School of Public Health

Group Mentoring And The Professional Socialisation Of Graduate Librarians: A Programme Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

The Group Mentoring Programme which is the subject of this evaluative research was developed and implemented under the auspices of the Australian Library and Information Association by the author and a colleague. The main aim of the Programme was to facilitate the transition of new graduates in librarianship into the profession. The objectives of the research were: (1) to conduct an impact evaluation of the Programme; (2) to explore and develop the conceptual and theoretical bases of mentoring; and (3) to identify sources of stress anticipated and experienced by new graduates in their transition into the profession. This evaluative research represents the first report in the research literature to date in which a group mentoring programme of this kind has been evaluated using a quasi-experimental research design. The population comprised all graduates in librarianship from the two Western Australian universities offering these courses in 1996. Subjects in the experimental group were self-selected, and the remainder of the population made up the comparison group. (This was divided into two groups - those who did not have a current mentor, and those who had a current mentor.) Data were collected by means of pre- and post-test questionnaires, and analysed by multiple regression analysis. The main outcome variable was measured by Hall's Professionalism Scale, a validated measuring instrument. Results indicated that the Group Mentoring Programme was effective in only one of the five domains of professionalism as measured by this scale (that is, in having a sense of "calling" to the field). This suggested that a group mentoring programme, by itself, is not a sufficient strategy for new graduates to attain a professional identity. A four-stage model of mentoring as continuing professional development is suggested as a strategy for teaching professionalism in a more formal, structured way. Results also showed that career-development outcomes were significantly higher in the Group Mentoring participants than in the two comparison groups, indicating that group mentoring is an effective career development strategy in the first year of such a programme. The concept of mentoring is extended to include group mentoring, which incorporates the essential characteristics of mentoring; it is also suggested that group mentoring includes the potential for practising three forms

of mentoring relationships: individual, peer and co-mentoring. Two broad areas for future research are suggested: longitudinal studies examining the outcomes of group mentoring, and studies extending the theoretical and conceptual bases of group mentoring.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Mentoring has been conceived traditionally as a relationship between two people in which one more experienced individual facilitates the other's transition into adulthood. Since Homer's original story of Mentor after whom mentoring relationships were named, examples of informal mentoring have been recorded and described throughout history, often with a fascination and fervour which point to a desire to understand the concept more fully and discover what makes these types of relationships successful.

During the past thirty-odd years, adaptations, hybrids and variations on the classical theme have led to the evolution of assigned mentoring programmes in the context of organisations and workplaces. These have attempted to capture the benefits of informal mentoring arrangements. More formally organised, structured and facilitated programmes are a comparatively recent development.

Contemporary mentoring programmes most often have been created for the purposes of orientation or socialisation into an organisation or a profession, or for ongoing training and development, both personal and professional. While the underlying purposes of formal mentoring programmes may be categorised as either seeking to maintain or change the status quo, the idea of facilitating a transition for the individuals being mentored has remained a common theme.

Although mentoring is generally considered to be of benefit to those who participate in such partnerships, it has not been established clearly whether the benefits of

informal, naturally-occurring mentoring relationships are also available to assigned mentoring relationships which have been implemented through formally structured programmes. Empirical research into the factors which contribute to the success of formal mentoring relationships, specifically identifying characteristics of individuals and organisations involved in successful programmes, has been limited. Mentoring programmes may have been evaluated to assess elements of the programme, such as the participants' satisfaction and learning, and to determine whether the programmes meet their objectives; however, there has been little rigorous, evaluative research utilising experimental research designs to evaluate programme effectiveness and outcomes, particularly long-term outcomes. In addition, evaluative research (i.e. programme evaluations which utilise <u>valid research designs</u> and thus contribute to the creation of new knowledge) of facilitated mentoring programmes (i.e. programmes which are formally structured and supported) has been lacking. This is especially true for the developing and evolving group mentoring format.

1.2 Benefits of the Study

The particular programme which is the subject of this evaluative research is a facilitated group mentoring programme for new graduates of librarianship. As yet there has been very little evaluative research into the benefits of mentoring in the library and information professions. This evaluation utilised a quasi-experimental research design. The main measuring instruments were validated instruments. The research questions were generic and therefore not specific to one profession in particular. Thus the results of the research may also be applicable to other populations of professionals who work in similar types of environments and to other mentoring programmes.

It has often been posited that transitional stages, particularly those associated with life changing events as well as those which contribute to cumulative daily problems, can be sources of acute and chronic stress, and that these can have long-term, deleterious

effects on people's health. Although the concept of stress and its effects on physical and mental health is complex, studies have indicated that mentoring can act as a mediating variable and has the potential to ease the transition process and thus make it less stressful for the individuals who are going through such periods of change. This study has sought to identify the stressful aspects associated with making the transition from student to professional, in order that mentoring programmes and health promotion activities which address these issues may be replicated and improved.

1.3 Description of the Group Mentoring Programme

The Group Mentoring Programme which formed the basis of the study and was the subject of this evaluative research was conducted under the auspices of the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). The programme was devised, implemented and facilitated by the author and a colleague, both professional librarians with managerial, teaching and mentoring experience. The main aim of the programme was to facilitate the transition of new graduates into the profession.

It was recognised that the transition from graduate to first professional position was a critical developmental stage in which the help of a mentor could be very beneficial. An individual mentoring programme had already been established by ALIA three years prior to the implementation of the group programme. Interest in the individual programme had been shown from new and recent graduates, as well as from current students. It had been noted, however, that many newer graduates were reluctant to put themselves forward as potential mentorees. This appeared to have been the result of a belief that they would be imposing upon the time of a senior practitioner whom they did not know at the time of application. It had also been observed that graduating students often found support amongst their peers, and it was therefore believed that the mentoring model could be adapted in a way which would draw upon, strengthen and expand this existing network of support.

In addition to the reluctance of new graduates to seek individual mentors, other difficulties in forming and maintaining a mentoring partnership had also become apparent to the ALIA committee who were responsible for implementing the individual mentoring programme and supporting the mentoring pairs. It was not always possible to match partners in assigned mentoring pairs on all selection criteria. It had also been found that personality factors could contribute to a partnership's not working.

It was posited that the mentoring functions and roles of conventional, individual mentoring relationships could be shared by the group's facilitators (who would perform a group facilitation and "learning leader" role, as well as acting as individual mentors as requested by participants in the group) and through the development of peer mentoring relationships within the group. It was hoped that this pairing of peers would occur through a natural selection process among group members. Matching of pairs which was often difficult in assigned individual mentoring programmes was thus not necessary in the group programme.

The initial group mentoring programme for sixteen new graduates was conducted in 1995, the year prior to the programme under study. The programme under study and reported here began in December 1996 and the final meeting was held in November 1997. The formal meetings comprised eleven, two-hour, monthly sessions in which the Group's learning objectives were addressed. In the interim the two facilitators (acting in their mentor role) were also available for small group and one-to-one mentoring sessions.

The facilitators were responsible for promoting the programme and enrolling the participants, conducting the first meeting in which the learning objectives were established, acting as mentors to individuals in the group, overseeing the meetings, ensuring that the objectives of the programme were met in a way which was in line with the philosophy, norms and operating principles for the group, and conducting the evaluation.

The stated, <u>formal</u> objectives of the Group Mentoring Programme were:

1. to provide opportunities for continuing professional development in librarianship;

2. to facilitate the sharing of information, ideas and feedback in a supportive environment;

3. to encourage the application of the theory learnt in formal education to practical issues and experiences;

4. to assist participants to develop and achieve their career plans;

5. to provide opportunities for participants to learn and practice mentoring and peer support skills;

6. to encourage the development of leadership roles within the group;

7. to introduce the participants to ALIA committees, special interest groups and networks.

The philosophy and operating principles developed and adhered to by the facilitators were:

- mutuality and complementarity: we are all learners and teachers for each other;

- principles of adult learning: participants are responsible for their own learning and independent, self-directed learning is encouraged;

- teamwork: the aim will be to foster a team spirit and develop a learning environment in which communication, cooperation and compassion are norms;

- synergogy is the preferred style of teaching and learning: the creative potential of the group is greater than the sum of its parts;

- transitional stages can be stressful: mentoring provides a network of support and teaches coping skills;

- mentoring relationships are supportive of individuals: group norms which concur with this philosophy must be established and maintained in the group and any activities which are not supportive will not be tolerated (this is the

responsibility of the facilitators).

Having given prior thought to their own professional objectives for the year, the participants were led through the first meeting in which the <u>learning objectives</u> for the Group were brainstormed, formulated and prioritised. The learning objectives which received the highest priority related to developing the skills which would enable the new graduates to find employment, develop their professional networks and continue their professional development.

The first six months' meeting programme was outlined in a way which would ensure that the formal objectives of the Group were also met. The participants were encouraged to take responsibility for organising and leading a session of their choice. Learning objectives and strategies were discussed before each session with the leaders of that meeting, and feedback on their performance was provided by the facilitators. Librarians and other professionals were invited to be guest speakers at meetings, and often the meetings were held at the practitioner's library, thus encouraging the graduates to become familiar with a wider variety of libraries. A process evaluation was conducted mid-way through the year to assess participants' satisfaction and learning, and the learning objectives were re-prioritised to make sure that the participants' changing needs were taken into account.

One of the Programme's formal objectives was to provide opportunities for participants to learn and practise mentoring and peer support skills. Mentoring skills were modelled by the group facilitators, but in order to function as a mentoring group and not simply as a social support network, deliberate strategies needed to be set in place for mentoring to occur on a peer level. For this reason teaching the skills of mentoring, such as giving and receiving feedback, supervision, goal setting, career planning and professional coaching, was incorporated into the programme, and the participants who acted as leaders for that session were encouraged to incorporate mentoring exercises and activities into their teaching strategies.

In the career-related sphere, the facilitators encouraged the sharing of information and opportunities for sponsorship, facilitating exposure and providing job introductions among peers as well as through the professional networks. Membership of ALIA was a pre-requisite for joining the group and the facilitators also encouraged the participants to join the professional association's special interest groups and committees, and to participate in professional development activities.

In the psychosocial sphere, the facilitators offered individual coaching and counselling. The counselling role was used mainly as a mechanism for clarifying and monitoring individual objectives and providing feedback to help the participants to learn from their own experience. Role modelling by the facilitators occurred in a less formalised way.

1.4 Aims and Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research were as follows:
1. to conduct an impact (short-term) evaluation of the programme;
2. to explore and develop the theoretical and conceptual bases of mentoring, particularly as they relate to a social model of health;
3. to identify anticipated and experienced sources of stress which affected new graduates during their transition from being a student to becoming a professional.

The main aim of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Group Mentoring Programme which was conducted for one year from December 1996 to November 1997. The purpose of the Programme itself was to facilitate the transition of a group of new graduates in librarianship into the profession. In this context, to "facilitate" meant to make the movement or change more effectively (in terms of professional socialisation) and more easily (by ameliorating sources of stress). It was emphasised from the beginning that the main objectives of the Programme were based on the achievement of continuing professional development outcomes (the formal

objectives are outlined in Section <u>1.3 Description of the Group Mentoring</u> <u>Programme</u>), not simply helping the new graduates to get a job.

In its broadest sense, the Programme's purpose related to professional socialisation i.e. the transition of new graduates into the profession and the development of their professional identity. A quasi-experimental research design was used to evaluate the outcomes of the Programme, the main outcome variable being the development of a professional identity. The participants in the Group Mentoring Programme were the experimental group; the rest of the population of new graduates formed the comparison group, and these were divided into two groups, those who did not have a mentor and those who had an individual mentor.

In addition to measuring the effectiveness of the Group Mentoring Programme in the development of a professional identity, the use of the evaluative research design to conduct the impact evaluation of the Programme also enabled the exploration and development of the theory and conceptual bases of mentoring.

In acknowledging the importance and contribution of psychosocial factors to an individual's wellbeing, a social model of health was used to explore the role of mentoring during the transition from student to professional. Life events which have been shown to induce stress were likely to be present in this transitional stage. A qualitative research methodology was employed to identify these potential sources of stress and explore the possible contribution of mentoring in alleviating stress. It was thought that the mentoring process would act as a mediating variable leading to behavioural adjustment (and presumably to physiological adjustment) by teaching coping skills and providing social support.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

1.5.1 Research Objective 1

It was posited that mentoring, in this case mentoring implemented through a formally structured and facilitated group programme, had a positive effect on professional socialisation. As the primary objective of the research was to conduct an impact evaluation of the Programme, and the main aim of the Programme was to facilitate the transition of new graduates of librarianship into the profession, the principle research question addressed can be stated as follows:

> *To what extent can the mentoring activities of the group be used to predict the professional socialisation and professional identity of new graduates?*

1.5.2 Research Objective 2

In the process of addressing this primary research question, the second objective of the research i.e. to explore and develop the theoretical and conceptual bases of mentoring, particularly as they relate to the social model of health, was also carried out. Thus a second research question incorporating the risk factors or indicator variables identified in the literature on mentoring can be stated as follows:

> *To what extent can the mentoring activities of the group be used to predict outcomes in the career and psychosocial domains for new graduates?*

1.5.3 Research Objective 3

The third objective i.e. to identify anticipated and experienced sources of stress which affected new graduates during their transition from being a student to becoming a professional, had a purely exploratory purpose and no hypothesis was formulated.

Based on the first two research questions the following hypotheses were formulated:

> H1: *There is a significant difference in professional identity of new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme.*

> H2: *There is a significant difference in career and psychosocial outcomes for new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme.*

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The main purpose of the Group Mentoring Programme was to facilitate the transition of new graduates of librarianship into the profession. Thus the main aim of the Programme was the development of a professional identity. Finding a job was not the primary focus of the Programme, and while this may have affected the development of the new graduates' professional identity, employment outcomes were not chosen as measures of the Programme's effectiveness. No data on previous job experience or job outcomes were collected.

The main outcome variable, professional identity, was measured by Hall's Professionalism Scale. This scale was chosen for a number of reasons, primarily because as a measuring instrument its reliability and validity had already been established, and librarians were one of the groups who were included in Hall's

original research, development and validation of the scale. The instrument had been used in other studies where professionalism was being measured as an outcome of mentoring, and also on a study population of masters students in librarianship (a population similar to the one in the current study).

However, because the population under study comprised new graduates in librarianship, and the development of a sense of professional identity may be a gradual and long-term process, there may not have been enough time elapsed (one year) for differences to have emerged in the shorter term. It is also the case that the benefits of mentoring have been shown in the research literature to increase after one year, and that in the initiation phase of mentoring relationships, psychosocial rather than career outcomes are more likely to occur. Thus the development of a sense of professional identity to be measured in an impact evaluation may not have been the most appropriate choice of outcome measure.

