher thought that respondents would report an increase in the

number of assignments completed given that the students may be working on assignments with

their mentor. Interestingly, in the open-ended responses, four participants commented about the benefits of the one on one time for students and mentors to work on academics.

Some of the open-ended responses about the challenges with programs and the lack of meeting time for teachers and mentors could account for this finding. There were numerous references that mentors and teachers need time to meet and plan which might create situations where more assignments are worked on. That being said not every student would benefit from working on assignments and may need to focus their time on building relationships. The need of each individual student needs to be examined in order to get the most benefits form the mentor.

Grades. This study found that 31% of participants agreed that students' grades improved due to mentorship programs, whereas 23% disagreed and 46% were undecided. Although the number of participants who agreed is greater than the number who disagreed the majority were undecided showing that teachers may not have had the information they needed to make a judgement on this statement. This does show that more teachers feel grades are improved which is consistent with findings by da Costa, Jose & Schinke (2000) and Coller and Kuo (2014) who found that mentorship programs increase reading, writing and math achievement. Also, past research by Lauderdale (2011) that determined that positive relationships with adults improved academic achievement. Due to the fact that students living in poverty are often behind in academics this one on one time would be an effective strategy for increasing academic performance.

Behaviour. Findings by Coller and Kuo (2014) and Nunez, Rosario, Vallejo & Gonzalez-Renda (2013) suggest that mentorship programs decrease behavioral challenges and improve attitudes in school. The findings of this study were consistent with this conclusion. Two of the Likert statements related to a decrease in behavioural challenges and 48% and 63%

of participants agreed to these statements. Only 15% and 8% disagreed with this statement.

Participants see a real benefit to mentorship programs helping behaviour in the classroom. This

finding is also consistent with findings from Lauderdale (2011) that positive relationships have a

positive impact on behaviour. Many students living in poverty develop negative behaviours to

try and fit in and hide that they are unable to do the work. An improvement in behaviour will not

only benefit the student but will benefit the other students in the class as well, freeing the teacher

to use their time more effectively.

　　　　Focus and Engagement. Participants in this study felt that both focus and engagement

increased when a student was involved in a mentorship program. Almost half of respondents,

45% agreed that both focus and engagement in the classroom increase due to mentorship

programs.   Nunez, Rosario, Vallejo, and Gonzalez-Renda (2013) also found that attitudes

improved, focus improved and engagement improved for students in mentorship programs.

Students benefit from the one on one time and that can increase their confidence in the classroom

which in turn will improve focus and engagement. Five of the open-ended responses talked

about the increase students experienced in their self-esteem and confidence. When a student is

more confident they are more likely to take risks in their learning and try harder due to the

feeling that they may succeed.

　　　　Attendance. Research conducted by Rhodes, Grossman & Resch (2000) as well as

research by da Costa , Jose & Schinke (2000) found that mentorship programs increase student

attendance. This study found that 46% of respondents agreed that student attend more when they

are involved in a mentorship program. One respondent wrote that attendance increased only on

the days the mentor was scheduled. Comments in the open-ended section about the students

having something to look forward to may also explain the increase in attendance. Students living

in poverty report that no one cares if they attend school (Mouton and Hawkins, 1996) and that is why many don't go to school or drop out. One of the hardest challenges for students living in poverty is attendance so if being involved with a mentor increases a student's attendance then it will benefit a student living in poverty. Students cannot learn if they are not in the building so creating a situation where they will attend will increase the likelihood of success for that student.

Disruption. Prior to conducting this study the researcher had had conversations with teachers and discovered that some felt that mentorship programs caused disruption in the classroom. The findings of this study show that this is not the case for the majority of teachers. The final statement in the Likert Scale asked whether participants felt mentorship programs caused disruption. The majority, 74% disagreed that mentorship programs cause disruption, only 11% thought they did. It is the researchers' opinion that teachers are more reluctant to be involved in something if they feel it disrupts their classroom. The finding that the majority of teachers do not feel this disruption occurs, is beneficial in that it will increase the number of teachers willing to make use of mentorship programs.

