Self-authorship in the Mentoring Process at Preschool Education Institutions

**SELF-AUTHORSHIP**

**ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE STUDY**

Self-authorship is receiving increasing attention from researchers. Most extensively researched:

- students' self-authorship (McGowan, 2016; Rieks, Meerts-Brandena & Sibthorp, 2021; Cohen et al., 2017; Pizzolato, 2020; Sankey & Jackson, 2015);
- self-authorship of future teachers (Browlee, Edwards, Berthelsen & Boulton-Lewis, 2011; Massedu, Brownlee, Walker & Allford, 2017; Suvutaviita, 2006);
- the impact of teachers on student self-authorship (Stone & Bernstein, 2018; Mondlisa & Adams, 2020).

However, there are few scientific sources that help to reveal the phenomenon of self-development in old age, especially when social contact is established between a young, less experienced, and an older person with more professional experience. Thus, studying how pre-school teachers exercise self-authorship in their role as mentors provides a valuable insight into the contextual aspects of development.

The aim of this study is to extend the phenomenon of self-authorship in the mentoring process striving to find answers to the research questions:

- How the phenomena of self-authorship and mentoring are perceived in old age?
- What are the preconditions for the emergence of self-authorship in mentoring?
- How these processes are connected (coherent) and what are the peculiarities of the interaction between self-authorship and mentoring?

**THEORETICAL GROUND**

Three dimensions of self-authorship (according to Baxte-Magnoli, 2004).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Epistemic foundation</td>
<td>The evolution of the assumptions about nature, facts, and certainty of knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-authorship</td>
<td>The ability to establish internal belief and practices that guide relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal foundation</td>
<td>Individuals' sense of who they are and what they believe</td>
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**SELF-AUTHORSHIP**

- Trusting the inner voice, identifying and following internal authorities and beliefs helps to choose how to respond to external challenges. Confidence in the inner voice allows a person to be more flexible and adapt to change.
- Preconditions facilitating self-authorship (according to Baxte-Magnoli, 2004):
  - knowledge is complex and socially constructed;
  - self-control to knowledge construction;
  - authority and expertise are shared in mutual construction of knowledge.

**MENTORING**

- The mentor draws on her or his experience as a key source of knowledge and shares it with the mentee, promoting the learning process.
- It is important for the mentor to know the protégé, identify his/her opportunities and encourage involvement in the processes of self-authorship and self-realization.
- We assume that in reverse mentoring young and technologically adept junior members teach senior colleagues (Kemmmis et al., 2014), it is possible to look for incentives for older teachers to develop themselves.

**METHODOLOGY**

Research approach

- Interpretative

Semi-structured interviews

- Open-ended questions
- On-line
- Duration 45-60 min.
- The interviews were recorded.

The text was transcribed verbatim.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

Thematic analysis in 6 steps (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield, 2015): 2 major themes and 5 sub-themes

**FINDINGS**

**Self-authorship and mentoring are two sides of the same coin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The process of self-knowledge</th>
<th>Mentoring as a journey of cognition</th>
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<tr>
<td>Motivation of a young teacher for self-authorship:</td>
<td>Mentoring as team growth</td>
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<td>Creating yourself in a mentoring role with the help of others</td>
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<td>- Understanding self-authorship as development of one's personality, one's self, character features (T1), spiritual and value attitudes (T2).</td>
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<td>- Supportive and understanding relationships with the mentor</td>
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<td>- Being empathic makes you a better person and a better mentor</td>
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<td>- The mentor helps others (T3)</td>
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<td>- It should be like a circle of mentors and we would have some kind of general plan according to which we could raise, improve, finally analyze the received results. This sharing of best practices by each mentor among other mentors would be of high quality (T5).</td>
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**CONCLUSIONS**

- Preschool educators perceive self-authorship as a constant journey of cognition: the process of creating their own personal qualities and self as a mentor, helping others, as well as the young educator's motivation to work in pedagogy and improve (develop) at the same time.
- Self-authorship is an important element of the mentoring process, where its content manifests itself in informal support for mentees, and this support presupposes the need for team (community) learning, sharing of knowledge and experience, which promotes the overall growth of the teaching staff.

**DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

- There is a need for a deeper analysis of the relationship between pre-school teachers' identity as mentors and self-authority, how self-authority contributes to the formation of a new role of pre-school teacher.
- The propensity of pre-school educators towards collegial learning should be further explored, perhaps in comparison with general teacher learning models. Teachers' activities are generally recognized as sufficiently autonomous and their learning models are, at least in some countries, individualistic. In this study, we identified a fairly unambiguous need to learn from each other in the mentoring process.

**REFERENCES**