In order to enhance the applicability of the instrument, the instructions and questions asked in the survey instrument were amended to incorporate beliefs about their chosen future profession and how they would be likely to act. It was hoped that this would allow for the fact that as new graduates, they may not have had the experiences on which they could directly base their responses.

The study utilised a quasi-experimental research design, in which the experimental group was self-selected. This source of possible bias placed limits on the external validity of the design and thus the results may only be generalised to the population of professionals under study.

Because the concept of stress is extremely complex, the third objective (to identify anticipated and perceived sources of stress during the transition from student to professional) was approached in a very specific and limited fashion. Stress was explored only in relation to this particular transitional event. The specific context was that of a period of change from being a university student to becoming a professional.

The aim was only to identify perceived sources of stress that may be affected by the mentoring process. There was no attempt made to further develop an understanding of the concept of stress, or to measure the degree or magnitude of the effects of stress at this time. Nor was there any attempt made to make any associations between the situation, the intervention and the outcomes.

The Karpin Report on management training in Australia recommended mentoring as one of the most effective methods of workplace management training, and further suggested mentoring in groups as a cost-effective approach to continuing professional development (Industry Task Force on Leadership and Management Skills, 1995: 224). In this Group Mentoring Programme evaluation, however, no cost analysis was performed. No information was collected or calculated regarding costs of running the Programme, time spent by the facilitators in meetings, preparing for meetings, administrative tasks and in individual mentoring sessions. Thus it was not possible to perform an analysis of cost-effectiveness, especially with regard to outcome comparisons with an individual mentoring programme with similar aims. Although it would be possible to calculate these costs, this was not one of the objectives of the research.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Mentoring

Traditional mentoring relationships are described by Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson & McKee (1978: 97-100) in *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, a study which highlighted the influence of mentors in a group of men in mid-life. They stated that mentoring, in its most widely understood form was a situation where:

> The mentor is ordinarily several years older, a person of greater
> experience and seniority in a world the young man is entering.

The authors preferred to describe mentoring in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it served, rather than by ascription of formal, assigned roles. The functions of the mentor were described as: teacher, sponsor, host and guide, exemplar, provider of "counsel and moral support in times of stress"; and the most crucial function of the mentor was "to support and facilitate the realisation of the Dream". Thus, with regard to the transitional functions of the mentor, the authors stated (p. 99):

> His primary function is to be a transitional figure...The mentor represents
> a mixture of parent and peer; he must be both and not purely either one.

The relationship between the mentor and the mentoree was also described in the following terms (p. 100):

> There is a resonance between them…Mentoring is best understood as a
> form of love relationship.

As well as the centrality of the themes of the facilitative function of mentoring in transitional stages and the personal intensity of mentoring relationships, definitions of mentoring, whether concerned with describing formally assigned partnerships (i.e. matched pairings) or informal relationships, generally incorporate a number of additional, common themes which are related to professional and personal development.

Although the exact terminology may differ slightly, the main dimensions generally ascribed to mentoring are career development (professional development or instrumental role) and psychosocial development (personal development or intrinsic role). Kram and Isabella, as a result of their qualitative research into the characteristics of formal mentoring relationships in organisations, described the functions and roles of mentoring in the following terms (1985: 111):

Mentors provide young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection, all of which help the younger person to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement. In the psychosocial sphere, the mentor offers role modeling, counseling, confirmation, and friendship, which help the young adult to develop a sense of professional identity and competence.

In Kram and Isabella's terms, the main outcomes of the mentoring process are that the mentorees "establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement" and "develop a sense of professional identity and competence". The former outcomes are related to career development, the latter to psychosocial development. Both incorporate aspects of professional development, the former as they are related to the mentorees' career aspirations in organisations, the latter in terms of the individuals' beliefs about themselves as professionals.

This study has drawn on and expanded Kram and Isabella's basic definition of mentoring, in terms of the characteristics, functions and roles of mentoring and peer relationships. These have been described in the three essential characteristics of mentoring which have been outlined in the section on the definition of group mentoring (see 1.7.3.1), and formed the basis of the programme under study. The two dimensions (career and psychosocial) and the broadly described professional development outcomes formed the conceptual basis for the evaluation of this Group Mentoring Programme.

1.7.2 Classification of Mentoring Programmes

Mentoring programmes exist in many different forms and contexts. They may be described according to various criteria and classifications. Some of the classifying criteria include:

- The Context

  Mentoring programmes generally exist either under the auspices of an association or professional body, or within a workplace or an enterprise (organisation).

- The Purpose

  Although often implicit, the underlying purpose of a mentoring programme for an organisation or sponsoring body may be categorised either as being to change or to maintain the status quo. The mentoring programme itself will have aims and objectives, and the individual participants may also formulate their own specific objectives.

- The Participants

  A mentoring programme may be conducted for individual partnerships or groups (or a combination of the two), and there are generally a number of eligibility criteria for becoming either a mentor or mentoree; the programme usually has an organising committee or a coordinator, who is responsible for initiation and implementation of the programme.

- Formal and Informal

  Formal mentoring programmes have some degree of organisation, at least, a mechanism for the assignment of pairs (in an individual programme), or suggested mentoring activities or roles (in a group programme), whereas informal mentoring exists outside the boundaries of an official mentoring programme and relies completely on a process of natural selection.

- Structured and Unstructured

   Structured mentoring programmes have an organisational context which gives the participants procedures and guidelines in which to conduct their relationships. An individual or a committee is responsible for the identification of target groups, selection of a coordinator, development of procedures for participation, assessment and selection of participants, matching mentors and mentorees, provision of guidelines (e.g. length of contract, suggested activities, possible meeting arrangements). Monitoring and evaluation of the programme should occur, and structured learning opportunities and training may be provided and/or required. Unstructured programmes, while they provide a formal organisational context, leave the individual participants completely alone to decide the terms of their relationships and the activities they undertake.

- Facilitated and Unfacilitated

   The distinction between facilitated and structured programmes is not a hard and fast one and there may be some overlap. Generally, however, facilitated programmes may be differentiated from structured programmes with regard to the criterion of resource provision. Murray (1991: 5) defined facilitated programmes as:

   > a structure and series of processes designed to create effective mentoring relationships, guide the desired behaviour change of those involved, and evaluate the results for the proteges, the mentors and the organisation.

   The coordinator and/or committee of a facilitated programme implements a formal structure and processes in which the programme operates. They also offer assistance and support to the participants in order to facilitate effective relationships. For example, support may include liaison and guidance from the committee or co-ordinator, provision of information kits and opportunities for training in mentoring skills, organisation of regular meetings among all participants in the programme for information sharing and problem-solving. Resources may

also include payment of a stipend to the mentors. Evaluation to assess effectiveness of the programme and achievement of outcomes is also characteristic of facilitated programmes. Unfacilitated programmes do not offer this type of structural support.

The term "systematic" mentoring has been used by Boyle and Boice, who described a model of programme design which had three main components: planning, structure and assessment (1998: 174). This appears to be similar to the concept of a facilitated programme, as the programme they described to illustrate the model emphasised the importance of involvement of both the participants and the facilitators or programme organisers.

1.7.3 Group Mentoring

Group mentoring is a relatively new concept, and has been variously, but incompletely defined and poorly represented in the literature to date. Generally these "group" programmes have ranged along a continuum from a networking-style of mentoring in which individuals have some affiliation to a larger group, to more formal, structured and facilitated small group programmes.

The term "group mentoring" has been used by one author to express the function of professional associations in influencing the career outcomes of members of that profession (Dansky, 1996). Another author has described the concept of group mentoring as a situation where: "a group of individuals meet to listen, critique and contribute to the development of each other's ideas" (Rolfe-Flett, 1998: 13); and a third author, in an outline of the possible formats of unstructured mentoring programmes, used the term "mentoring circles" to incorporate the networking aspect (McKenzie, 1995). Kaplowitz (1992) described a style of "network-mentoring" among information professionals in an organisation as "peer pals".

Mentoring programmes which have used the small group format have referred to the process as "co-mentoring" (Challis, Mathers, Howe & Field, 1997), "learning sets"

(Holbeche, 1996) and "learning groups" (Kaye & Jacobson, 1996). The term "peer relationships" (Reiman, Bostick, Lassiter, & Cooper, 1995; Riley & Wrench, 1985, cited in Burke & McKeen, 1990: 320), has also been used, although the relationships among peers in the latter study were characterised as "support group" relationships, rather than being "truly" mentoring relationships. Keith, Scaturo, Marron, & Baird (1993) described a clinical supervision group for new family practice residents who provided "mutual collaboration", the main mentoring function (modeling) being performed by the group leader.

None of the definitions contained in these examples adequately describes the group mentoring which occurs in the programme under study. This evaluative research has sought to develop and expand the theoretical understanding of the group mentoring format, based on the conceptual model of mentoring and peer relationships which was researched and developed originally by Kram and Isabella, and is described in the literature review (see 2.1 Mentoring and Peer Relationships)

1.7.3.1 Characteristics of Group Mentoring

The essential characteristics of mentoring which are reiterated in reports of research as well as in the popular literature, have formed the conceptual basis of this Group Mentoring Programme. Based on a review of the literature and previous experience in mentoring programmes in librarianship, these characteristics were formulated and described by the initiators of the Programme under study (Genoni & Ritchie, 1996: 190) in order to ensure that the newly developed group mentoring format incorporated the essence of mentoring. Thus the three essential characteristics of mentoring adopted for this programme are:

1. mentoring is a two-way, learning relationship which draws upon the knowledge and wisdom of suitably experienced practitioners;
2. mentoring is designed to fulfil two broad purposes of career and psychosocial development, with the specific goals of the relationship being determined by

the individuals involved; and

3. mentoring relationships develop over time i.e. there is more than just a short-term or passing interest on the part of the mentor in the mentoree, and the relationship passes through a series of developmental stages.

The term group mentoring is used to describe the process in which the functions and roles of mentoring (as outlined in Kram and Isabella's definition, see 1.7.1 Mentoring) are shared by the facilitators and participants and are carried out in a group environment. The facilitators or leaders of the group act as individual mentors (in the more traditional sense of the word), and the participants act as peer mentors to each other (see 1.7.3.2 Forms of Mentoring in the Group Context).

A group mentoring programme can be adapted to any main purpose or aim of the organising body. Participants should form a fairly homogenous group with regard to eligibility criteria and with regard to their own individual reasons for wanting to participate in the group. As with any mentoring relationship, specific, individual goals and objectives are formulated by the participants themselves. In a group context, these objectives need to be compatible with the group's objectives and they must be able to be achieved within the group setting.

1.7.3.2 Forms of Mentoring in the Group Context

There is the potential for three forms of mentoring to be experienced within a small group context: individual mentoring, peer mentoring and co-mentoring.

1. Individual mentoring

The facilitators of the programme act as mentors to the participants, both within and outside the group meetings. Participants are encouraged to contact the facilitators when they require personal support from an objective and more experienced practitioner. In this way they fulfil the counselling and coaching roles of mentoring. Career development strategies, including facilitating

exposure and offering challenging work also fall into this category of individual mentoring.

The role model function of mentoring is a less obvious role. Within the group context, the facilitators, as experienced practitioners, are de facto professional role models, and participants are presented with an ongoing opportunity for vicarious or observational learning. Perry, Baranowski and Parcel (1990: 171-172) have drawn on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, to describe this concept of observational learning. Regarding the efficiency of using role models for learning complex behaviours, they noted:

> A person can learn from other people, not only by receiving reinforcements from them but also through observing them and utilizing his or her symbolic capability... In observational learning... the learner discovers rules that account for the behavior of others by observing the reinforcements they receive for their behavior.

2. Peer mentoring

   The group acts as a forum for peer support, networking, information sharing, confirmation and friendship, and for mentoring skills to be learnt and practised. New contacts are made and existing contacts sustained and strengthened. Participants are also encouraged to contact each other outside the group meetings and to devote time to practising the skills learnt in the group and act as peer mentors for each other. These skills include giving and receiving feedback, supervision, goal setting and coaching (Genoni & Ritchie, 1996: 192).

3. Co-mentoring

   Group mentoring in a professional association has been loosely defined as a process in which group dynamics take on mentoring qualities (Dansky, 1996:

6). Distinct from the peer mentoring which occurs amongst professionals of equal status, and within a more formally structured learning group context, co-mentoring is characterised by complementarity, mutuality, equal power relationships between facilitators/leaders and peers, and teamwork.

The group meetings are structured so that experiential learning (learning by doing), as well as observational learning can occur. The latter type of learning is integral to the mentoring process and is exemplified in the role modelling performed by the facilitator/mentor. The added dimension of the group creates the opportunity for experiential learning and "synergogy", which is defined by Mouton and Blake (1984), cited in Quinn (1995: 108) as: "a systematic approach to learning in which the members of small teams learn from one another through structured interactions". Quinn differentiated synergogy from other approaches to teaching (pedagogy, which is generally associated with a teacher-led, dependent style used in teaching children; and androgogy, which is an independent, self-directed learning style most often used when teaching adults). Quinn stated that synergogy has four fundamental differences from other approaches (p. 108):

1. it uses learning materials managed by a learning administrator rather than having a teacher who might be seen as an authority figure;
2. students have responsibility for their own learning through active involvement with other students;
3. it rests on the premise that learning that arises from teamwork is greater than that done by the individual alone, i.e. the principle of synergy; and
4. the planned interaction with colleagues acts as a motivator for learning.

The synergistic effect of co-mentoring derives from the meetings of the group which are designed to foster a supportive and creative learning environment. Opportunities for experiential learning to occur are integrated into the group mentoring process. There is also an intention to create a group which reaches a stage of development where there is a sense of cohesiveness, trust and teamwork.

Co-mentoring in the small group context provides a forum for the group members to learn from each other not only through information sharing and discussion, but also by practising mentoring activities. The brainstorming and subsequent formulation of goals or learning objectives, together with the shared responsibility for creating strategies and tasks to achieve the goals, foster teamwork. Thus, in addition to the structured learning programme by which the individuals pursue the group's learning objectives, an extra dimension (synergistic learning) is added when the group begins to function as a team.

The group process (and the individual's role in the group) may be viewed as parallelling the participants' larger organisational and professional environments, where committees, teams and project work are a large and growing influence. Individuals have an opportunity to learn about themselves, and the experiences gained and new skills practised in the safety of the group can often provide a stimulus for reflection and subsequent application of the new learning in the larger environment. There is potential for the synergistic effect and creative outcomes of the group work to have repercussions beyond the scope of the programme's formal objectives and evaluations.

1.7.4 Professionalism

According to Mason, Mason and Culnan (1995: 151):

> Professions, in their most general sense, consist of exclusive occupational groups who apply special expertise to help human beings solve particular human problems.

The traditional meaning of the term "professional" implies more than just belonging to a particular occupation. In addition to the ideas of exclusivity, specialist expertise and helping others, the term "professional" also embodies the notion of a vow or a declaration of commitment to a particular vocation.