Relationships. Students living in poverty often lack the social emotional relationships needed for academic success (Rothman, 2007). Also, there is a connection between positive social relationships and school success (Szewczyk-Sokolowski, Bost & Wainwright (2005). This study found that teachers believe that mentorship programs create positive relationships that benefit students. The open-ended responses showed 11 comments out of 24 that related to the positive relationship students built with their mentors. Five of the comments also talked about how the student could build a trusting relationship with their mentor where they could discuss sensitive life topics and receive guidance. The comments also talked about how students feel special and important when they were involved with a mentor. These comments are similar to

findings by Herrera (2011) who found that students were more likely to report having an important adult in their lives when they were involved in a mentorship program. Increasing a student's feeling of belonging and connectedness to the school will increase their chances of success.

Self Esteem and Confidence. The open-ended responses form participants showed five comments that referred to students increase in self-esteem. This is an important finding knowing that self-confidence can be a determining factor in how a student succeeds in the classroom. Research by da Costa, Jose & Schinke (2000) also found that mentorship programs increase students' self-esteem. Students living in poverty often lack self-esteem and confidence because they often are behind in school and don't want to look like they are the only ones who don't know the answers. This can result in behaviour challenges and the inability to take learning risks. Taking risks in learning is where the deepest learning happens. Finding that mentorship programs can have a positive impact on confidence and self-esteem continues the push for using mentors in schools.

Participant Differences. The researcher looked at differences in Likert statement responses that may have occurred due to differences in gender, teaching experience, experience working with a student involved in a mentorship program in the last 5 years, experience working in high poverty schools and the reported amount of poverty in a class. The researcher did not look for research related to these differences and therefore they will be discussed using the researchers' opinion.

Gender differences. There were six male participants and 22 female participants who responded. Overall female participants responded that they believe mentorship programs have more benefits to students than male respondents. The female participants did not disagree with

any of the Likert statements whereas the male participants disagreed with three of the Likert statements suggesting that female participants perceive mentorship programs as more beneficial. This could be due to the small number of male participants involved in the study. It is expected that fewer male respondents would occur because there are fewer male elementary school teachers but had there been more I am not sure the differences would have occurred.

Teaching experience differences. The study found that there was only one difference between teachers with over 10 years' experience and those that had less than 10 years' experience. Teachers with less than 10 years' experience felt that students were not more engaged when they were involved in a mentorship program. This could have occurred due to less experience working with students involved in mentorship programs and therefore less information to use when responding.

Students involved in a mentorship program in the last 5 years differences. There were no reported differences in respondents that had worked with a student in the last 5 years who had been involved in a mentorship program and those that hadn't. Of the participants 11 (39%) reported having students in their classes in the last 5 years who were involved in a mentorship program, nine (32%) responded no and one (3%) was unsure. The two groups produced similar responses on all the Likert statements.

Experience working in high poverty schools. Of the 28 participants 17 (60%) had over 10 years of experience working in high poverty schools, four (14%) reported 5-10 years and 7(25%) reported 0-5 years of experience. All three groups felt that mentorship programs are beneficial and they do not disrupt the classroom. The participants with 10 or more years agreed that mentorship programs decrease behavioral issues in the classroom, increase students focus in the classroom, increase student engagement and decrease student absences. Participants with 5-

10 years agreed that mentorship programs increase student's engagement in classroom activities and decrease behavioral issues. Participants with 0-5 years only agreed that mentorship programs are beneficial, increase focus and do not cause disruption in the class but they disagreed that mentorship programs, improved grades, improved scores on assignments and that students are more engaged. As the number of years' experience working in high poverty schools increases the number of respondents that agreed or strongly agreed with the positively stated Likert statements increases whereas the number of disagree and strongly disagrees decreases.

The more experience a participant had working in high poverty schools increased the perceived number of benefits mentorship programs had. For the purpose of this study this was confirming the researchers' belief that mentorship programs are beneficial to students living in poverty. This indicates that teachers who have experience working in high poverty schools have had the opportunity to evaluate the usefulness of many programs. They believe that students living in poverty will benefit from the relationship that forms between mentors and students.

