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The Role and Motivation of Pre-Service Teacher (PST) Mentors from Pro-Social to Cognitive-Effective Perspectives

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Abstract: The purpose of this quantitative descriptive study is to shed light on the driving forces of the mentor's positions in teacher training processes in Israel. The research is based on an exploratory cross-sectional study which included 170 preservice teacher mentors in the north of Israel. The mentoring position, despite its importance, is often unappreciated, even by the mentors themselves. It is barely rewarded, in money, status, or prestige. The current study focuses on the internal motivation of mentors for choosing to serve in this role in addition to their main role as classroom teachers. In this regard, the theory of cognitive-effective perspective can help us to understand the reasons behind these motivations. Our findings indicate that mentors exhibit internal motivation from the pro-social and cognitive-effective perspectives. The average score for attitudes was $M = 2.92$ ($SD \pm 0.42$). The total score was higher for the cognitive components than for the effective ones ($M = 2.98$, $SD \pm 0.44$, and $M = 2.85$, $SD \pm 0.52$, respectively). The main motivations of the mentors were based on their strong desire to improve the level of teaching in Israel. Contributing to the future of education was a dominant part of their personal educational philosophy. These insights depict the mentor as a pillar of the teacher training community in Israel. Our findings also indicate that, while a supportive school climate and autonomy in the mentor's role are factors that promote mentoring practices, a lack of theoretical knowledge about teacher training and a lack of clarity about the mentors' responsibilities are factors that hinder such practices. It is important to address these factors in order to enhance the desirable variables while decreasing the undesirable ones, in order to translate educational philosophy into stable and sustainable improved teacher training processes.



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Keywords: mentors; teacher training; motivations

1. Introduction

To be or not to be? This is a complex question that depends on human behavior, and on driving forces like internal and external motivations and other variables. Behaviors are influenced by a variety of personal and contextual motivational factors [1]. Since the COVID-19 epidemic and in the last two years, there has been extensive research in a variety of subjects involving education, teaching, and learning [2–5]. Still, however, there is a lack of research that has dealt with the mentoring of preservice teachers and their points of view in the “new routine.” The literature mainly focuses on the mentor's roles and functions rather than on their internal and professional motivation for mentoring. The past few years have seen an increasing research interest in the roles and characteristics of mentors [6,7], yet there are only a few studies on mentors' motivations and their decision to be a teacher's mentor [8,9].

The current study attempts to reveal the driving forces in the role, the motivations, and the reasons for choosing to be a mentor in the teacher training process in Israel. The character and the special role of the mentor in the teacher training processes is central. Due to the importance of mentors, this role requires in-depth examination and even reconceptualization within the field of teacher training processes [10,11].

The preparation of pre-service teachers is the opportunity to practice teaching in a real-life classroom with an experienced primary teacher. Ref. [12] raised the issue of challenges that teacher education programs (TEPs) face, as well as raised questions that are related to the effective preparation of mentor teachers with the appropriate knowledge and strategies from different mentoring approaches, as well as different theoretical approach regarding teacher learning and varies ideologies that are hard to change.

This study seeks to add to the existing research on preservice teacher mentors and their motivation to fill this position by applying a novel approach—i.e., through the lens of the cognitive-effective perspective. The aim of this study is to examine the motivations and attitudes of mentors, examined from two main perspectives: the cognitive-theoretical aspect and the effective-practical one. This study also attempts to reveal the reasons for choosing to become a mentor, as well as the factors that enhance or hinder the mentoring process.

1.1. Teacher Training in Israel

Teacher training in Israel is an academic process based on theoretical and pedagogic studies and practicums. Students attain a bachelor's degree and a teacher's certificate within four years [12]. The program operates in 21 colleges and 9 universities. Practical experience is the core of the training and is carried out in actual classrooms and kindergartens [10]. Teacher education institutions attach great importance to the teacher educators, the lecturers, and the pedagogical counselors who serve as role models for the PSTs. The teaching staff also play an essential role in addressing the PSTs' social and emotional needs as teachers of the future [13].