Referring to the empirical, sociological research carried out by Hall and Snizek in the late 1960s and early 1970s into the professionalisation of occupations and the attitudinal characteristics of members of professions, Yoder (1996: 293) provided a definition of professionalism: "as the degree of commitment by individuals to values and behaviors characteristic of a specific group of professionals". Snizek (1972: 109-110) based his discussion of the theoretical dimensions of professionalism on the earlier work of Richard Hall, who had developed an attitudinal scale to measure the degree of professionalism among practitioners of an occupation. (Librarians were one of the occupational groups used in Hall's original research.) The five dimensions of professionalism identified by Hall were:

1. Use of the professional organisation as a major referent
   Professional organisations reinforce the values, beliefs and identity of the profession, and activities within the association help members to develop "colleague consciousness", and this in turn influences the individual to comply with standards of the profession.

2. Belief in public service

    This implies an altruistic commitment to society as well as a commitment to the profession itself, and rests on a belief that the profession is both indispensable and beneficial.

3. Belief in self-regulation

    This belief is based on the premise that due to the specialised nature of the knowledge required to belong to and practise in a particular profession, only colleagues (not outsiders) are qualified to judge (and therefore regulate) their work.

4. Sense of calling to the field

    The gap between a vocation and a job, the former an end in itself, the latter a means to an end, is what differentiates a profession and an occupation.

5. Autonomy

    This belief states that a practitioner should be free to make decisions without the threat of external pressure.

While it is not an objective of this research to explore the question of librarianship as a profession, it should be noted that information professionals have been considered to be those who "help clients overburdened with material from which they cannot retrieve usable information" and that "qualitative information has generally been the domain of librarians, joined by academics, journalists and others." (Abbott, 1988: 216). The notion of professionalism in librarianship, and particularly the role of mentoring in learning about what it means to be a member of a particular profession and the practical application of the theory learned in university studies to the real world, is within the bounds of this research.

1.7.5 Professional Socialisation

The general term "socialisation" implies a mechanism by which an individual learns and develops certain characteristics of a particular group in the process of becoming a member of that group. Du Toit (1996: 164-165) defined professional socialisation as:

> a developmental process of adult socialization. Not only does it involve the recognition of an assumed identity by the outside world; it also involves individuals' recognition of the identity within themselves and the non-deliberate projection of themselves in its terms - referred to as *internalization.*

1.7.6 Professional Identity

Professional identity may be said to be the main outcome of professional socialisation. It is defined by Bragg (cited in Fidler, 1995: 17) as:

> the possession of the specific competence in knowledge and skill, autonomy of judgement, and responsibility and commitment to the profession that is shared by full-fledged members of the profession and that also mark for the group and for outsiders the individual as a member of his or her chosen profession.

Thus the adoption of a professional identity is characterised by the internalisation of key qualities by the individual and by the recognition of professional status by the outside world.

1.7.7 Stress

In attempting to define the concept of stress, Bailey and Clarke (1989: 3-32) described and critiqued three models of stress. Very simplistically, these models were broadly

classified as: stimulus models of stress (in which an environmental or external stressor affects and causes strain on some attribute of the individual); response models of stress (based largely on the work of Hans Selye, these models emphasised the individual's physiological response to stress); and cognitive-phenomenological-transactional views of stress (which took into account the individual's thought processes in the perception of the stress, their idiosyncratic appraisal of the situation, and their interaction with the environment, all three of which then affect the individual's response and coping strategies). The latter model is adopted as the basis for this research.

1.7.8 Health Promotion and the Social Model of Health

In the original 1946 World Health Organisation definition of health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity" emphasis was placed on the social dimensions of health (Green & Raeburn, 1988: 152). The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (1986) defined health promotion as: "the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health" (p. 153). The authors suggest a balanced approach to health promotion, integrating "individual, community, institutional, societal and political perspectives" (p. 154). They highlight the enabling aspect of health promotion and the role of the health professional acting on the local level as one of "consultant, advocate, mediator and supporter, rather than master of the situation" (p. 157). The role of the mentor aligns with this definition of the health professional who implements a local level health promotion educational programme. The psychosocial aspects of mentoring can be viewed as a health promotion strategy as the provision of social support has implications for enhancing the wellbeing if the individuals involved in the mentoring programme. Thus mentoring fits nicely into a social model of health.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The traditional concept of mentoring has been characterised by length of endurance of the relationship and the existence of a power differential (often indicated by gender and age differences) between the parties. More recent developments in forms of mentoring and the introduction of the concept of a continuum of mentoring activities have led to the incorporation of shorter term and peer relationships into the mentoring model of professional and personal development. This change has coincided with and may at least partially have resulted from the shifting gender balance in organisations and the growing desire for career improvement strategies for women in the workplace, together with the shortage of women in senior positions who were available to act as mentors to less experienced colleagues.

More recently, there has been a growing number of references to alternative styles of mentoring, for example, the possibility of having multiple mentors for different purposes, a portfolio approach, where there is an emphasis on the skills, expertise and attributes of mentors and it is seen to be the individual's responsibility to find a mentor (or mentors) who can fulfil that individual's mentoring need (Tye, 1997). Other variations include adult learning partnerships, in which the equal power and status of peers are viewed as desirable features (Rolfe-Flett, 1998) and mentoring in groups (Ritchie & Genoni, 1997).

Since the 1970s much has been written about work-based mentoring programmes, particularly in the business, educational, academic, management and organisational psychology literature. This has tended to focus on mentoring as a mechanism for induction into the organisation or orientation to a new job, ongoing training, management and leadership development and succession planning.

A second theme of the literature has explored mentoring in the context of

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organisational culture, either as a strategy for socialisation (or acculturation), which has aimed to perpetuate the existing cultural values and norms and maintain the status quo, or for the purpose of cultural change (for example, affirmative action and minority and ethnic group programmes).

Many of the journal articles are anecdotal, particularly those from the business, management and training literature, and while of interest for obtaining an overview of the issues involved, they do not provide a well-researched basis for developing a facilitated mentoring programme (i.e. a formally structured and supported programme). Many of the popular books function as practical guides and workbooks for establishing and managing mentoring partnerships and programmes (Rolfe-Flett, 1995 and 1998, McKenzie, 1995, MacLennan, 1995, Murray, 1991, Parsloe, 1992). While these are generally based on the authors' practical experiences and some evaluation of the programmes' outcomes is provided, they are not intended to meet the criteria of evaluative research.

Doctoral theses are a source of more rigorous research. Daresh (1995), in a systematic review of the literature on mentoring and related professional development activities for educational leaders between 1984 and 1994 found seventy-seven reports of original research. Using *Dissertation Abstracts International* he found three hundred and ten dissertations of interest, of which sixty-six met the criteria. A review of thirty different journals yielded eleven suitable articles. Daresh noted, however, that despite the interest in mentoring as a professional development activity (p. 7):

> there has been a remarkable lack of systematic analysis of this issue in the research literature. There have been numerous descriptions of major trends, issues, and many interesting local programmes where mentoring has been used to support educational administrators. However, there have been relatively few published descriptions of research related to the structure, implementation, evaluation, or outcomes of mentoring programmes designed to enhance the professional development of educational leaders.

This review will concentrate on the research literature on mentoring, with particular emphasis placed on peer and group mentoring, and evaluation of mentoring programmes. It should be noted that in the mentoring literature, the term "peer" has been used variously to refer to any colleague, or specifically to refer to colleagues at the same or similar levels.

2.1 Mentoring and Peer Relationships

Kram and Isabella's exploratory research into mentoring in organisations in the early 1980s suggested that there were types of work relationships other than mentoring relationships (for example relationships with superiors, subordinates and peers) which contributed to fulfilling an individual's developmental needs. They noted (1985: 116-117):

> Peer relationships function so as to provide a variety of developmental benefits. Many of these are similar to the career-enhancing functions and psychosocial functions that are observed in conventional mentoring relationships.

Kram and Isabella distinguished between conventional mentoring and peer relationships using the criteria of age, level in the organisation, mutuality and length of endurance of the relationship. They stated (p. 115):

> From previous research, we knew that mentors tended to be much older and several organizational levels higher, and that the mentoring relationship was characterized as a one-way helping relationship.

With regard to mutuality and endurance, an analysis of the functions of peer relationships revealed that (p. 118):

While many of these functions are similar to those characteristics of mentoring relationships, one special attribute makes them unique. Peer relationships offer a degree of mutuality that enables both individuals to experience being the giver as well as the receiver of these functions...This mutuality appears to be critical in helping individuals during their careers to develop a continuing sense of competence, responsibility, and identity as experts. In fact, peer relationships can endure far longer than relationships with mentors.

In her review of the literature in the social sciences, organisational development, and human resource management, Foxon (1993: 6) distinguished between primary or classical mentoring, which was said to be long-term, formalised, intense and developmental, and secondary mentoring, which could involve multiple relationships and was likely to be a less inclusive developmental process. Peer relationships were differentiated from mentoring relationships by reference to a continuum of career support activities. Foxon (p. 27) referred to the research of Shapiro, Haseltine and Rowe (1977), noting that these authors:

have identified a continuum of advisory and support relationships which facilitate women's career progression. They term this continuum a "patron system". The relationships on the continuum are mentors, sponsors, guides, and peer pals. Mentors are the most unequal and most paternalistic...Peer pals, at the other end point, are helping and supportive relationships involving considerable reciprocity, and the most egalitarian...The mentor is thought to make the greatest contribution to career advancement. The influence of the other relationships decreases across the continuum.

It should be noted, however, that in conventional mentoring relationships there are benefits to both mentors and mentorees. The research of Shoolbred, Chivers and

Nankivell (1997: 199) identified mentoring as being "overwhelmingly beneficial to mentors, learners and often the organisations in which they work". They noted five areas of particular benefit to both mentors and mentorees: increased confidence, ideas for career direction, networking, opportunity to share frustrations in a safe environment, and reduced feelings of professional isolation.

The recently formulated "essential characteristics of mentoring" (Genoni & Ritchie, 1996: 190) which incorporated and expanded Kram and Isabella's original definition, identified this characteristic of mutuality or reciprocity as being essential to the mentoring relationship i.e. the capacity to be a "two-way learning relationship which draws upon the knowledge and wisdom of suitably experienced practitioners". This development of the theoretical construct of mentoring allowed peer relationships (i.e. relationships occurring between colleagues at the same or similar levels) to be included in the definition of mentoring. Indeed, in describing the content and process of the phases of peer relationships which progressed through the stages of establishment, advancement, middle and late career, Kram and Isabella noted the mutual learning amongst peers (p. 125):

> The process of a peer relationship in the establishment stage seems to be similar to that which might characterize a mentoring relationship...the other is viewed as having more wisdom or experience and is described as a model and as a career guide.

The model adopted by the Sheffield project for continuing education for general practitioners (Challis et al., 1997) incorporated aspects of individual mentoring and co-mentoring. Small groups of general practitioners (the peers) were led by a mentor (also a general practitioner with some expertise in the area of educational development) whose role was to "facilitate the sharing of ideas, hopes, anxieties and progress in learning" (p. 23). Regarding mutuality of the mentoring which occurred as part of the group's structured learning process and suggesting the possibility of the model of learning referred to as synergogy, the authors stated:

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There is, therefore, little difference in professional status between the mentor and the mentees, which gives the whole mentoring process a degree of dynamic interaction which goes beyond the role of mentor as 'expert' and the mentees as 'novices'.

Thus co-mentoring amongst a group of professional peers and a facilitator is characterised by mutuality, complementarity, and equality, and has, inherent in its structure, the potential for synergistic learning to occur.

2.2 Group Mentoring

There are examples in the mentoring literature in which the term "group" referred to the context or population in which a mentoring programme occurred, for example mentoring in a group of overseas students in a university setting (Meghani-Wise & MacDonald, 1995). Dansky (1996) used the term "group mentoring" to refer to the phenomenon of informal mentoring which occurred within a professional organisation (the "group"). This mentoring was not part of a formal mentoring programme. As a result of her research in organisations which found that individuals who had work supervisors of a different age or sex were more likely to gain psychosocial support from a group outside their organisation, Dansky (p. 6) proposed that: "Group mentoring is a new construct...(and that) group dynamics often take on mentoring qualities".

Dansky defined group mentoring as:

A group influence that emerges from the social norms and roles that are characteristic of a specific group and results in the career enhancement of an individual member.

In addition to the individual mentoring activities which may have occurred while participating in group activities, Dansky (p. 7) differentiated the construct from individual level mentoring by referring to the synergistic effect of collective behaviour, stating:

> group-level mentoring emerges from the dynamics of the group as a whole, rather than from a relationship with one specific person.

Other studies have referred to variations of traditional mentoring partnerships which have a group mentoring component. In these programmes the mentoring generally occurred amongst peers and in small groups (Boyle & Boice, 1998, Challis et al., 1997, Graham & McKenzie, 1995, Holbeche, 1996, Keith et al., 1993, Reiman et al., 1995, Riley & Wrench, 1985, Twomey, 1991).

In a programme designed to facilitate the transition and induction of newly graduated teachers into the profession, Reiman et al. (1995) used a model which incorporated aspects of peer support and a group mentoring format. The professional (career) and psychosocial functions were separated into the two different, but collaborative mentoring roles of the co-leaders, allocated according to professional expertise - teachers and counsellors. The former were concerned with applying the theory to practice in the new and demanding roles and tasks that a beginning teacher had to understand and learn. The latter were concerned with the affective and personally stressful aspects of the assimilation of new roles.

In Reiman's study, eight meetings were conducted and participants were required to attend every session. The peers played a supportive role by virtue of the fact that they were all in the same situation and could therefore empathise with each other. Mentoring roles were performed by the group leaders, but the concept of peer mentoring was not explored.

Boyle and Boice (1998) described an evaluation of a two-year, systematic mentoring

programme for two groups of new teachers (twenty-five new faculty pairings, and eighteen graduate teaching assistant pairings). The first group had a matched control pair (a mentoring partnership which occurred naturally). The pairs were required to meet weekly, and group meetings were held monthly to learn about alternative methods of mentoring and to share experiences. The group meetings were seen as one of the most beneficial aspects of the programme, enhancing participants' involvement with the programme as well as providing them with a sense of campus (p. 176). Other effects of the group meetings were that they stimulated change and they sustained the individual partnerships when interest waned (p. 166-167).

A mentoring index was developed for the evaluation. This comprised a 10-point rating scale on 10 dimensions of mentoring. An overall mean of 70.8 was attained for the twenty-five pairs in the first experimental group. The twenty-five matched pairs in the comparison group (the mentorees coming from the same cohort of new teachers) were monitored less closely. The mentorees were phoned periodically and reported on the value of recent meetings and activities with their mentors. Their pair ratings on the mentoring index averaged about 58, and their meetings were less regular and less frequent, with fewer pairs surviving the year. Although no test for statistically significant differences between the means for the two groups was reported, the authors concluded (p. 169):

> These comparison subjects provide a compelling picture of what happens when mentoring occurs spontaneously for busy newcomers...by our estimates, even the best-treated of natural mentees fared less well than most counterparts in the formal program.

