

Investigating the Extent to Which Mentor Selection in Zimbabwe's 2-5-2 Teaching Practice Enhances Continuous Improvement of Student Teachers' Teaching Skills and Competences

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ABSTRACT The study sought to establish the experiences and perceptions of mentors and student teachers on the extent to which mentor selection enhanced continuous improvement in Zimbabwe's 2-5-2 teaching practice. The mixed methods design was used to collect data in two phases. The first phase used questionnaires to collect quantitative data while the second phase collected qualitative data through interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis. The research findings revealed that mentor selection was the responsibility of the school head and that most student teachers were mentored by qualified and experienced classroom practitioners with high teaching experience and expertise, although in some isolated instances student teachers were either being mentored by junior teachers and temporary teachers or were on their own without mentors. The study recommended that teacher education institutions should support school heads through workshops on mentor selection and ensure that qualified experienced mentors are selected to mentor students.