During their studies, PSTs develop different teaching skills that increases their readiness for their future role [14]. In their practical training, throughout their studies, they are partnered with mentors—experienced teachers who strive to help their mentees become professional teachers [15,16]. According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics report, 19.7% of new teachers leave the profession in the first three years [17]. In this process, mentors have a central role as experienced teachers in preventing and reducing the dropout rate. Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) found that the mentor-mentee process decreased teacher dropout by 35–50%, and continued to have an impact throughout the mentees' first five years of teaching [18].

However, the mentors do not belong to the institutions of higher education that train teachers, but serve as teachers in the schools. Moreover, there are no clear guidelines or role definitions for mentors, nor for the HEI (higher education institutions), regarding collaboration with the mentoring process. Deepening the knowledge and the growth mindset regarding the roles and motivations of the mentor is important for HEI in understanding their inner world, their motivations, and the importance to be given to this role in optimal teacher training processes.

1.2. The Mentor in the Teacher Training Process

1.2.1. The Mentor

Mentoring is a process that mediates between contradicting yet complementary functions, and that entails the creating and maintaining of relationships between the experienced teacher (the mentor) and the preservice teacher (the mentee). In education the mentor is part of a framework that supports the future teacher's learning and professional development, and that encompasses a culture of nurturing, emotional support, and care [19].

In educational institutions in Israel, schools' and kindergartens' mentors are experienced and knowledgeable teachers who provide preservice teachers with guidance, advice, and knowledge [19]. Throughout the four-year program, preservice teachers undergo a process of personal and professional development and learning, building their identity while collecting practical experience and observing [15]. This is the most important stage in teacher training. The students learn about themselves, their knowledge, and their skills, and consolidate their identities and educational worldviews [10]. This expertise is formed

into a 'profession' that requires dedicated training, mentoring, and the mastery of complex knowledge. This has a meaningful impact on the teaching abilities of these future teachers [20,21].

Mentoring is a dialogical, social, and emotional relationship between a less experienced individual and a more experienced individual that involves regular contact over a period of time and is intended to promote mutual growth, learning, and development within the career context [22,23]. In light of this fact, mentoring plays a meaningful role in supporting preservice teachers in their professional development and clinical experience, contributing to the identity construction process of preservice teachers, while creating growth-enabling dialogue between them [24]. In striving to improve teacher training processes and professional efficacy in the teachers of tomorrow, the related processes place an emphasis on models of clinical training in the educational field that are based on collaboration and cooperation between the school (e.g., via the mentor) and the training institution (e.g., via the pedagogical instructor). These reciprocal relations are at the core of the teacher training process and combine theoretical and practical aspects to improve outcomes [25,26].

1.2.2. The Roles of the Mentorship

The mentoring practice involves cooperation between the preservice teacher and the mentor [27–30]. Studies have defined mentor competence as having the ability to create an interactive relationship with the student, develop characteristics and cooperation with stakeholders, provide goal-oriented mentoring, support students' in their professional development, and support the student's learning process [31]. Mentors fill both a professional and interpersonal role [32]. In addition to enhancing the mentees' teaching experience, mentoring processes also impact the development of their professional identities [33].

Mentorship covers a wide spectrum of roles, from professional teacher, to critic and assessor, to instructor and supporter [34], that can be divided into three main categories: First, developing teaching skills. Here, the mentor serves as a role model for pedagogical and educational acts, providing the preservice teacher with concrete practical teaching experience, followed by analysis and reflection [35]. Next, developing a holistic outlook. In this category, the mentor introduces the preservice teacher to academic curricula, assessment methods, and classroom climates, as well as to interacting with parents. The mentor also introduces the mentee to the school as an organizational unit, enabling the preservice teacher to gain experience in developing and maintaining relationships between different position holders within the institution [36]. The third category relates to support and accompaniment, where the mentor serves as a personal counselor throughout the mentee's practical experience [32]. The mentor's containment and support of the mentee has great influence on the success of the latter's practical experience.