2.3 Mentoring Research and Programme Evaluation

Merriam (1983) reviewed the literature to 1983 to ascertain the extent to which the enthusiasm for mentoring could be substantiated by research. She concluded that from

a research design perspective, the literature was "relatively unsophisticated" (p. 169) and noted the need for more extensive evaluation of formal mentoring programmes. With respect to the direction of future research and focusing on the psychosocial aspects of mentoring, Merriam stated (p. 171): "the fundamental question for adult educators and researchers is not how mentoring leads to material success, but how it relates to adult development and adult learning". As a basis for future inquiry Merriam suggested following the lead of Vaillant's finding "that sustained loving relationships aid in coping with life's stresses". Vaillant (1977) had collected data on the mental and physical health of a group of men over thirty years, and showed that mental health was the most important predictor of physical health, and that men with immature coping styles became ill four times more often than men with more mature coping styles. Merriam noted that Vaillant's finding was underpinned by Freud's definition of maturity as the "capacity to work and love", and suggested that it may provide the key to understanding the role of mentoring in adult development.

Noe (1988) studied the determinants of successful, assigned, one-to-one mentoring relationships in a group of educators who were part of a comprehensive development programme and who were aspiring to management positions. Based on previous qualitative and descriptive analyses of mentoring relationships, including Kram's categories of functions and roles of mentoring, Noe developed a tool for measuring the functions provided by the mentors in the study. Questionnaires were administered before and after the first six months of the mentoring programme to test six hypotheses about the characteristics of individuals and their bearing on the success of mentoring relationships. These were then tested by means of regression analysis. Only one of the hypotheses was found to be partially statistically significant (p. 470):

> Effective utilisation of the mentor was significantly related to protege's attainment of psychosocial functions (r = .22), but not career functions. Proteges' level of job involvement, locus of control, relationship importance, and career planning were not related to effective utilization of the mentor or amount of time spent with the mentor... relationships that were heterogeneous in terms of gender were rated as more effectively

utilizing the mentor (r = -.16) than proteges involved in mentoring relationships with mentors of the same gender.

Noe concluded that "proteges reported receiving beneficial psychosocial outcomes but limited career functions from the assigned mentor" (p 473). This point was also made in a project evaluation of a mentoring programme for junior academic women. Butorac and Rowland (1996: 6) reinforced the primacy of the psychosocial dimension, stating: "For this particular group of mentees and mentors at least, the psychosocial aspects of mentoring underpin the career development even where there is a clear focus on the latter."

Noe posited that it may well be the characteristics of the programme itself, rather than the fact that the relationships were assigned, which were critical to the achievement of successful outcomes. He suggested that in addition to the characteristics previously identified by Phillips-Jones (Noe, 1988: 474) i.e. having a clearly defined purpose and goals, selection of mentors who have interpersonal skills and an interest in developing employees, and training of mentors, that the programme organisers also should ensure that mentors were accessible to mentorees, and that a requirement of weekly meetings should be considered.

In discussing the results of his study, Noe outlined at least seven topics falling into three main categories which needed more rigorous study using quasi-experimental designs (p. 474-6), summarised as follows:
- studies comparing informal and formal assigned mentoring programmes to determine whether the benefits to individual participants in the two different arrangements were similar;
- evaluative studies were needed to demonstrate organisational effectiveness of formal programmes; this type of evaluative research would also be useful to identify characteristics of formal assigned mentoring programmes that were critical to the programme's effectiveness i.e. the achievement of the organisation's purpose and objectives for the programme;

- individual-level variables needed further study, including proteges' attitudes and behaviours such as self-efficacy, attitudes about "relationship importance", jobs and career attitudes, and their effect on the success of mentoring relationships; the effect of mentor characteristics, such as career stage, on the types of functions provided to proteges, and the benefits that mentors obtained from participating in mentoring relationships also need further study.

Finally, Noe noted (p. 477) that one of the limitations of the study was its short-term nature. He stated that longitudinal study of formal mentor programmes was necessary to determine if mentors and proteges continued to interact after the novelty of the relationship was reduced and if proteges could receive career functions from participating in mentoring relationships of shorter duration. He reiterated Kram's suggestion that:

> the first year of a mentoring relationship is characterized by a task focus. Because these behaviors (e.g. coaching, role modeling) facilitate task completion, it may not be surprising to find that proteges reported that mentors provided more psychosocial functions. After two to five years, Kram suggests, proteges obtain the maximum benefit from the relationship.

One of the most recent pieces of empirical research was conducted by Chao (1997). Based on the four phases of mentoring developed by Kram (1983; and Kram & Isabella, 1985) i.e. Initiation, Cultivation, Separation, and Redefinition, Chao's study compared the long-term effects (over a five year period) of the phases of mentoring functions in three groups of engineers - current and former proteges, and a "never mentored" group.

Chao (1997: 18-19) formulated three hypotheses:
1. that there would be differences in the perceived levels of career and psychosocial mentoring functions in the different phases of the relationship;
2. that there would be significant differences in outcomes within the three

groups depending on the phase of the mentoring relationship to which they
had progressed; and

3. that there would also be differences in the outcomes for the groups who had
had a mentor, compared to those who had never been mentored.

The nine outcome measures were based on career outcomes (planning and
involvement scales), a job satisfaction questionnaire, organisational socialisation
scales, and income (salary ranges). Regarding the perceived levels of the mentoring
functions and the phases of the relationships, the main findings of the research were
(p. 24):

> Proteges in the Initiation phase reported the lowest levels of
> psychosocial and career-related support compared with proteges in all
> other phases.

> Results did not support the hypothesis that the mentoring functions
> would be maximised in the Cultivation phase.

Regarding the outcomes and the length of the relationships:

> Over a 5-year period, results supported differences between mentored
> and nonmentored individuals, regardless of whether the proteges were
> in current or former mentorships. Although all groups continued to
> learn and be better socialized in their organisations, the advantages of
> the mentored groups did not dissipate greatly over time. Significant
> differences were still observed on four of the nine outcome measures
> in the last year of study...these results suggest that the effects of
> mentoring on outcomes like income and organizational socialization
> endure over a long term.

It should be noted, however, that the outcome measures chosen related almost entirely
to career development, not psychosocial development.

Challis et al. (1997) conducted a mid-point evaluation of a one year pilot continuing education programme for general practitioners. Although the study's sample was small, and the evaluation was conducted half way through the programme, the interim results were instructive for the development of continuing education programmes with a group mentoring component.

Thirty four subjects were divided into two cohorts, each group following either a "portfolio-based" learning route (which included a co-mentoring group led by a facilitator/mentor) or a traditional postgraduate education allowance-based learning programme. After six months the groups were crossed over. The mid-point evaluation process consisted of participant observation (to review the group process) and a questionnaire to participants in the co-mentoring groups (mentors and mentorees). These were analysed using a grounded theory approach and major themes were identified.

By comparing the two groups, the authors concluded (p. 25) that general practitioners were familiar with a traditional model of professional development in which they responded to training initiated by others, and that they were not used to initiating and collaborating in training so that their own learning needs would be met. However, following participation in the group process they were able to review this established pattern and were comfortable with identifying personal and professional needs and gaps in their own knowledge.

Shoolbred et al. (1997) described a research project which investigated mentoring as a staff support and staff development tool in the Library and Information (LIS) field. The research was exploratory in design and focused on practical outcomes. The authors noted (p. 193) that many organisations had incorporated mentoring into a range of staff support strategies (although not always specifically using that term), but until the current project, there had been no research into mentoring in the LIS profession. The aims of the research were to find out what kinds of mentoring

currently existed in the field in the United Kingdom, and to establish guidelines for mentoring initiatives. The main methods of data collection were: literature searching, focus and advisory groups, a questionnaire survey (a selective sample), and an interview survey. They found that very little mentoring currently existed in the LIS field, and that there was a high level of demand in the profession for mentoring support. However, no attempt was made to obtain a random sample, so the results could not be generalised to a larger population. The study focused on individual mentoring, and no mention was made of peer or group mentoring.

2.4 Stress, Transition and Psychosocial Health

Holmes and Rahe (1967) developed a Social Readjustment Rating Scale which could be used to quantify life events in order of stressfulness. Their research was based on previous studies which had pointed to the fact that time of disease onset had often been significantly associated with a cluster of life events requiring change, and that this provided etiologic significance as a necessary but not significant cause of illness. Their definition of "stressful" included events that were both desirable (i.e. positive stress) and undesirable, the main criterion being that change or readjustment, usually associated with some kind of adaptive or coping behaviour, was necessary.

The Scale they devised comprised forty-three items, beginning with the death of a spouse and ranging through other events that would affect most people in a lifetime. Beginning or ending school was ranked number twenty-seven on the forty-three point scale, and other events which may be associated with a transition from student to professional (such as change in work conditions or responsibilities) were mentioned in at least seven of the categories. These transitional events could be classified as sources of both acute and chronic stress, deriving from both life changing circumstances and minor, daily problems.

In reviewing the epidemiological research on the effects of stress on health, Marmot

and Madge (1987: 3) reiterated the view that psychosocial stress, whether in the workplace, in personal relationships, or following from life events, predisposed an individual towards disease. With regard to the question of whether psychosocial factors could directly or indirectly (i.e. in the presence of some additional stressor) affect the risk of morbidity and mortality, the authors used the example of social networks, stating (p. 11):

> To take the case of social networks, do these in and of themselves affect health ("main effects"), or is their influence only that, if present, they protect against the impact of other psychosocial stressors. There has been much support for the latter view... as well as some empirical demonstration that unemployment, stress at work, bereavement and so on have a lesser impact on health when social support is available... Nonetheless some well conducted studies have indicated main effects by showing that social networks have a fairly constant impact at all levels of risk and that the risk of mortality decreases consistently with the degree of social support.

Pearlin and Turner (1987) discussed the effects of stress on health, and differentiated between coping behaviour and social support: "Coping can be thought of as the things that people do on their own behalf in confronting stress while social supports are the things that others do for them" (p. 156). According to these authors, all coping behaviour could be considered to involve efforts either to change and alleviate a difficult situation; to alter and reduce the perceived threats of the situation; or to manage the symptoms of stress arising out of the situations.

McEwen (1998) reviewed the literature to date on the long-term effect of the physiological response to stress (known as "allostatic load") and its role in the pathogenesis of disease. He provided a useful model of this process (p. 171-72) and this may be summarised in the following statements:
- Acute stress (i.e. inducing "fight or flight", or major life events) and chronic stress (i.e. the cumulative effect of minor, daily hassles) can both have long-term

consequences.

- An individual's sensitivity to stress is only partly explained by genetic factors.
- The stress response is determined largely by two factors: the way the situation is perceived, and the individual's general state of health (this includes genetic factors as well as behavioural and lifestyle choices).
- Perception of a situation as threatening leads to a behavioural response and a physiological response.
- The way a situation is perceived also determines whether the individual can adjust or habituate to repeated stress, and physical condition as well as genetics also influence this ability to cope.

McEwen used the term "allostasis" to describe the body's ability to achieve stability through change, noting that it was critical to survival (p. 171).

> Through allostasis, the autonomic nervous system, the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, and the cardiovascular, metabolic, and immune systems protect the body by responding to internal and external stress. The price of this accommodation to stress can be allostatic load, which is the wear and tear that results from chronic overactivity or underactivity of allostatic systems.

Thus allostatic responses generally involve the sympathetic nervous system and the HPA axis. Illness and disease may result when there is an overexposure to stress hormones, due to failure to activate or shut off the allostatic response.

McEwen (p. 172-175) described four situations which were associated with allostatic load: frequent stress, deficient adaptation to repeated stressors of the same type, inability to shut off allostatic responses after the stress is terminated, and when inadequate responses by some allostatic systems trigger compensatory increases in others. A number of examples of allostatic load related to the cardiovascular system, the brain and the immune system were provided.

With regard to therapeutic measures, McEwan suggested that health professionals could help their patients to reduce allostatic loads by helping them to learn coping skills, recognise their own limitations, and relax (p. 177). He also stated:

> Interventions that increase social support and enhance coping prolong the life spans of patients with breast cancer, lymphomas, and malignant melanoma... Interventions designed to increase a worker's control over his or her job...have also improved health and attitudes toward work.

Thus, according to McEwan's review of the scientific literature on the physiological response to stress and its role in illness and disease, there is evidence to suggest that interventions which help individuals to adjust or habituate to stress can have beneficial effects on health. The literature review has also suggested that individuals use coping behaviours as a response to stress and that social networks have the potential to affect health directly, as well as providing a protective effect against psychosocial stressors.

2.5 Mentoring and Stress

A number of studies have sought to evaluate the effects of mentoring programmes on stress in different groups of subjects, ranging from children, adolescents, students and graduates (Bowman, Bowman & DeLucia, 1990; Twomey, 1991; Olson, Gresley & Heater, 1984; Reiman et al., 1995), women (Burke & McKeen, 1990) and minority groups, to professionals in higher management positions. This review has concentrated on those programmes which have been implemented for students and new graduates.

The role of mentoring as it related to the themes of adult development and learning, and particularly its supportive function in coping with stress, was highlighted by

Merriam (1983). These themes were reiterated by Bowman et al (1990), who described a student mentoring programme which was established to alleviate the stress associated with the transition into graduate study. Although not an experimental design, the results of the evaluation indicated that social support was a mediating variable in the stress experienced by students.

The most common difficulties experienced by graduate students were changes in financial situation, changes in support networks, fear of failure, lack of knowledge about the study programme, and family readjustment. The authors noted that other researchers had found that more than half of this graduate group scored in the crisis category in the Social Readjustment Rating Scale (developed by Holmes and Rahe, 1967); and that it has been suggested that support networks, particularly those formed amongst peers, were critical to the emotional and academic development of graduate students.

Harris (1991) reported beneficial results of an individual mentoring programme for beginning teachers. The programme was designed to overcome the personal and professional stresses that new graduates faced because of lack of experience, support, and guidance in their first year of teaching. Many induction programmes had been found to be insufficient to the new teachers' needs for professional assistance, providing little more than an orientation to the building and structure of the system. In a school where there was some form of assistance offered, such as fellow teachers acting as mentors or principals as supervisors, there had often been a reluctance to be associated with a problem (on the part of a teacher) or a fear of being exposed as having a weakness (on the part of the beginning teacher). The concept of "Master Teachers" as mentors from outside the beginner teacher's school was implemented through the Teacher Partnership programme. The Master Teachers were identified and trained to be mentors to assist in the transition to the professional role of a teacher.