Reported percentages of poverty in the classroom. Three participants responded 0%-20% of their class was living in poverty, 10 reported 20%-40% of their class, eight responded 40%-60% of their class, three responded 60%-80% and two responded that between 80%-100% of their class was living in poverty. All four groups felt that mentorship programs are beneficial and disagreed that they cause disruption in the class. The 0%-25% group agreed that students were more focused in class when involved in mentorship programs and disagreed that mentorship programs improved grades, improved scores on assignments or increased engagement in the classroom. The 25%-50% group agreed that mentorship programs cause less behavioral issues in the classroom. The 50%-75% group reported that mentorship programs decrease behavioral issues in the classroom and increase student engagement. Whereas the 75%-100% group

strongly agreed or agreed that mentorship programs increase the number of assignments completed, improve grades, improve scores on assignments, decrease behavior issues, increase focus and increase engagement.

As the reported amount of poverty in the class increased the number of respondents that strongly agreed and agreed to the Likert statements also increased. The more poverty in a classroom the more beneficial mentorship programs were perceived to be. This demonstrates that all students benefit from mentorship programs but students living in poverty may experience more benefits. The researcher believes this is directly related to the relationship formed between the mentor and student that allows for the student to become more confident and comfortable in the academic environment.

Organizational Challenges. The open-ended responses elicited informative data for the researcher about challenges with mentorship programs. The researcher did not foresee the number of responses that would relate to these challenges. Organizational challenges were neither beneficial nor harmful but discussed concerns that the participants had about mentorship programs. Of the 47 comments made by respondents 19 (40%) of them referred to these organizational challenges.

The most frequent response was that mentors needed to be properly matched with students. Either the mentors were working with students and they weren't compatible, or the wrong students, for example behaviour students, were being put into mentorship programs. Many participants discussed the fact that the other students in the classroom were perceiving mentorship programs as a reward for bad behaviour. One participant stated, "other students are wondering how bad they need to be in order to go out for treats with a mentor" (Anonymous, 2015). There was an expressed concern that there are many students who would benefit from a

mentor but that the student who had the most behavioral challenges was always the recipient. The researcher feels that this is an area that needs to be investigated further.

Other statements made by respondents were about how mentors needed to be trained. The lack of training was consistent throughout the study. Respondents expressed the need for mentors to know what to do in their time with the students. Mentorship programs differ from each other and the amount of training available to the mentors is very different depending on the program they are working with. Mentors are volunteers and there is always a need for more volunteers.

This ties in with another challenge discussed by the participants that teachers need time to meet with mentors to plan. If teachers and mentors had planning time there would be more of a team approach to working with the student. This would be extremely beneficial to meeting the needs of the students. The classroom teacher has knowledge that is imperative to the success of the student and the challenges they experience.

The participants expressed concerns about the meeting times of mentors and students. Some of the comments talked about how mentors needed to be reliable. Students would expect a meeting and then a mentor would not come and the student would be disappointed and behaviours would become more challenging. This is a sensitive point made by the respondents in that these students already experience a high amount of disappointment in their lives and adding to the disappointment is a disservice to them. This miscommunication about meetings times may occur due to the lack of communication between mentors and school staff. This needs to be addressed and a more efficient system would benefit the programs.

Limitation

Although this study yielded a response rate of 26%, which is a good response rate it would be difficult to generalize the findings to other schools or school districts. School District are all unique and each schools access to mentorship programs will differ. Furthermore, each school or school district will have different policies about the use of mentorship programs in their schools. Different programs may result in different responses which brings another limitation to this study. In further conversations with teachers and administrators in School District #68 the researcher discovered that different schools use a variety of different mentorship programs. Depending on the specific program each individual school uses, the responses could be significantly different.

Survey location is another limitation of this study. The researcher did not have control over where or when the participants completed the survey. Completing the survey at home or at school or at the end the day compared to the beginning could produce different responses. The participants were also given 4 weeks to complete the survey which would allow time for them to discuss the survey with each other or research mentorship programs which would also effect responses.

The use of a 5 point Likert scale also limits the responses from the participants. I found that many participants responded that they were undecided about the statements. Out of the 10 statements five of them had the majority of respondents answering undecided. This could show that many of the participants are just beginning to examine the effects of mentorship programs in their schools or that their experience with mentorship programs was not enough to warrant an answer. If the participants were not given the undecided option would they have responded differently? Also interviews with the participants may have given more information about the

responses and provided clarification as to why participants responded in a particular way. The

surveys were anonymous so any inferences as to why is subject to my own biases.