The following three main working models can be seen in mentoring: (1) The mentor is the owner of the classroom and is the person who allows the preservice teacher into the classroom as an immediate teacher; (2) the mentor is also a pedagogical supervisor, observing and documenting the trainee teacher throughout the year; and (3) the mentor is perceived as a teacher trainer who is expected to be proficient in the field of teacher training [20]. Mentors are responsible for a large range of activities, including developing mentor–mentee relationships; support; exposing the preservice teacher to the teaching profession; providing the mentee with teaching opportunities and related feedback; overseeing and evaluating the mentee; supervising the completion of tasks given by the training institution; enabling teamwork and cooperation; managing the practical work environment; establishing a sense of connection between the preservice teacher and the school; and developing reflective capabilities in the mentee [20].

1.2.3. The Mentor as a Model for Professional Development

The mentors' professional development continues throughout their career, enabling them to examine and rethink their professional beliefs and training methods. In addition,

mentoring offers opportunities to develop effective processes for training and mentoring preservice teachers, setting up learning communities for both teachers and preservice teachers from the school, and expanding both discipline-related and pedagogical knowledge, such as assessment methodologies [20,28,37].

Mentors are also responsible for the professional development of the mentee—in relation to teaching in general, and to their specific field of knowledge in particular—while enhancing the mentees' professional growth and familiarity with the school, and serving as a role model [38]. The mentors' contribution to the teacher training process can also be seen in their engagement in the joint construction of knowledge, becoming co-thinkers and co-learners together with their mentees, as they are a source of teaching knowledge and experts in knowledge construction [39]. Mentors can also benefit from receiving advice and assistance from the academic pedagogical instructor, as they work together to promote the success of their shared student-mentee [40].

Their contribution can also be seen in teaching their mentees to use their judgement and discretion, by exposing them to difficulties in teaching, helping them develop skills in the field of assessment and self-reflection, and encouraging them to implement new initiatives. Such contributions are based on the personal qualities that the mentor has to offer, such as warmth, generosity, and a love of teaching, as well as their teaching experience and constructive criticism [41].

1.2.4. Mentoring and Pro-Social, Altruistic Motivations

Mentors contribute their time and efforts for the greater good [42]. Their motivations are to be a better support in volunteering for their role [43]. The work of mentors is often defined as pro-social, altruistic, and professional—aimed at enhancing the wellbeing of future teachers as a means to improve the teaching profession. Altruism in education relates to educational acts for the benefit of others [44]. Batson (2010) defines altruism as “a motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another's welfare” (p. 16). As mentors are educators, they are motivated by their educational and social values [45]. Their main motivation for doing so reflects a “positive” social approach in their striving to promote the wellbeing of others [46]. Mentors are often goal-oriented, striving to help others while also satisfying their own needs or motivations [47]. Therefore, we hypothesize that the motivation behind choosing to serve as a preservice teacher mentor stems from altruistic, pro-social factors.

The terms pro-social and altruistic stem from a behavioral approach that reflects positive social actions in relation to the group or individual, often with the aim of promoting other people's wellbeing [46] or serving society at large [48]. Indeed, altruism has been found to serve as a key motivational factor for filling the role of mentor [49]. The role of the mentor focuses on assisting the mentees in dealing with their “reality shock” as they enter the system, while providing a type of “quality control” to ensure that these future teachers comply with professional teaching standards [50]. Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017) [18] found that the mentor-mentee process decreased teacher dropout by 35–50% and continued to have an impact throughout the mentees' first five years of teaching [18]. The difficulties experienced in teaching give rise to a feeling of personal incompetence, as reflected in a high dropout rate among novice teachers [51]. In Israel, the dropout rate is very high (about 30 percent) during the first five years, and especially the first two years, after entering professions in education and teaching [17]. This intensifies the valuable role of the mentor. Yet, despite the benefits and importance, this role is not without difficulties and complexities.