Only a preliminary assessment of the programme was reported and this consisted of an evaluation from the administrators' point of view, who noted that the master teachers

were "a precious resource for the region". Assessments of the perceptions of the master teachers and novices were planned.

In an evaluation of a peer mentoring programme among university students, Twomey (1991) used a stress prevention model of social support. According to proponents of this model (p. 4):

> when specific social support is an antecedent to stress, (that) support can actually prevent the occurrence of stress and can influence the cognitive perception regarding the degree of threat from a stressor.

In this peer mentoring programme, social support was provided to new students by peer mentors at the beginning of their studies. Students were randomly allocated to one of three groups. Two experimental groups were based on social support models, one using a peer group and single mentor method, and the second using a one-to-one method of mentoring; the third control group had no support. Pre- and post-test questionnaires were administered to each of the groups.

Outcome measures for the three groups were compared and analysed by repeated measures anova. Effects on grades, retention, identification with the role of student, and psychological well-being were assessed. Results included (p. 2):

> (1) the mentored students had higher grade point averages (GPAs) than the students who had no mentors, regardless of whether the mentoring took place in group or one-on-one settings; (2) students who had been mentored in groups returned the following semester at a higher rate than students with individual mentors or students in the control group; (3) there was virtually no change in commitment to the student role in any of the groups.

The psychological well-being outcomes examined were change in positive affect,

change in negative affect, and change in quality of life. For participants in the programme, no significant effect was found for change in negative effect or change in quality of life, and only a marginal effect (alpha levels between 0.051 and 0.10) in change in positive affect. Participation as a peer mentor, however, did result in increased quality of life with increased effort put into the programme.

Reiman et al. (1995) described a programme for sixty-seven first-year teachers, who were divided into regional support groups, led by mentor-counsellors and mentor-teachers. Based on the earlier work of Fuller, who had "demonstrated how support groups for student teachers that are led by professionals with counseling and guidance skills reduce student teacher stress... and can encourage teachers to be less egocentric and more able to focus on the initial teaching tasks" (p. 109), the goal of the programme was to provide psychological support and technical assistance.

As there was no comparison group in this research, the study outcomes could only be treated as an evaluation of this particular programme. Qualitative analysis of the participants' written reflections indicated that their concerns shifted from being focused on personal issues, to management (task) issues, to concerns about consequences for their students. In combination with an analysis of the coleaders' observations of the groups, this was interpreted as evidence of a positive trend, indicating "a sense of reduced stress, a reduced sense of isolation, and increasing concerns about lesson planning and student learning" (p. 114).

This literature review has suggested that transitional events in people's lives are sources of both acute and chronic stress, and that mentoring, by acting as a social support mechanism, and by facilitating the teaching and learning of coping skills, has the potential to act as a mediating variable leading to behavioural and physiological adjustment. Thus mentoring would appear to be a useful intervention to reduce allostatic load, prevent disease and improve people's health in times of stress.

2.6 Professionalism, Professional Socialisation And Mentoring

Cruess and Cruess (1997) examined the notion of professionalism in modern medicine in the context of the public's changing expectations of professionals. They noted the importance of leadership and role modelling both in influencing the future behaviour of younger members of the profession, as well as in maintaining the profession's autonomy or ability to self-regulate, both characteristic of an independent profession in modern society. They suggested, however, that this indirect style of teaching was not enough to ensure that doctors lived up to public expectations of professionals, a status which was not an inherent right but was bestowed on a particular group by society. They contended that there was a need to teach professionalism at all levels of medical education; that in order to meet their professional obligations, doctors needed to understand their origins (as healers) and their nature (as medical professionals). With regard to this educational challenge, they stated (p. 1675-6):

> When the medical profession was smaller, more homogeneous, and had more truly shared values - and when the issues were simpler - professional values could be imparted during the process of "socialisation" of doctors in training. The profession is now diverse...the transmission of common values...requires explicit teaching of the role of both the healer and of the professional.

Yoder's research (1996) in the nursing profession supported the point of view that teaching professionalism cannot be left to more informal methods of career development or the process of professional socialisation, as none of the career development relationships (CDRs) examined was found to have an effect on professionalism. Yoder studied the effects of a continuum of CDRs ranging from precepting, peer-strategising, coaching, sponsoring through to mentoring, on three outcome measures (professionalism, job satisfaction and intent to stay). Two groups of Army staff nurses were compared: those who had not experienced a CDR and those who had experienced a CDR. (These CDRs were not part of formal professional

development programmes, but most often had occurred by chance.)

Professionalism was operationalised in Yoder's study using Hall's Professionalism Scale, which measured attitudes in five dimensions: use of the professional organisation as a major referent; belief in public service; belief in self-regulation; sense of calling to the field; and autonomy. In discussing the results of the study, Yoder (p. 295) noted:

> Professionalism does not appear to be related to having a CDR. Possibly, high levels of professionalism may actually represent a variable related to obtaining a CDR, instead of an outcome resulting from such a relationship.

The primary focus of Yoder's research was on career development and the concept of professional socialisation was limited to the organisational context. She stated that (p. 290):

> The professional socialization process for nurses requires that they learn to adapt to the expectations of practice and to the organizational environment of their practice. Often nurses must learn to reconcile the idealistic expectations they held in nursing school with the realities of contemporary practice.

By limiting the conceptualisation of the professional socialisation process to the organisation and workplace, this study may be somewhat narrower in scope than others in which professional socialisation is conceptualised as comprising more than career and job-oriented domains; where there is a sense of obligation to the public and to society at large, and where the professional association has a role to play in upholding the central tenets of the profession.

In Yoder's study, the mentoring process which occurred was not part of a formal

mentoring programme. With regard to the concept of mentoring, Yoder noted that there has been some confusion and "muddling" of terms (p. 290). In this study, she has attempted to differentiate mentoring from other career development relationships by interpreting the results of the Alleman Mentoring Scale Questionnaire, the main measuring instrument used to measure career development relationships activities, so that scores could be recoded as belonging to one of the five categories of career development relationships. It should be noted that all these relationships had occurred by chance, so the mentoring which was studied was not part of a formally structured mentoring programme.

Two studies found positive effects on professional socialisation. Fidler (1995) also used Hall's Professionalism Scale as her main measuring instrument in her research on masters students in librarianship. This study examined the effect of the informal curriculum (which was considered to be part of the formal education process but occurred outside the classroom) on identification with the profession of librarianship. Professional identity was viewed by Fidler as an outcome of professional socialisation. By analysing the influence of interactions with faculty, peers and practitioners, Fidler found that peer activity was the only variable which was statistically significant as a predictor of professional identity.

Attesting to the role of mentoring in the professional socialisation of new teachers, Boyle and Boice noted that "by the end of each project year, participants showed strong agreement about the essence of mentoring: support and guidance in socializing new faculty" (1998: 169).

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.1 Research Design

The study utilised a prospective, quasi-experimental research design. The experimental group was self-selected. The remainder of the population was available for inclusion in the two comparison groups. No randomisation occurred. The data were collected by means of pre- and post-test questionnaires (see A, B, and C). These were conducted on one experimental group (the Group Mentoring Programme participants) and two comparison groups, a group who did not have a current mentor, and a group who had an individual mentor during the year of the study. Figure 1: Population and sample shows the number of subjects in each group and the number of subjects who responded in the pre- and post-tests.

3.2 Subjects

The total study population comprised all 1996 graduates attaining their first qualification in librarianship from either of the two Western Australian universities offering degree or post-graduate diploma courses in librarianship. It was estimated at the end of the 1996 academic year that there would be approximately ninety students who would be eligible to graduate.

The pre-test questionnaire was administered to all prospective graduates in November 1996, either as part of the enrolment process for the Group Mentoring Programme (31 subjects), or by mail. Questionnaires containing "reply paid" envelopes were mailed to 58 graduates who had not already registered to be participants in the Programme. Of these, 46 questionnaires were returned and deemed usable for the purposes of the study (sample n=77).

Figure 1: Population and sample
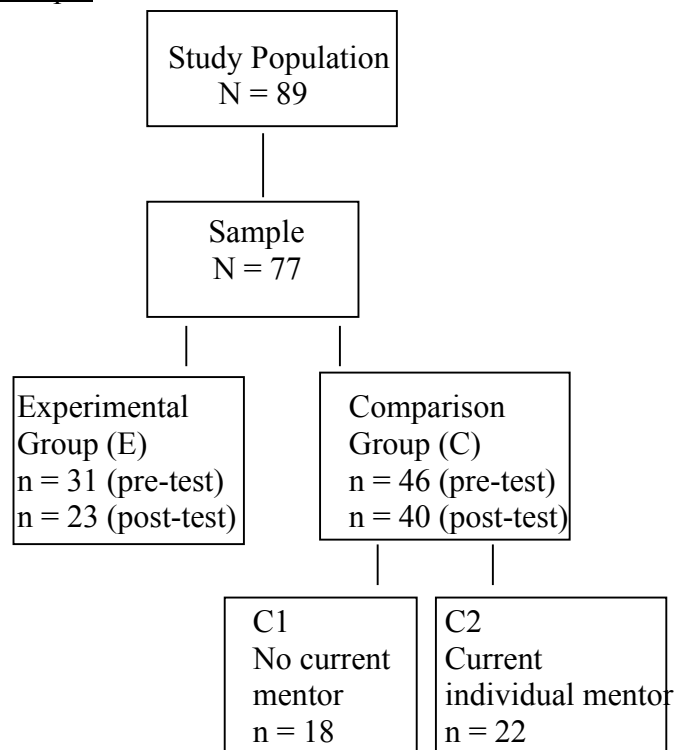
Thus the Group Mentoring participants comprised the experimental group (31 self-selected subjects). The comparison group (46 subjects), was drawn from the remainder of the total population, all of whom were expected to graduate and therefore received the pre-test questionnaire. This represented an initial response rate for the study population of 86.5% (i.e. 77/89).

Only those subjects who responded to both the pre-test and post-test questionnaires were included in the research (n=63). There were eight subjects from the experimental group who dropped out from the programme, for reasons generally related to relocations or clashing commitments (this was most often because of time constraints, family commitments and employment factors). For some subjects, getting their first job was given as a reason for no longer feeling that they needed to be part of the Programme. This left a total of 23 (74.2%) in the experimental group (E) at post-test. All subjects who completed the year as participants in the Group Mentoring

Programme responded to the post-test questionnaire.

Because mentoring activities were hypothesised as being the intervention which affected the outcome variables, the experience of having a mentor in the comparison group was considered to be a confounding variable. In order to control for this, the comparison group was split into two according to this variable (C1: a group of 18 subjects who did not have a current mentor, and C2: a group of 22 subjects who had a current, individual mentor). As an evaluation of the outcomes of individual mentoring relationships was not one of the objectives of this research, only limited information about the informal mentoring which occurred in this comparison group was collected.

The response rate for the comparison groups was 79.3% at pre-test (46/58). The main reasons for this decline were: some respondents were ineligible to graduate, no return address supplied, and non-response. Forty of the 46 returned the post-test questionnaire, giving a response rate of 87%. The drop-out at post-test for the comparison groups can be explained by loss of contact because subjects relocated in the year following completion of their university studies. It can be surmised that this was because of gaining a position in another location or because of other family circumstances (similar to the reasons for the drop-outs in the experimental group).

3.2.1 Demographic Description of the Subjects

There were only four males involved in the study (two in each of the comparison groups). All the participants in the experimental group were female.

Age group information was collected in four categories. Table 1 shows the number and percentages of subjects in each age group for each treatment group.

Table 1: Age Groups by Treatment Group at Pre-test

| | Treatment Groups | | | |
	C1	C2	E	Total
25 years and under		3 13.6%	7 30.4%	10 15.9%
26-35 years		3 13.6%	3 13.0%	6 9.5%
36-45 years	13 72.2%	14 63.6%	10 43.5%	37 58.7%
46 years and over	5 27.8%	2 9.1%	3 13.0%	10 15.9%
Total	18 100.0%	22 100.0%	23 100.0%	63 100.0%

In the experimental group, 30.4% were in the youngest category (25 years and under), and 43.5% fell into the 36-45 year category. There were no subjects in the two youngest age categories in the C1 group and only 13.6% of subjects in the C2 group in each of the two youngest categories. For all groups, the largest single category was the 36-45 years age range (58.7% of all respondents).

Section 4.1 Background of Respondents contains Tables 4-6, which show the frequencies for the background variables where there was a significant difference between the groups at the pre-test stage i.e those variables describing age (recoded into three categories), qualification and professional association student membership.

Just over half of those in the experimental group held a Bachelor of Applied Science (56.5%, n=13), whereas the majority in both the comparison groups held a Teacher Librarianship qualification (see Table 5: Qualifications by Treatment Group).

In the experimental group, 61% of participants had joined their professional association as student members prior to November 1996, while less than a quarter of the comparison groups' subjects were student members (see Table 6: Professional Association Student Membership by Treatment Group). ALIA membership was an

eligibility requirement for the Group Mentoring Programme participants. During the year of the study, membership rates also increased in the comparison groups (C1: 22% at pre-test to 28% at post-test; C2: 18% at pre-test to 41% at post-test). In a follow-up to the post-test (conducted in May 1998), the ALIA membership in the experimental group was still higher than the pre-test level (87%). The comparison groups' membership had dropped when compared to the initial post-test measures (C1: down to 17%; C2: down to 23%).

Table 2 shows the number and percentages of the subjects in each treatment group who had previous experience of having a mentor.

Table 2: Mentor before November 1996 by Treatment Group

		Treatment Groups			
		C1	C2	E	Total
	Mentor before 1996	6	14	13	33
		33.3%	63.6%	56.5%	52.4%
	No mentor before Nov	12	8	10	30
		66.7%	36.4%	43.5%	47.6%
	Total	18	22	23	63
		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Approximately half of the subjects in the experimental group had had a mentor in their working life. For the comparison groups, a third (six subjects) of the C1 group, and almost two-thirds of the C2 group had previous experience of being mentored.

3.3 Survey Instruments

The data for all the variables in this study i.e. demographic information, professionalism, career and psychosocial development, anticipated and experienced sources of stress, and experiences of mentoring functions, were collected by means of the pre- and post-test questionnaires. These questionnaires included the various scales. (See Appendixes A, B and C.)

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The survey instruments were selected to measure the three main outcome variables. According to Kram and Isabella's model of mentoring (1985: 111), the two dimensions generally ascribed to mentoring are career development and psychosocial development and the main outcomes of the mentoring process are that the mentorees "establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement" (career development sphere) and "develop a sense of professional identity and competence" (psychosocial sphere). The main aim of the Group Mentoring Programme was "to facilitate the transition of new graduates into the profession". Therefore the main outcome variables to be measured were professionalism, career and psychosocial development.