Suggestions for Further Research

The researcher recommends that the policies in place regarding the different mentorship

programs being used in the school district and how they are used should be examined. I

discovered that many teachers feel that mentorship programs are beneficial to students but the

programs are limited due to organizational challenges with the interaction of the mentors and the

school personnel. A policy about how mentorship programs are used in the school and how to

match students with mentors may assist in improving the challenges that teachers described.

Further investigation into what programs are the most beneficial would also increase the

positive effects of mentorship programs in schools. This may prove difficult due to the fact that

mentorship programs are volunteer programs and there may be challenges to finding enough

volunteers. It would be beneficial to evaluate the different programs being used in school

districts.

Research involving the students involved in mentorship programs opinions would also be

interesting to conduct. The students are directly involved in the programs and their interpretation

would provide knowledge about the programs that would be insightful. I would also like to have

examined hard data in regard to students' grades, assignments, behaviour and attendance of

students involved in mentorship programs. A pre and post interview of a student involved with a

mentor would provide a wealth of knowledge about the benefits of mentorship programs.

More research into the effects of mentorship programs for students living in poverty need

to be conducted. The vast number of students living in poverty is apparent and strategies need to

be introduced and perfected that will enhance the learning experiences of these students. This

study was a small look into the effects of mentorship programs for students living in poverty. It showed that teachers believe they are an effective strategy to use but the students' perspective, the parents' perspective and the mentors' perspective all need to be investigated as well.

Conclusion

The benefits of mentorship programs are apparent for all students but the benefits for students living in poverty seem to be even higher. Students' grades, behaviour, focus, engagement, self-esteem and attendance all are positively affected due to mentorship programs. The relationships that students build with mentors allow for them to create a bond that is needed to be successful in an academic environment. It can be said that these effects will also benefit the student in other aspects of their lives as well. Although there are challenges to the success of programs in schools these are all issues that can be investigated and rectified.

Students living in poverty will ultimately benefit from involvement in mentorship programs and their likelihood of success will increase. This will have a significant impact on the likelihood of them graduating from school and thereby increase their chances of not experiencing the negative effects of being a non-graduate. So, mentorship programs need to be utilized and further investigation on how to improve the use of them in schools should be conducted.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Vancouver Island University

900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo,

British Columbia, Canada V9R 5S5

Tel (250) 740-6221 Fax (250) 740-6463

http://www.viu.ca/education/

"The Effects of Mentorship Programs on the Academic Motivation of Students living in Poverty"

Please answer the following questions and then start the short survey. **Please do not indicate your name or school as the survey is meant to be anonymous.**

In the context of this study a Mentorship program is a program where an adult or older student from an outside agency such as big brothers and big sisters spends time with a student once a week or more to help build a positive relationship.

Please circle one   Male   Female

How many years have you been a teacher? Circle one

0-5 years   5-10 years   10 years or more

How many years have you been teaching in schools that have students living in poverty?

0-5 years   5-10 years   10 years or more

Does your school currently have students involved in mentorship programs?

Yes   No   Unsure

In the last 5 years have you had a student in your class involved in a mentorship program?

Yes   No   Unsure

What percentage of your class do you feel are living in poverty?

Please one of the following.

Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Undecided (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5)

	Question	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1	Mentorship programs increase the number of assignments a student completes.					
2	Mentorship programs are beneficial to students.					
3	Mentorship programs improve students' grades on report cards.					
4	Mentorship programs improve students' scores on assignments.					
5	Students have less behavioural challenges in the classroom when they are involved in a mentorship program.					
6	When a student returns from a meeting with a mentor they are more focused on the classroom activities.					
7	Students are more engaged in classroom activities when they are involved in a mentorship program.					
8	Mentorship programs help students create positive relationships within the classroom.					
9	Mentorship programs decrease the number of days a student is absent.					
10	Mentorship programs cause disruption in the classroom.					

Please list any other opinions or observations you may have about the positive and negative effects you feel mentorship programs in your school have on students. List as little or as many as you feel you need.