1.3. Mentors' Perceptions and Attitudes

In some cases, teachers take on the role of mentoring with insufficient knowledge and tools to provide their mentees with adequate training and support [52]. Others may perceive their preservice teachers as “classroom placeholders”, leaving the mentees to fend for themselves as the sole (inexperienced) classroom teacher, while the mentor spends the

lesson elsewhere—instead of invaluablely working together as co-teachers [53]. Others may experience negative emotions such as frustration, as they are required to fill their mentoring role with insufficient time and resources, difficult work conditions, and low compensation—while feeling like “second-class citizens”, as they are not a significant part of the teacher training decision-making process [54] and mainly provide technical feedback about their mentees’ teaching skills. Their feedback also tends to validate the preservice teachers’ existing knowledge, rather than serving as a source of new knowledge construction. In general, studies indicate that mentors rarely provide feedback that enhances the preservice teachers’ ability to reflect on their practical teaching experience. As such, increasing the mentors’ involvement in the larger teacher training process, and offering suitable compensation, could be beneficial for all parties involved [20].

1.4. Mentoring Difficulties

Filling the role of mentor is not without difficulties, as mentors must assist their mentees while also teaching their own classroom students to meet curriculum standards and requirements. At times, this dual commitment could lead to conflicts, dilemmas, and challenges for the mentor [53]. However, this role can also be beneficial for the mentors themselves, contributing to their own professional development, as they are required to cooperate with multiple factors, create a uniform conceptual-professional language with the pedagogical instructors from the mentees’ academic institution, and create and implement joint methodological planning and problem-solving procedures [55].

Mentor teachers invest great time and effort in mentoring preservice teachers, while continuing to perform their own teaching work. In some cases, these two roles may even lead to a conflict of interest, as the mentor strives to navigate between the mentee and the classroom students [56,57]. Moreover, mentors are minimally compensated for this role, and rarely receive praise, admiration, or even acknowledgement for their important work and dedication. As such, the question is why do teachers take on the role of mentor, how do they perceive their role, and what motivates them to do so?

1.5. Factors That Hinder the Mentoring Process

When training preservice teachers, mentors often encounter difficulties in their attempt to combine their mentoring work with their regular classroom teaching—which could lead to difficulties relating to the mentor’s new position and place in the classroom, burnout from classroom routines, and the need to adapt their professional identity to encompass the new role of mentor. In turn, this could harm the mentors’ self-perception as a teacher of their own classroom [20]. An additional outlook addresses the “dual loyalty” conflict, i.e., loyalty towards the mentee versus loyalty towards the classroom children [27], which could result in negative emotions such as stress and tension, with the mentors feeling torn between their responsibility towards their mentees [28] and their responsibility towards their students [58].

Although compatibility may exist between the mentors’ classroom teaching abilities and their mentoring skills, enabling them to serve as both classroom teacher and mentor [28], this may not be the case for their professional identities as a mentor and/or as a classroom teacher, which could harm their positive self-perceptions [20]. Mentoring often also takes an emotional toll on the person who is filling this complex and demanding role [58], as they must deal with their excitement and anticipation on the one hand, and their self-doubt and criticism on the other [59,60].

Mentors report feelings of stress, overload, and lack of time for mentoring—which are intensified by the small financial compensation that they receive for this role [61]. Teacher mentors may also experience difficulties that stem from a lack of clear-cut definitions as to what their mentoring role should entail, thereby hindering their feelings of ability, increasing their vulnerability, and decreasing their self-efficacy [41].

Finally, the professional relationship between mentors and representatives of the teacher training institutions may also pose an obstacle in cases of inadequate communi-

cation, understanding, and agreement as to the mentors' role and scope of responsibility [41]—in turn taking a serious toll on the mentors [58]. Additional personal difficulties are related to the practical training of the future teachers, which often lacks a culture of documentation as a basis for conducting planning and feedback, lacks systematic and methodical feedback and assessment processes, and allows for minimal leveraging of opportunities for collaborative learning and enrichment between all parties involved [61]. Yet, when examining outcomes of feedback processes, studies tend to highlight aspects relating to dialogues and social actions, rather than dyadic feedback [62].

The professional and personal difficulties that teachers experience when mentoring, as described above, could harm the quality of the practical training that preservice teachers so desperately need.

Based on the literature review presented in this paper, the current study examines the following research questions: (1) What are the attitudes of teacher mentors towards the teacher training process in general? (2) What are the attitudes of teacher mentors towards the teacher training process from a cognitive and effective perspective? (3) Why do teachers choose to serve as mentors? And (4) which factors do they perceive as assisting or hindering their mentoring of the preservice teachers?