3.3.1 Professionalism Scale

Based on this conceptual model of mentoring, the main outcome (dependent) variable for this research was the index of professional identity, measured by Snizek's revised 25-item version of Hall's Professionalism Scale, (Snizek, 1972), which is a validated measuring instrument.

Reliability of a measuring instrument relates to the correlation between items within a test if the items are standardised. If not standardised, reliability is based on the average covariance among the items. Reliability had already been established for Hall's Professionalism Scale and Snizek reported .78 reliability for his revised 25-item version (Snizek, 1972: 112). Comparing all domains against each other, Snizek reported inter-dimensional product-moment correlations ranging from .072 to .219. Fidler used Snizek's 25-item version in her research of masters students in librarianship, and recorded a Cronbach's alpha of .80 (Fidler, 1995: 131).

Table 3 shows the pre- and post-test reliability coefficients obtained in this research for Snizek's revised 25-item version of Hall's Professionalism Scale, including the

coefficients for the five domains of professionalism and the inter-dimensional coefficients.

Table 3: Reliability Coefficients: Professionalism Scale

Domains	Pre-test	Post-test
Professional organisation as a major referent	.49	.66
Belief in public service	.66	.70
Belief in self-regulation	.69	.59
Sense of calling	.69	.60
Autonomy	.52	.57
Inter-dimensional	.12	.39
25 scale items	.58	.69

In this study of new graduates, the overall reliability coefficient alpha was .58 on the pre-test and .69 on the post-test. As with Snizek's data, the low inter-dimensional coefficients (.12 and .39) suggest that the items in these domains were measuring separate aspects of professionalism.

To retain the content validity of Hall's scale (i.e. to ensure that it was in fact measuring what it was intended to measure), minor variations in wording were made as suggested by Fidler to adapt the instrument and make it suitable for new library studies graduates. (Fidler, 1995: 57). (See Appendix A.)

3.3.2 Career and Psychosocial Indexes, Stress and Mentoring Experience

In addition to basic demographic information, information about career and psychosocial development was collected by means of the pre-test and post-test questionnaires. (See Appendix B.) Questions about sources of stress anticipated and experienced in the year of transition to work, and questions about the subjects' experiences of mentoring were also asked in the pre- and post-test questionnaires. These instruments had been pilot-tested in the 1995-96 Group Mentoring Programme.

Reliability coefficients for the Career Index were .44 for the pre-test, and .64 for the post-test. For the Psychosocial Index, reliability coefficients were .60 for the pre-test and .66 for the post-test.

3.3.3 Mentoring Functions Scale

To confirm that mentoring activities had actually occurred within the experimental group, Noe's Mentoring Activities questionnaire (Noe, 1988: 468-469), a validated measuring instrument, was administered at the conclusion of the programme to the experimental group only. This is a Likert scale questionnaire, developed by Noe as part of his research in individual mentoring, and based on Kram and Isabella's conceptual model of mentoring. It comprises twenty-nine questions about the five career roles and four psychosocial roles of mentoring. Subjects were asked to rank their experience of the mentoring role according to a scale from one to five. (Possible responses ranged from one, which indicated "no experience of this mentoring function", to five which indicated "experience of this function to a very large extent".)

To enhance the content validity of the measuring instrument, instructions to the respondents were added, defining the mentoring role to include both individual and peer mentoring activities which were likely to occur in a group mentoring context. Minor adaptations to the wording of the questions were made to make it applicable to new librarianship graduates in a professional group mentoring context. (See Appendix C.)

With regard to the reliability of the scale, Noe calculated internal consistency reliability estimates using twenty-one of the scale items. An alpha of .89 was recorded for the career-related functions scale (seven items) and .92 for the psychosocial functions scale (fourteen items, including coaching which was found to share more common variance with psychosocial rather than career-related functions).

The intercorrelation between the scales assessing career and psychosocial functions was .49. (Noe, 1988: 469-470). Chao (1997: 20) used the same twenty-one items for the career and psychosocial subscales, recording coefficient alpha reliabilities of .79 and .85 respectively.

In contrast to Noe, in this study all twenty-nine items on the scale were retained in the reliability calculation, and the reliability coefficient obtained was .93; .92 for the fourteen career-related items (including coaching), and .82 for the fifteen psychosocial items.

3.3.4 Operationalisation of Variables

3.3.4.1 Professional Identity

Possible responses to the twenty-five items in Hall's Professionalism Scale were: "very well", "well", "neutral", "poorly" and "very poorly". These were coded to score five for a response which indicated the highest level of professionalism, to one for a response which indicated the lowest level of professionalism. A maximum score of 125 was possible for all items, with a maximum of twenty-five possible for each domain.

Scores for the five items in the five domains of Hall's Professionalism Scale were summed and a score for each domain, as well as a total score, were calculated. Post-test scores were subtracted from pre-test scores for each domain and the total index score, to create differences scores for each domain and the Professional Identity Index (Difference).

3.3.4.2 Indicator Variables

Sub-objectives (corresponding to the contributory risk factors, i.e. predisposing, enabling and reinforcing factors) were devised to indicate the achievement of the main

aim of the Group Mentoring Programme, professional socialisation, and the main outcome variable i.e. the development of a professional identity. These were derived from the conceptual model of mentoring, as outlined in the definition of mentoring devised by Kram and Isabella. Thus the indicator variables related to the two broad functions or dimensions of mentoring, career and psychosocial development, which, by definition, are intended to help the mentorees, amongst other things, to "develop a sense of professional identity".

These indicator variables were operationalised by measuring a number of items which were summed to give an index in the two domains of career and psychosocial development.

1. Career development sub-objectives comprised six items: having a CV prepared, membership of the professional association, membership of one of the professional association's committees, having a set of professional objectives to achieve, number of professional association meetings attended and number of continuing professional development events or activities attended. (See Appendix B, Pre-test questions: 4-8,14; Post-test questions: 1-5,11.)

Scores were calculated by summing the items. The first four items were coded as 0 for a negative answer, and 1 for a positive answer. Individual scores for meeting and professional development attendances were calculated as a proportion of the range, with a maximum possible of 1.0. For the experimental group, the number of group mentoring meetings attended was included in the subject's professional development attendances score. All items were summed to give a maximum score of 6.0. A Career Index (pre-test) and Career Index (post-test) were calculated for each subject. The Career Index (Difference) was created by subtracting the pre-test scores from the post-test scores.

2. Psychosocial development sub-objectives comprised five items: perception of self as belonging to the profession, perceived level of activity in professional networks,

level of involvement in peer support networks, awareness of professional issues, and perception of self as having the ability to apply professional knowledge and skills in the workplace. (See Appendix B, Pre-test questions: 9-13; Post-test questions: 6-10.)

Subjects were asked to rank themselves on these items as either low, medium or high. This self-assessment measure was quantified by summing the subjects' answers for each item (the scale ranged from 1 = low, 2 = medium, to 3 = high) to give a maximum score of 15 for the Psychosocial Indexes (pre- and post-test). The Psychosocial Index (Difference) was then calculated for each subject by subtracting their pre-test scores from their post-test scores.

3.3.4.3 Mentoring Functions (Experimental Group and the C2 Group)

Noe's Mentoring Activities questionnaire was administered to the experimental group to confirm that mentoring had actually occurred in the group. The questionnaire was designed to provide a quantitative measure of the types and the strength of mentoring functions and roles which had occurred.

As noted in Section 3.2 Subjects, an evaluation of the outcomes of individual mentoring relationships was not one of the objectives of this research. For the comparison group who currently had individual mentors (C2) it was not known whether the individual relationships were part of formal mentoring programmes. Nor was the stage of development of these relationships known. It was therefore necessary to collect some validating information as an indicator of the extent of the mentoring relationship and the likelihood that the relationship would be beneficial to the mentoree. On the basis of Kram's suggestion (referred to by Noe, 1988: 459), that "the greater the number of functions provided by the mentor, the more beneficial the relationship will be to the protege", those in the comparison group (C2) who currently had individual mentors were asked what roles their mentor had played (Appendix B, Post-test question: 15). A Mentoring Functions Index for this comparison group was calculated by summing the number of roles that the mentor had played.

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3.3.4.4 Stress Measures

Open-ended questions were asked in the pre- and post-tests in order to determine what sources of stress were anticipated and experienced for the transitional period by all groups in the study. (See Appendix B, Pre-test question 16; Post-test: question 13.) The responses were analysed and categorised, and content validity was ensured by having the categorisation of the responses checked by two experts in the area.

In addition to this method of validation, the categories were also compared with the Group Mentoring participants' learning objectives. Because the Group Mentoring Programme had been run for three years (i.e in the year prior to and in the year immediately following the Programme under study), information regarding the participants' learning objectives was available from all three years' groups for the purposes of the current evaluation. These learning objectives had been formulated as part of the initial needs analysis, when participants in the Programme had been asked to consider their individual, professional objectives for the year. These were then prioritised by the whole group to create a set of learning objectives which could be addressed as part of the Group Programme.

Similar concerns were expressed by Programme participants over the three years, both in the learning objectives and by participants in the current study in the subjects' responses to the question about possible sources of stress. This gave further confirmation of the validity of the categories devised in the analysis of the issues which were identified by the new graduates as possible sources of stress. It also suggested that the issues were being identified by the Group Mentoring participants as areas for action (learning objectives) which could provide a method of coping or a strategy to help alleviate sources of stress.

3.4 Procedure

The pre-test was administered to all subjects in November 1996, and the post-test was administered in December 1997. All results for the post-test were received by February 1998. In May 1998 a longer term measure of professional association membership retention was also obtained.

At the conclusion of the Programme, the Mentoring Functions questionnaire was administered to the experimental group at the same time as the post-test questionnaire. For most of the respondents this occurred at the last Group Mentoring meeting. However, for those participants who did not attend this meeting the questionnaire was mailed by post or email at the same time as the comparison groups' post-test questionnaire mailing occurred.

3.5 Data Analyses

Descriptive statistics (frequencies) were calculated to present the demographic information. Chi-square tests and one-way anovas were used to ascertain whether there were any significant differences between the groups at the pre-test stage on the Professional Identity Index (and the five domains of professionalism), the Career Index and the Psychosocial Index. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, range, minimum and maximum) were calculated for the Indexes (i.e. Professional Identity, Career and Psychosocial Indexes) and Mentoring Functions Scale (see Appendix D: Indexes: Comparison of Means by Treatment Groups).

Multiple response sets were used for the stress data analysis where it was possible for respondents to give more than one response to the question. This allowed the calculation of percentages (responses and cases). Cross-tabulations were performed to compare the data from all three groups. Further statistical analysis of this data was not possible.

Reliability tests were performed to test for internal consistency of the scale items (i.e. Hall's Professionalism Scale, Noe's Mentoring Functions Scale, Career and Psychosocial Indexes). The reliability coefficient calculated for all scales was Cronbach's alpha.

Multiple regression analyses were used to identify significant predictor variables and to test whether there were significant differences between the experimental group and the two comparison groups on the outcome variables (differences between the subjects pre- and post-test scores in the Professional Identity, Career and Psychosocial Indexes, as well as the five domains of professionalism). Regression analysis was used and this controlled for any differences on the outcome variables which existed between the groups at the pre-test stage as well as any possible differences due to other factors. These analyses are equivalent to repeated measures anova. For ease of analysis and for comparability of results, stepwise regression procedures were used in preference to anova procedures. All the necessary tests with regard to assumptions for regression analyses were carried out.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Background of Respondents

Standard demographic information for all respondents was collected in the pre-test questionnaire. This comprised information on age, gender, qualification, student membership of the professional association, and previous experience of having a mentor. (The respondents' background information has been described in section 3.2.1 Demographic Description of the Subjects.)

Chi-square tests were performed to test for differences between the groups at pre-test. Previous experience of having a mentor did not show a significant difference (see Table 2: Mentor before November 1996 by Treatment Group). Because there were insufficient numbers of males in the study, a formal test for differences between the groups was not possible for this variable. Variables which showed a significant difference were age, qualification and student membership of the professional association. Tables 4-6 show frequencies (numbers and column percentages of respondents within each group) for the three variables which showed a significant difference.

The age group information was originally collected in four categories (see Table 1: Age Groups by Treatment Group). However, as there were insufficient numbers in each cell to meet the assumptions of the chi-square test, this was recoded into three categories. The recoded categories corresponded to Kram and Isabella's stages in career development i.e. early (35 years and less), middle (36 to 45 years) and later career stages (46 years and over) (Kram & Isabella, 1985: 113). This further justified recoding into these age categories. The chi-square test showed a significant result indicating that there was a difference in ages between the three groups (p=.022). As

shown in Table 4, the experimental group was slightly younger than the comparison groups (43.5% fell into the youngest category, compared with 27.3% in the comparison group C2 and none in C1).

Table 4: Age Groups (3 categories) by Treatment Group at Pre-test

	Treatment Groups			Total
	C1	C2	E	
35 years and under		6 27.3%	10 43.5%	16 25.4%
36-45 years	13 72.2%	14 63.6%	10 43.5%	37 58.7%
46 years and over	5 27.8%	2 9.1%	3 13.0%	10 15.9%
Total	18 100.0%	22 100.0%	23 100.0%	63 100.0%

Chi-square = 11.482, 4df, p = .022

With regard to qualification, Table 5 shows that in the experimental group, 56.5% of subjects had studied for the Bachelor of Applied Science and 30.4% for the Graduate Diploma in Librarianship (having already achieved a first degree in another discipline), while only 13% had qualified as Teacher Librarians. In the comparison groups, more subjects had achieved a Teacher Librarianship qualification than either of the other two qualifications. This represented a significant difference between the three groups (p=.01).

Table 5: Qualifications by Treatment Group at Pre-test

	Treatment Groups			
	C1	C2	E	Total
Bachelor of Applied Science	5	6	13	24
	27.8%	27.3%	56.5%	38.1%
Graduate Diploma	4	2	7	13
	22.2%	9.1%	30.4%	20.6%
Teacher Librarian	9	14	3	26
	50.0%	63.6%	13.0%	41.3%
Total	18	22	23	63
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-square = 13.182, 4df, p = .01

The chi-square test showed a significant difference between the groups at the pre-test stage on the professional association membership variable (p=.005). As shown in Table 6, there were more subjects in the experimental group (n=14) than either of the comparison groups (n=4 in each group) who had joined the professional association as student members prior to November 1996.

Table 6: Professional Association Student Membership by Treatment Group at Pre-test

	Treatment Groups			
	C1	C2	E	Total
Non-member before Nov 1996	14	18	9	41
	77.8%	81.8%	39.1%	65.1%
Member before 1996	4	4	14	22
	22.2%	18.2%	60.9%	34.9%
Total	18	22	23	63
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi square = 10.804, 2df, p = .005

The implications of the differences between the groups at the pre-test stage in the age, qualification and professional association membership variables are explored in the discussion of the results (see Section 5.2.9 Background Variables).