-
-
-
-
-

If you have a personal story about a student and a mentorship program please share it below. **Please do not indicate your name, the name of any students, any mentors or schools as the survey is meant to be anonymous.** (Please write on the back if you need more space).

Thank you for participating in this study to examine teachers' opinions of the effects of mentorship programs for students living in poverty.

Please place the survey in the envelope provided and put it in the pink drop box in the teacher's mail room on before November 20th 2015.

Appendix B: Email to Administrators

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Vancouver Island University

900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo,

British Columbia, Canada V9R 5S5

Tel (250) 740-6221 Fax (250) 740-6463

http://www.viu.ca/education/

Dear Mr. /Mrs. Administrator,

My name is Trisha Armour, a teacher in School District #68, currently taking my Masters in

Educational Leadership at Vancouver Island University. As part of the requirements for this

program I am researching the effects of mentorship programs on the academic motivation of

students living in poverty.

I would like permission to invite the teachers at your school and yourself to participate in this

study. Your school is being invited to participate because it is an elementary school in school

district #68 and is located in a neighborhood where more than 45% of the students are vulnerable

according to the Early Development Instrument.

Study Participants are asked to complete an anonymous survey. The survey consists of 3

sections. Section 1 asks 6 general background questions about you and your teaching career.

Section 2 has 10 statements about mentorship programs that you will be asked to rate on a 5

point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Section 3 has 2 open ended questions about

mentorship programs. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes and I would appreciate

your permission to invite the staff at your school to participate.

If you consent to allowing me to invite the staff at your school to participate in the study I would

like to have a teacher contact at your school or myself read a short script at your October staff

meeting. This script is approximately 2 minutes long and its purpose is to introduce the study

and make the staff aware that there will be a survey in their mailbox inviting them to participate.

A letter of consent which details the study procedures will be attached to each survey.

Thank you for your time,

Trisha Armour

Appendix C: Letter of Consent

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Vancouver Island University

900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo,

British Columbia, Canada V9R 5S5

Tel (250) 740-6221 Fax (250) 740-6463

http://www.viu.ca/education/

Letter of Consent

"The Effects of Mentorship Programs on the Academic Motivation of Students Living in Poverty"

November1st 2015

Dear Colleague;

I am a teacher in School District #68, currently taking my Masters in Educational Leadership at Vancouver Island University. As part of the requirements for this program I am researching the effects of mentorship programs on the academic motivation of students living in poverty. You are being invited to participate because you are a teacher or an administrator at an elementary school in school district #68 and the school you are working at is located in a neighborhood where more than 45% of the students are vulnerable according to the Early Development

Instrument. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes and I would appreciate your

participation.

To be a participant in the study you are asked to complete the attached survey. The survey

consists of 3 sections. Section 1 asks 6 general background questions about you and your

teaching career. Section 2 has 10 statements about mentorship programs that you will be asked

to rate on a 5 point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Section 3 has 2 open ended

questions about mentorship programs. Once you have completed the survey please place it in the

envelope provided and put it in the pink drop box on or before November 20th, 2015. The drop

box is located in the staff mail room. **Please do not provide any information that could**

identify you, your school or any other person in the survey.

My supervisor and I will be the only people who will have access to the information you provide

in the survey. Completed surveys will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and electronic data

will be stored on a personal laptop that is password protected. The paper surveys will be

shredded and the electronic data will be deleted in July 2019.

There are no known harms associated with your participation in this research study. Your

participation is completely voluntary and the surveys collected will be anonymous. You may

choose to participate or not without any explanation or penalty. You can choose not to answer

any questions or submit an incomplete survey. Please be aware that once you put the survey in

the drop box your information can not be removed from the study because there will not be any way to determine your information from other information that has been submitted.

If you have any questions about the study or would like more information please contact me at the email address at the bottom of this form. If you have any concerns about your treatment as a participant in this study please contact the VIU Research Ethics Officer by email at reb@viu.ca or by phone at 250-753-3245 extension 2665.

By completing and submitting this survey you are consenting to participate in this study.

Please detach this letter and keep it for your records.

Trisha Armour
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Rachel Moll, PhD
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Faculty of Education
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