2. Methods

The study is a descriptive exploratory study with a cross-sectional design. It was conducted among mentors of preservice teachers (PST) studying at a teacher training college in Israel. This college trains teachers who teach in the northern region of the State of Israel. The study included 170 mentors. The research tool was a questionnaire that was sent for distribution through the college email system, while adhering to the principle of anonymity. All participants in the study were assured that their answers would be saved in the Google Form system anonymously and all results are for research purposes only.

2.1. Participants

The questionnaires were sent to 204 mentors in an extensive geographical area in the north of Israel (that are working in 300 different schools). A total of 170 responded, giving a response rate of 83%. Authors used representative convenience sampling. Gender, social, and religious aspects (Jews and Arabs) were in proportions that represent the population of the country, and the types of educational institutions to which the mentors belong. Background variables are presented both in raw numbers and as valid percentages.

Table 1 presents the demographic background characteristics of these teachers.

Table 1. Mentors' Background Demographics.

Factor	Frequency	%	
Teaching Experience (in years)	1–10	44	26.0
	11–15	29	17.1
	15+	93	54.5
	Unknown	4	2.4
	Total	170	100
School Level	Elementary	81	47.6
	Secondary	72	42.4
	Unknown	17	10.1
	Total	170	100

Table 1. *Cont.*

Factor	Frequency	%	
School Sector	Hebrew speaking state school	119	75
	Arabic speaking state school	44	25.9
	Unknown	7	4.1
	Total	170	100

2.2. Research Tool

For the purpose of this study, we developed a four-component questionnaire. Instrument development contained:

1. *Questions on background data.* The mentors were asked about their teaching experience (seniority and type of school), their main teaching subject, their school climate (open/not open to change), education, and experience mentoring preservice teachers.
2. *Questions on attitudes towards the mentoring process within the teacher training framework.* This aspect was examined via the following three questionnaires:
 - 2.1. Interval scale questionnaire on *attitudes towards the mentoring process* within the teacher training framework. This included the cognitive-theoretical aspect and the effective-practical one. Based on the literature, eight relevant items were devised, such as, “Teacher training should take place mainly in the school”, and “The mentor is the main person who is responsible for the student’s practical teaching experience.” The respondents were asked to address each item from a cognitive aspect, i.e., “To what degree do you agree with this statement?” and from an effective one, i.e., “To what degree do you identify with this statement?”—Rating their responses on a Likert scale from 1 to 7 for each participant, a score from 1 to 7 was calculated for the cognitive aspect and for the effective one—individually and joint. Reliability of this questionnaire was examined using Cronbach’s alpha, resulting in $\alpha = 0.63$ for the cognitive aspect; $\alpha = 0.71$ for the effective aspect; and $\alpha = 0.82$ for the joint questionnaire.
 - 2.2. *Reasons for choosing to become a mentor.* The participants were asked to choose at least one reason for becoming a mentor out of the following six options: (1) Desire to improve the level of teaching in Israel; (2) desire to help advance the children in your classroom; (3) dissatisfaction with the current status; (4) pressure from the school principal; (5) pressure from the district supervisor; and (6) personal educational philosophy (principles and beliefs). For this part, we conducted an EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis) of the factors operating in the processes of mentoring in PST training.
 - 2.3. *Factors that hinder/enhance the mentoring process.* From the large range of factors that are addressed in the literature as playing a role in the mentoring process of preservice teachers, 11 variables with high frequencies were chosen for this questionnaire [63]. Based on their experience, the participants were asked to rate the degree to which each factor assists in their mentoring practices, on a scale from 1 (does not help at all) to 6 (is very helpful). The 11 factors included: (1) collaboration with work colleagues; (2) collaboration with the preservice teacher’s pedagogical instructor; (3) ongoing guidance from the teacher training institution; (4) autonomy as a teaching mentor; (5) vast amount of time that teachers need to invest in their role of mentor; (6) burnout from teaching; (7) lack of theoretical knowledge on teacher training; (8) supportive school climate; (9) lack of clarity about the role of teaching mentor; (10) allocating time for mentor–mentee meetings; and (11) payment received for mentoring preservice teachers. To calculate mean scores, each factor was evaluated individually across all responses.