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One-way anova analyses were conducted on the pre-test indexes (Professional Identity, Career and Psychosocial Indexes) and on the pre-test scores for the five domains of professionalism. The Career Index (pre-test) was the only one to show a significant difference, and this was found between the experimental group and the C2 group (p=.043).

4.2 Test of the Study Hypotheses

The two research hypotheses were tested by multiple regression analysis. Both H1 and H2 received partial support.

4.2.1 Hypothesis One

H1: *There is a significant difference in professional identity of new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme.*

Regression analysis revealed that there was no significant difference between the three treatment groups on the dependent variable, the Professional Identity Index (Difference). Independent variables entered stepwise into the model were: treatment condition (group), Professional Identity Index (pre-test), age, qualification, gender, previous mentoring experience, Career Index (Difference), and Psychosocial Index (Difference). The pre-test Professional Identity Index was included to control for any differences (between subjects) that existed from the outset on this variable.

Table 7 indicates that there were three significant predictors of the dependent variable: the Professional Identity Index (pre-test), the Career Index (Difference), and the Psychosocial Index (Difference).

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Table 7: Regression Model: Professional Identity Index (Difference)

Variables		Unstandardized Coefficients		t-value	p-value
		B	Std. Error		
	(Constant)	42.670	8.806	4.845	.000
	Professional Identity Index (Pre-test)	-.475	.104	-4.565	.000
	Career Index (Difference)	-2.455	.767	-3.199	.002
	Psychosocial Index (Difference)	1.483	.500	2.965	.004

Adjusted R square = .332

The positive coefficient for the Psychosocial Index (1.483) indicated that an increase in this score was associated with an increase in the Professional Identity Index. The negative coefficient for the Career Index (-2.455) indicated an inverse relationship between the Career Index and the Professional Identity Index. That is, an increase in the Career Index was associated with a decrease in the Professional Identity Index. The interpretation of this finding will be discussed in Section 5.2.7 Career and Psychosocial Development Activities.

Partial support for H1 was found when each of the five domains of professionalism was tested by multiple regression analyses: a significant difference between the experimental and C1 groups in the domain of "calling" was revealed. The p-value resulting from the stepwise regression was .020 in this domain. Table 8 also shows that membership of one of the professional association's committees was a significant predictor variable in the model (p=.035). Other independent variables entered stepwise into the model which did not show a significant difference were: age, qualification, gender and previous mentoring experience.

Table 8: Regression Model: Calling Index (Difference)

Variables		Unstandardized Coefficients		t-value	p-value
		B	Std. Error		
	(Constant)	11.189	1.763	6.346	.000
	Calling (Pre-test)	-.578	.097	-5.959	.000
	Experimental vs C1	-2.020	.824	-2.451	.017
	Experimental vs C2	-.608	.766	-.795	.430
	Committee membership	-2.341	1.084	-2.159	.035

Adjusted R square = .417

The negative coefficient indicated that the average difference in the change in the "calling" variable between the experimental and C1 groups was two units i.e. for no change in the experimental group, there would be a drop of two units on average in the C1 group (pre-test to post-test). There was not a significant difference between the experimental and the C2 groups.

Table 9 shows the mean scores for the "calling" variable for each group on the pre- and post-tests, and for the Calling Index (Difference). The possible range was five to twenty-five; the observed range was ten to twenty-five.

Table 9: Mean Scores for Calling Indexes by Treatment Group

Treatment Groups		Calling (Pre-test)	Calling (Post-test)	Calling (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	18.67	17.06	-1.6111
	Std. Deviation	3.87	3.57	3.7907
	Minimum	12	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	4.00
C2 (N=22)	Mean	18.14	18.14	.0000
	Std. Deviation	3.28	2.75	2.3905
	Minimum	14	13	-4.00
	Maximum	24	23	5.00
E (N=23)	Mean	16.43	17.52	1.0870
	Std. Deviation	2.97	2.59	2.9374
	Minimum	10	11	-6.00
	Maximum	21	22	6.00
Total (N=63)	Mean	17.67	17.60	-0.0635
	Std. Deviation	3.44	2.94	3.1820
	Minimum	10	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	6.00

For the experimental group, scores increased by an average of 1.09 (pre- and post-test means were 16.43 and 17.72), while for the C1 group the mean difference was -1.6 (pre- and post-test means fell from 18.67 to 17.06).

In addition to the difference between the groups on the "calling" variable, there were two other predictors in the model: the Calling pre-test score, and the professional association committee membership variable (see Table 8: Regression Model: Calling Index (Difference). Table 10 shows the mean scores for the committee membership variable (pre- and post-test, and difference) by committee membership.

Table 10: Mean Scores for Calling Indexes by Committee Membership

Committee membership		Calling (Pre-test)	Calling (Post-test)	Calling (Difference)
Never been on a committee (N=56)	Mean	18.07	17.95	-.1250
	Std. Deviation	3.30	2.81	3.2365
	Minimum	12	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	6.00
Committee member (N=7)	Mean	14.43	14.86	.4286
	Std. Deviation	2.88	2.67	2.8785
	Minimum	10	11	-6.00
	Maximum	18	18	2.00
Total (N=63)	Mean	17.67	17.60	-0.0635
	Std. Deviation	3.44	2.94	3.1820
	Minimum	10	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	6.00

Committee membership increased the subjects' sense of calling to the profession. The negative coefficient shown in the regression model (Table 8) for the committee membership variable is reflected in a slight increase in the calling score for those who were committee members either pre-test and/or post-test, and a slight decrease in calling for those who were not committee members.

No significant differences between the groups were found in the differences in mean scores for the remaining four domains in the professionalism scale i.e. "using the professional organisation as a major referent", "belief in public service", "belief in self-regulation" and "autonomy". (See Appendix D Indexes: Comparison of Means by Treatment Groups.) These will be discussed in Sections 5.2.3 to 5.2.6.

4.2.2 Hypothesis Two

The second research hypothesis also received partial support.

H2: *There is a significant difference in career and psychosocial outcomes for new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme.*

Regression analysis revealed a significant difference between the treatment groups in the career domain but not in the psychosocial domain. That is, the mentoring activities of the experimental group had a positive effect on career outcomes, but not on psychosocial outcomes.

The Mentoring Functions Scales validated that mentoring activities had taken place in both the experimental group (E), who were participants in the Group Mentoring Programme (see Table 11) and the comparison group (C2), who had individual mentors for the year of the study.

Table 11: Noe's Mentoring Functions Scale

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career Function	23	3.21	1.43	4.64	2.9534	.8129
Psychosocial Function	23	2.33	2.67	5.00	3.7913	.5834
Total Mentoring function	23	2.41	2.38	4.79	3.3868	.6600

This scale measured the extent to which mentoring roles and functions were experienced by participants in the Group Mentoring Programme. Career-related roles comprised: sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection. Psychosocial roles comprised: role modeling, counselling, confirmation and friendship. The highest possible score was five (indicating that the participant had experienced this function "to a large extent").

Thus, the mean for the psychosocial sphere was higher than the mean for the career sphere, indicating that the participants had experienced the former roles to a greater degree than the latter.

Subjects in the comparison group C2 were asked to indicate the roles that they had experienced in their individual mentoring activities. Of a possible nine roles, the mean score for the group was 2.59.

Regression analyses were performed on the Career Index (Difference) and the Psychosocial Index (Difference).

4.2.2.1 Career Index

Table 12: Regression Model: Career Index (Difference)

Variables		Unstandardized Coefficients		t-value	p-value
		B	Std. Error		
	(Constant)	1.654	.476	3.477	.001
	Career Index (Pre-test)	-.560	.104	-5.396	.000
	Experimental vs C1	-1.600	.259	-6.174	.000
	Experimental vs C2	-1.100	.246	-4.467	.000
	Gender	.920	.428	2.151	.036

Adjusted R square = .464

For the Career Index (Difference), treatment condition was a significant predictor in the model, indicating that the mentoring activities of the experimental group had made a difference to career outcomes. This was significant when the experimental group was compared with both comparison groups i.e. C1: those who did not have a current mentor, and C2: those who had a current, individual mentor. Other variables which could be incorporated into the model using stepwise procedures were Career Index (pre-test) and gender (p-value = .036). As noted in Section 4.1 Background of Respondents, there was a significant difference between the experimental group and

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the C2 group on the Career Index (pre-test). This was entered into the regression model in order to control for this difference between the groups at the pre-test stage. Variables excluded from the model were: age, previous mentoring experience and qualification.

There was an inverse relationship between the experimental group and both comparison groups (indicated by the negative coefficients for the treatment group variables in Table 12). From the following Table 13, which compares the means for these groups for the Career Indexes, it can be seen that this coefficient meant that the increase in scores for the experimental group was associated with a decrease in the C1 group's scores and a smaller increase in the C2 group's scores. Thus the career development activities were significantly higher in the experimental group.

Table 13: Mean Scores for Career Indexes by Treatment Group

Treatment Groups		Career Index (Pre-test)	Career Index (Post-test)	Career Index (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	1.9711	1.7401	-.2309
	Std. Deviation	1.1072	1.1063	.8825
	Minimum	.00	.00	-2.28
	Maximum	3.69	3.41	1.22
C2 (N=22)	Mean	1.9640	2.2552	.2911
	Std. Deviation	.8402	.9560	.9000
	Minimum	1.00	.06	-1.61
	Maximum	4.13	3.41	2.00
E (N=23)	Mean	2.7246	3.7740	1.0494
	Std. Deviation	1.0766	.7862	1.0342
	Minimum	.00	2.56	-.78
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39
Total (N=63)	Mean	2.2437	2.6625	.4188
	Std. Deviation	1.0591	1.2762	1.0692
	Minimum	.00	.00	-2.28
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39

Table 14 shows that the difference between the pre- and post-test Career Indexes decreased for males and increased slightly for females. The regression analysis (Table

12) revealed that this was a significant difference. The positive coefficient for the gender variable can be interpreted to indicate that where the male group's score stayed the same, there would be an increase of .9 on average for the female group's score.

Table 14: Mean Scores for Career Indexes by Gender

Gender		Career Index (Pre-test)	Career Index (Post-test)	Career Index (Difference)
Male (N=4)	Mean	1.0000	.7444	-.2556
	Std. Deviation	.0000	.6810	.6810
	Minimum	1.00	.00	-1.00
	Maximum	1.00	1.33	.33
Female (N=59)	Mean	2.3280	2.7925	.4645
	Std. Deviation	1.0417	1.2025	1.0792
	Minimum	.00	.06	-2.28
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39
Total (N=63)	Mean	2.2437	2.6625	.4188
	Std. Deviation	1.0591	1.2762	1.0692
	Minimum	.00	.00	-2.28
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39

4.2.2.2 Psychosocial Index

For the Psychosocial Index (Difference), treatment condition was not a significant predictor in the model. As shown in Table 15, there was, however, one variable in addition to the Psychosocial Pre-test Index which was significant (professional association committee membership, p-value = .001).

Table 15: Regression Model: Psychosocial Index (Difference)

Variables		Unstandardized Coefficients		t-value	p-value
		B	Std. Error		
	(Constant)	3.353	1.047	3.203	.002
	Psychosocial Index (Pre-test)	-.387	.110	-3.537	.001
	Committee membership	2.051	.611	3.359	.001

Adjusted R square = .210

There was a positive coefficient for the committee membership variable. As shown in Table 16, the mean scores of those subjects who were committee members increased by a greater amount (2 units) than for those who were not committee members. That is, for those subjects who were committee members of one professional association's special interest groups or sections, there was a significant increase in psychosocial development.

Table 16: Mean Scores for Psychosocial Indexes by Committee Membership

Committee membership		Psychosocial Index (Pre-test)	Psychosocial Index (Post-test)	Psychosocial Index (Difference)
Never on a committee (N=56)	Mean	9.39	9.11	-.29
	Std. Deviation	1.72	1.80	1.55
Committee member (N=7)	Mean	11.00	12.14	1.14
	Std. Deviation	1.53	1.68	1.95
Total (N=63)	Mean	9.57	9.44	-.13
	Std. Deviation	1.77	2.01	1.64

4.3 Sources of Stress Anticipated and Experienced

The third research objective was to identify anticipated and experienced sources of stress which affected new graduates during their transition from being a student to becoming a professional. This objective had a purely exploratory purpose and no hypothesis was formulated.

Respondents were asked in the pre-test questionnaire what potential sources of stress (if any) they were anticipating in the coming year during the transition from being a student to becoming a professional. There were fifty-two subjects who responded from the whole group, the remaining eleven saying they did not anticipate any stress.

In the post-test questionnaire, respondents were asked what sources of stress (if any) they had experienced in the past year during the transition. There were fifty subjects who responded, with thirteen subjects saying they had not experienced any stress. Of the eleven who did not anticipate any sources of stress at pre-test, five subjects reported at the post-test stage that they had, in fact, experienced stress during the year. Seven of the fifty-two subjects who anticipated sources of stress at the pre-test stage, reported at the post-test stage that they had not, in fact, experienced any sources of stress. Eight subjects reported that they neither anticipated nor experienced any sources of stress during the year.

The sources of stress fell into sixteen categories. Those who responded with the answer that they anticipated or had experienced "positive stress" (one subject in the pre- and post-tests), were included in the table but not in the analysis of the responses. The responses could be categorised into four broad areas: pre-employment issues, on-the-job issues, organisational and professional issues, and psychosocial (personal and family) issues.

From Table 17 it can be seen that there were 103 responses to the open-ended question regarding "anticipated sources of stress in the year of transition from being a student to becoming a professional". These came from the fifty-one subjects who reported that they anticipated at least one source of stress (twelve cases in the C1 group, eighteen cases in the C2 group and twenty-one cases in the experimental group).

Table 17: Sources of Stress Anticipated at Pre-test

Category label	Total for All Groups n=51			C1 n=12	C2 n=18	E n=21
	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases	Pct of Cases Within Each Group		
Pre-employment issues						
finding a job	31	30.1	60.8	41.7	66.7	66.7
interviews	6	5.8	11.8	0	0	28.6
reentering the workforce	4	3.9	7.8	0	11.1	9.5
lack of experience	1	1.0	2.0	0	0	4.8
theory/practice gap	4	3.9	7.8	8.3	0	14.3
On-the-job issues						
adjusting to a new job/workload	21	20.4	41.2	25.0	44.4	47.6
managing staff	2	1.9	3.9	8.3	5.6	0
managing time	3	2.9	5.9	8.3	5.6	4.8
applying information technology	5	4.9	9.8	8.3	22.2	0
skills deficit/need training	5	4.9	9.8	25.0	0	9.5
Organisational/professional issues						
organisational/industrial issues	5	4.9	9.8	16.7	5.6	9.5
professional issues/identity	5	4.9	9.8	16.7	5.6	9.5
continuing professional dev't/study	5	4.9	9.8	16.7	0	14.3
Personal issues						
psychosocial issues	4	3.9	7.8	8.3	5.6	9.5
juggling home/work roles	2	1.9	3.9	16.7	0	0
Total responses	103	100.0	202.0	23.5	35.3	41.2
no stress	11					
positive stress	1					

"Finding a job" (60.8% of total cases) was identified as the largest single source of stress anticipated, followed by "adjusting to a new job/workload" (41.2% of total cases).