The complete questionnaire and data-producing sample was validated by five experts who hold PhD degrees in education and have vast experience in academic teacher training programs. Each reader was asked to rate the relevance of each item on the questionnaire to the work of the mentor, on a scale from 1 (not relevant) to 5 (very relevant). The reliability score of the questionnaire was $\alpha = 0.86$. In order to specify the factors and motivations, we carried out EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis).

The questionnaires were sent to the participants via email ($N = 170$) and all data were collected via Google Docs. Data analysis was conducted via the SPSS 27—2019 software.

3. Findings

The findings of the study are presented in this chapter and are in line with the four research questions. Table 2 presents the findings relating to the first two questions which address the attitudes of teacher mentors towards the teacher training process—in general and from a cognitive and effective perspective.

Table 2. Attitudes Towards Teacher Training and Mentoring Processes ($N = 170$).

Item	Effective Score		Cognitive Score		General Score	
	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M
Teacher training should take place mainly in the school	3.11	0.81	3.47	0.68	3.30	0.66
Being a mentor is a good “recipe” for preventing burnout	3.00	0.88	2.70	0.87	2.83	0.81
The mentor is main person who is responsible for the student’s practical teaching experience	2.38	0.92	3.17	0.81	2.76	0.68
Training preservice teachers is a challenging part of the mentoring work	3.25	0.75	2.81	0.87	3.02	0.70
Preservice teacher training should be collaborative between the academic institutions, mentors, and teachers from the field	3.11	0.85	3.43	0.65	3.27	0.65
Teacher training should mainly take place in colleges and universities	2.38	0.98	2.53	0.90	2.62	0.84
The pedagogical instructor is the person who is most responsible for the preservice teacher’s practical training	2.21	0.92	2.99	0.89	2.62	0.72
The encounter between the mentor and the pedagogical instructor contributes to the mentor’s professional development	3.09	0.87	2.80	0.88	2.93	0.78
Total Score	2.85	0.52	2.98	0.44	2.92	0.44

Range: 1–4.

The findings show that the average score for attitudes was $M = 2.92$ ($SD \pm 0.42$). The total score was higher for the cognitive components than for the effective ones ($M = 2.98$, $SD \pm 0.44$, and $M = 2.85$, $SD \pm 0.52$, respectively). In the cognitive components, the highest score was seen for “Teacher training should take place mainly in the school” and “Preservice teacher training should be collaborative between the academic institutions, mentors, and teachers from the field.”

The next research question sought to understand why teachers choose to serve as mentors. Table 3 presents the main reasons that emerged from this study.

The findings show that the main reason for choosing to mentor preservice teachers, despite the difficulties entailed in doing so, is the desire to improve the level of teaching in Israel. Written by 73% of the participants, this factor was mentioned a total of 103 times and accounted for 44.8% of all reasons stated. The mentor’s personal educational philosophy was also rated highly as a reason for mentoring, with almost half the respondents stating this item. These findings indicate that mentors truly wish to contribute to future generations of teachers and students. Pressure from the school principal or from the district supervisor

were rarely mentioned as reasons for serving as a mentor. These findings, indicating a type of pro-social pyramid of motivation.

Table 3. Reasons for Choosing to Mentor Preservice Teachers (N = 170).

Reason for Mentoring	%	Frequency (n)	Respondents %
Desire to improve the level of teaching in Israel	44.8%	103	73.0%
Personal educational philosophy (principles and beliefs).	28.7%	66	46.8%
Desire to help advance the children in your classroom	15.2%	35	24.8%
Dissatisfaction with the current status	6.5%	15	10.6%
Pressure from the school principal	4.3%	10	7.1%
Pressure from the district supervisor	0.4%	1	0.7%
Total Score	100.0%	230	163.1%

In order to specify these factors and motivations, we carried out EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis), as demonstrated in Table 4.

Table 4. EFA (Exploratory Factor Analysis) Varimax of the factors operating in the processes of mentoring in PST training.

	Effective Score	Cognitive Score	General Score
Cooperation of the mentor with the pedagogical guide	0.83	−0.02	−0.05
Support and training of the device institution	0.77	0.18	0.01
His autonomy as an instrument teacher	0.64	0.44	−0.01
The large amount of time I have to devote to performing its role as an instrument	0.58	0.16	0.09
Collaboration between colleagues and the profession	0.52	0.51	0.02
The salary I receive for the student's training work	−0.05	0.78	0.30
Allocating time for meetings between the instructor and the student	0.26	0.72	−0.05
A supportive school climate	0.43	0.67	−0.16
Lack of theoretical knowledge in the subjects of training for teaching	0.03	−0.01	0.88
Burnout from teaching	−0.09	0.17	0.78
Ambiguity about the role of the teacher	0.09	−0.07	0.77
α Cronbach	0.77	0.67	0.75
Average	4.64	4.72	2.51
SD	0.87	0.94	1.19

The final research question addressed in this study sought to identify factors that are perceived as assisting or hindering the participants' mentoring work. The related findings are presented in Table 5.

A supportive school climate, allocating time for mentor-mentee meetings, collaboration with work colleagues, and autonomy as a teaching mentor were found to be the factors which contribute the most to the mentors' work. On the other hand, the most hindering factors include lack of clarity about the role of teaching mentor, lack of theoretical knowledge on teacher training, and burnout from teaching. It should be noted that the vast amount of time that teachers need to invest in the role of mentor, or even the low payment, were not mentioned as hindering factors.

Table 5. Factors that are Perceived as Enhancing or Hindering the Mentoring.

Factor	M	SD
Supportive school climate	5.04	1.03
Allocating time for mentor-mentee meetings	4.91	1.09
Collaboration with work colleagues	4.85	1.16
Autonomy as a teaching mentor	4.80	1.05
Collaboration with the preservice teacher's pedagogical instructor	4.75	1.15
Ongoing guidance from the teacher training institution	4.45	1.36
Vast amount of time that teachers need to invest in role of mentor	4.32	1.29
Payment received for mentoring preservice teachers	4.16	1.46
Burnout from teaching	2.61	1.50
Lack of theoretical knowledge on teacher training	2.48	1.39
Lack of clarity about the role of teaching mentor	2.47	1.50

4. Discussion and Conclusions

Mentorship in education is a worldwide role where a skilled teacher trains PSTs. The past few years have seen a growing research interest in the clinical training of PSTs, as well as in identifying teaching strategies and psycho-social variables that characterize such training [64]. This study directs a spotlight on teacher mentors and their motivation to fill this position by applying a novel approach, i.e., through the lens of the cognitive-effective perspective and through the effective practical lens. As such, this study examined the complex world of mentors, their motivation for choosing to serve as mentors, and the promoting and hindering factors that they encounter when doing so. The altruistic, pro-social approach served as a theoretical anchor for understanding why teachers choose to serve as mentors. Their main motivation for doing so reflects a “positive” social approach in their striving to promote the wellbeing of others [46]. In other words, their main goal is to serve society in the broadest meaning of the word [48], contributing their time, energy, and knowledge to improving teacher training in Israel. Altruism has been found to serve as a key motivational factor for filling the role of mentor [49].

The findings of this study sought to examine the perspectives of mentor teachers by assessing their motivation for filling this role. As stated, pro-social motivational factors were found to be dominant in their decision to conduct teacher mentoring. These are presented from a cognitive perspective that relates to the ability to draw conclusions about the thoughts and beliefs of others, and from an effective perspective that expresses the ability to draw conclusions about the emotions of others and of oneself [65]. Agreeing to serve as a mentor also expressed the teacher's goal for personal and professional development [66].

Furthermore, the current research's findings are in line with previous research that has demonstrated that PSTs' capacity to succeed in a professional placement is closely linked to the quality of the mentoring relationship [65]. We would like to emphasize and indicate that, through the identification of factors that are essential for the personal and professional development of PSTs, the mentor's role in the teacher preparation programs can provide guidelines for the training teacher's processes. Another, current study suggested that PSTs are exposed to and aligned with the desired characteristics of a mentor and a mentoring relationship [67].

The findings of this study also indicate a need for rethinking the collaboration between mentors and teacher training institutions, in relation to the type of interaction between the various parties involved in the teacher training, including mentors and preservice teachers, and mentors and training institutions. Similar findings were also seen in Hall et al. (2008) [41].

The growth and development of the mentors themselves may be related to how they perceive their role of training and instruction [68]. Quality mentoring should include

discourse and the practicing of key skills and capabilities that teachers need to possess, content knowledge and pedagogy, classroom management, and self-ability in relation to classroom students and study plans, as per the teacher's field of discipline. Such skills should be applied for ensuring academic development and improving the classroom students' achievements [69].

As to the reasons for choosing to serve as mentor, our findings indicate two main reasons that were highly rated by the participating mentors: the desire to improve teaching standards in Israel, and their personal educational philosophy. Mentoring that strives to expose mentees to current professional knowledge, and opportunities for conducting in-depth examination of their teaching, stems from the mentor's desire to improve their own teaching level while contributing to improving the overall level of education and teaching [70]. These findings clearly convey a pro-social approach, with mentors contributing their time and efforts for the greater good. As mentioned by Shier et al. (2020) [42], organizations which support this process can benefit from direct insights from mentors on their motivations to be a better support in volunteering for their role. Bolino and Grant (2016) [43] also presented the organizational advantages embodied by pro-social mentors.

The high scores seen in the mentors' desire to improve teaching levels in Israel, combined with their personal educational philosophy, indicate their strong desire to contribute to the teachers of tomorrow and to their students. Translating personal philosophy into stable and sustainable teacher training processes, the lecturers and pedagogical counselors as well as the mentors serve as role models for the PSTs. The teaching staff also play an essential role in addressing the PSTs' social and emotional needs as teachers of the future [71]. On the other hand, inadequate collaboration between colleagues, teacher autonomy, and ongoing instruction throughout the mentoring process were all found to be factors that hinder these teachers' desires and ability to provide optimal mentoring services [72].

It is important to address these factors in order to enhance the desirable variables while decreasing the undesirable ones. School principals, as well as teacher training institutions, should work together to create a more supportive and positive ecosystem, as the mentors' internal pro-social motivation alone does not suffice. Instead, there is room and a need for additional support from the school and the institution in order to continue to improve teacher training processes. Sokhulu (2021) argued that experience refers to one's participation in various events during their life [73]. People can engage in specific behaviors, portray certain skills, and be involved in various situations as part of their life experiences. In this regard, the mentor's role shapes the teacher training eco-system and contribute to its stability and sustainability [13].

Yet, mentors do not receive the acknowledgement or cooperation that they are worthy of, nor are they adequately positioned in educational hierarchies. A shared vision must be defined, based on comprehensive collaboration between the mentors and the academic institution throughout the teacher training process [28].

4.1. Recommendations

It is important to build professional training programs for mentors, as part of the teacher training array. Teachers who undergo professional mentoring training have a better understanding of the meaning of educative mentoring that highlights the combination between the mentors' expertise and the preservice teachers' knowledge. Focusing on three main aspects, collaborative planning, observation and investigation, and analysis of students' papers, was seen to lead to a change in the perceived and practical role of mentor [74]. Finally, specializing in the training of preservice teachers, including instilling in them relevant and important knowledge, is an ongoing process in mentors throughout their career—one that is greatly driven by pro-social motivational aspects. Yet, efforts should be made to improve and enhance the professional development and work of the mentor, as well as the status and perception of this important role—to create a balanced academia-field ecosystem for the benefit of future teachers and their students. The insights

of this study shed light on the role of the mentor, who is deserving of acknowledgement, praise, and compensation in return for their investment in the teachers of tomorrow.

4.2. Limitations

This study contributes to the literature on preservice teacher mentors. Yet, the research limitations should be addressed. Future studies should address the issue of mentoring motivation from additional aspects and perspectives, and in relation to additional geographical areas. We also propose examining the issue of mentoring from the mentees' perspectives, i.e., the preservice teachers.

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