From Table 18 it can be seen that there were ninety-nine responses to the question regarding "sources of stress experienced in the past year of transition". Forty-nine subjects reported experiencing at least one source of stress (twelve cases in the C1 group, sixteen cases in the C2 group and twenty-one cases in the experimental group). Numbers in the table in **bold** font indicate an increase in comparison to the percentage of cases who had anticipated these categories as sources of stress at the pre-test stage.

Table 18: Sources of Stress Experienced at Post-test

| Category label | Total for All Groups n=49 | | | C1 n=12 | C2 n=16 | E n=21 |
	Count	Pct of Responses	Pct of Cases	Pct of Cases Within Each Group		
Pre-employment issues						
finding a job	14	14.1	28.6	16.7	18.8	42.9
interviews	3	3.0	6.1	0	0	14.3
reentering the workforce	1	1.0	2.0	0	0	4.8
lack of experience	7	7.1	**14.3**	0	12.5	23.8
theory/practice gap	1	1.0	2.0	0	0	4.8
On-the-job issues						
adjusting to a new job/workload	19	19.2	38.8	25.0	**50.0**	38.1
managing staff	3	3.0	**6.1**	**16.7**	0	**4.8**
managing time	5	5.1	**10.2**	**25.0**	6.3	4.8
applying information technology	5	5.1	**10.2**	**25.0**	0	**9.5**
skills deficit/need training	4	4.0	8.2	**16.7**	**6.3**	4.8
Organisational/professional issues						
organisational/industrial issues	9	9.1	**18.4**	**25.0**	12.5	19.0
professional issues/identity	11	11.1	**22.8**	16.7	**18.8**	**28.6**
continuing professional dev't/study	4	4.0	8.2	0	**6.3**	14.3
Personal issues						
psychosocial issues	8	8.1	**16.3**	8.3	**18.8**	**19.0**
juggling home/work roles	5	5.1	**10.2**	**8.3**	**12.5**	**9.5**
Total responses	99	100.0	202.0	24.5	32.7	42.9
no stress	13					
positive stress	1					

0 missing cases;
63 valid cases

Although the largest percentage of subjects in all groups had identified "finding a job" as a potential source of stress, it can be seen from Table 18 that in the post-test, only 28.6% of cases reported that they had in fact experienced "finding a job" as stressful. This suggests that for the whole group, it was not as difficult to find a job as they had

expected. However, it was noticeable that this source of stress was the largest single source of stress for the experimental group (42.9%) indicating that almost half of this group did, in fact, experience this factor as a source of stress. When the three groups were compared on this variable, it can be seen the percentage was much higher for respondents in the experimental group than either of the other two groups. For all groups, most categories of anticipated pre-employment stress decreased in the post-test, indicating that subjects had coped with these areas of potential concern.

The largest single source of stress experienced by the total group was "adjusting to a new job and workload" (39% of cases). This category fell only very slightly from the level anticipated at pre-test. Other "on-the-job" issues were identified slightly more times as being sources of stress than had been anticipated, this close approximation indicating a fairly realistic appraisal of the situation in this area.

For all groups, post-test scores increased in most areas of organisational, professional and personal issues, indicating that there was an increased awareness of concerns in these areas and that the difficulties of balancing professional and personal concerns had become more pronounced in the transitional year.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Contribution to the Field

The research addressed three objectives the first of which was to conduct an evaluation of the Group Mentoring Programme's short-term outcomes. This objective was expressed as the first hypothesis. The research also pursued two additional objectives. An exploration and development of the theoretical and conceptual bases of mentoring was expressed as the second hypothesis. The third research objective was to identify perceived sources of stress which were anticipated and experienced by new graduates in the year of transition from being a student to becoming a professional.

Using a quasi-experimental design, this research represented the first evaluative research conducted and reported in the research literature to date on a facilitated group mentoring programme. For the most part, the research on mentoring has been limited to exploratory research designs and descriptions of individual (i.e. one-to-one) mentoring programmes. Mentoring programmes have been evaluated according to formative (or process) and summative evaluation designs (assessing the achievement of short and long-term outcomes). There has been very little evaluative research conducted on formal mentoring programmes using true experimental or quasi-experimental research designs.

The mentoring literature synthesised in the literature review has emanated from a range of disciplines including education, management, librarianship, social psychology, medicine, nursing and allied health professions. The literature review focused especially on outcomes of research conducted on formal mentoring programmes. Particular attention was given to formal programmes which incorporated a group or peer mentoring component. Two broad purposes of mentoring were examined: mentoring as an adult education strategy, particularly as it contributed to

the process of professional socialisation; and mentoring as a variable influencing an individual's ability to cope during transitional stages which may be construed as stressful life events.

One of the starting points for this research was provided by the literature review conducted by Merriam (1983: 171), in which it was stated that "the fundamental question for adult educators and researchers is not how mentoring leads to material success, but how it relates to adult development and adult learning", and that the basis for future inquiry should be "that sustained loving relationships aid in coping with life's stresses". In addition to this, McEwan (1998) suggested that health professionals could use stress reducing interventions which helped individuals to increase their social support, enhanced their ability to cope and increased their control over their own jobs. Other studies pointed to the possibility that mentoring could be useful as a means for developing coping skills and providing social support to alleviate the effects of stress.

Since Merriam's literature review, there have been only a few programme evaluations which can be classified as evaluative research. Two studies of individual mentoring programmes have clearly established the following outcomes:

- during the first year of an individual mentoring relationship, the levels of both psychosocial and career support are at their lowest; and

- the differences between mentored and nonmentored individuals continue over a 5-year period, regardless of whether the proteges are in current or former mentorships (Chao, 1997: 24);

- significant outcomes in the psychosocial functions but not in the career functions of mentoring have been found in the first six months (Noe, 1988: 473).

Although no evaluative research has been conducted on a facilitated group mentoring programme similar to the programme under study, there have been some recent studies which have pointed to the value of peer group support, peer activities and peer mentoring. These have been conducted in the following areas:

- professional socialisation of new graduates (group meetings as part of an individual mentoring programme) (Boyle & Boice, 1998);

- the development of a professional identity among masters students (peer activities in the informal curriculum) (Fidler, 1995);

- professional and personal learning for general practitioners (peer activities with a group leader and co-mentoring in small groups) (Challis et al.1997);

- stress reduction for graduate students (peer mentoring in pairs) (Bowman et al. 1990);

- stress prevention and increased psychosocial wellbeing (benefits to individuals who acted as peer mentors of university students, but no significant psychosocial benefits to the peer group participants) (Twomey, 1991).

The results of this evaluative research in the area of group mentoring extend what is known about the short-term outcomes of group mentoring programmes in the following ways:

1. Group mentoring has significant benefits for new graduates in the first year of a mentoring programme in the career development sphere, but not in the psychosocial sphere;

2. Group mentoring has a significant effect on the development of a professional identity in the domain of a new graduate's sense of "calling" to the field;

3. A one year Group Mentoring Programme is not effective as a single strategy for the development of a professional identity among new graduates.

The research also found that with regard to the process of professional socialisation:
4. Psychosocial development has a significant effect on the development of a professional identity among new graduates;

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5. Career development activities have a significant effect on the development of a professional identity among new graduates, but this is an inverse relationship;

6. Professional association committee membership has a significant effect on the development of a new graduate's sense of "calling" to the profession.

<u>5.2 Results: Hypothesis One</u>

There was partial support for the research hypothesis H1: that there is a significant difference in professional identity of new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme.

However, as there was not a significant difference between the groups for <u>all</u> domains of the Professional Identity Index, the evaluation did not support the hypothesis that group mentoring affected the development of a professional identity. Thus this research concurs with the views of Cruess and Cruess (1997), who contended that there was a need to teach professionalism at all levels of medical education; that the process of socialisation and the transmission of common values required explicit teaching and could not be left to the indirect style of teaching which resulted from leadership and role modeling strategies.

Although regression analysis for the Professional Identity Index (Difference) did not show a significant difference between the treatment groups, when the five individual domains of professionalism were analysed, the results varied.

5.2.1 Having a Sense of "Calling" to the Field

The "calling" domain revealed significant differences between the experimental group and the C1 group (who did not have a current mentor). Significance in the "calling" domain indicated that the Group Mentoring participants had increased their belief in their profession as a vocation, that they thought of their chosen field of work as more than just an occupation or a way of earning a living. For the group who did not have a current mentor, this sense of a calling to the profession had declined (see Appendix D5).

Having a sense of calling to a professional field has been described as one of the main differences between a profession (or a vocation) and a job. It may have been that the Group Mentoring Programme functioned as a first step in raising awareness of this distinction. With regard to the sources of stress anticipated and experienced by new graduates (see Tables 17 and 18) "on-the-job" and "professional issues" were differentiated as separate themes, the latter increasing in the transitional year suggesting an increasing awareness of the distinction between employment and professional concerns.

As the main purpose of the Programme was to "facilitate the transition of new graduates into the profession" (and it was also emphasised that the Programme was not intended to be simply a means for finding a job), it can be concluded that this key objective in educating new graduates about this aspect of professionalism was achieved through the group mentoring process i.e. that having a vocation in life means more than simply earning a living.

Although no significant results were found in the remaining four domains in the professionalism scale ("use of the professional organisation as a major referent", "belief in public service", "belief in self-regulation" and "autonomy") an examination of the descriptive statistics for these domains, as well as for the scores on the total

Professional Identity Index, is instructive. (For a comparison of means for these indexes, see Appendix D1-D6: Professional Identity Indexes by Treatment Groups).

5.2.2 Professional Identity Index

The mean score for Hall's Professionalism Scale reported by Fidler (Fidler, 1995: 129) for a group of masters students in librarianship was 82.80. This score was comparable to the means obtained for the sample in this study, which ranged from 84.19 on the pre-test to 85.67 on the post-test (see Appendix D1: Professional Identity Indexes by Treatment Groups).

Although the Professional Identity scores were on average lower for the experimental group in both the pre- and post-tests, mean differences increased by a greater amount in the experimental group (an average increase of 2.26), compared to C1 (an average increase of 1.39) and C2 (an average increase of .73). The average improvement for all groups was 1.48. This indicated that the experimental group had shifted further on average in their level of professional socialisation than the other two groups on a pre-test/post-test comparison. Regression analysis revealed that this was not, however, a significant difference between the groups, and this may be partly explained by the fact that regression analysis controls for any differences that were present at the pre-test. Thus even though the experimental group improved by more than the average improvement, it can only be interpreted as showing that if the subject started with a low score, they improved by more, and if they started with a high score, they improved by less.

5.2.3 Use of the Professional Organisation as a Major Referent

"Professional organisation" was not a domain in which the Group Mentoring Programme made a significant difference. For all three groups, the pre- and post-test scores were highest in this domain when compared to the other domains of professionalism, indicating a high level of "colleague consciousness" and awareness

among new graduates of the role of their professional association as a major referent (see Appendix D2). For all of the groups, the post-test scores fell, although this decreased by a smaller amount in the experimental group (an average of -.43) than either of the other two groups (-1.67 in the C1 group, and -1.27 in the C2 group). This suggested that activity levels for all the new graduates and their professional colleagues may have fallen and there may have been some degree of disillusionment among all new graduates in this area, regardless of their mentoring activities.

As librarians in organisations are often "one of a kind", this decline in use of the professional organisation as a major referent may be explained by the fact that during the first year in the workforce, new graduates will be concentrating on being socialised into the new work environment and learning about their jobs. The responses on "experienced sources of stress" (Table 18) indicated that in the transition year the largest single source of stress (38% of cases) was "adjusting to a new job or workload", while only 22% experienced "professional issues" as a source of stress.

Membership or registration with the Australian Library and Information Association is not a requirement to practise in the profession of librarianship. However, many employers do stipulate eligibility for membership of the professional association as a criterion for employment.

As the Group Mentoring Programme was conducted under the auspices of ALIA, professional association membership was a pre-requisite. Prior to enrolment in the Programme, 61% of the experimental group had been student members of ALIA, whereas only 22% (C1) and 18% (C2) of the comparison groups had been members. During the year, membership rates for all new graduates increased (E: 100%; C1: 28%; C2: 41%). In a follow-up to the post-test (conducted in May 1998), the ALIA membership in the experimental group had dropped very slightly to 87%, a percentage still well above pre-test levels. In contrast to this, the comparison groups' membership had dropped more markedly to percentages more closely approximating pre-test levels (C1: to 17%; C2: to 23%). Chi-square tests indicated that there was a significant

difference between the groups at both pre- and post-test. It was not possible to conduct further regression analysis to test for significance between the groups pre- and post-test as the numbers were too small.

For the professional association, these results indicate that the Group Mentoring Programme was effective as a recruitment and retention strategy, at least in the short-term. It is not possible to elaborate on the reasons for this, as no data were collected. However, it appears that the retention of professional association membership in the year following the programme by the Group Mentoring Programme participants has demonstrated a commitment to the professional association, to the profession in general and to the individual's own professional development in particular.

5.2.4 Belief in Public Service

This altruistic commitment rests on the belief that the profession is both indispensable and beneficial to society. For all groups, "belief in public service" had the lowest mean score in both the pre- and post-tests (see Appendix D3). The scores increased in the post-test for the comparison groups, but decreased for the experimental group. It is not possible to discern the reasons for the low scores in this domain as there were no other means of data collection relating to this aspect of professionalism. It may be surmised, however, that this may be a reflection of the views of the wider society, in which there has been little popularisation of the belief that the provision of public services is a characteristic of a civilised society. The growing trend to privatisation of public services is currently an economic strategy pursued by governments in areas such as healthcare. A diminishing adherence to the belief in public service as a social responsibility and an aspect of the role of a professional may well be part of the justifying mythology.

5.2.5 Belief in Self-regulation

"Belief in self-regulation" rests on the premise that due to the specialised nature of professional knowledge only colleagues can judge and regulate each others' work. Mean differences between the pre- and post-test scores increased slightly in the experimental and C1 groups, and decreased slightly in the C2 group, but these differences were not significant (see Table D4).

5.2.6 Autonomy

The "autonomy" domain of the professionalism scale related to the subject's desire to be free to make decisions without the threat of outside pressures. The increase in scores for all groups on the "autonomy" measure (see Table D6) suggested that in their first year in the workplace as professionals, the new graduates found that they were in fact less constrained by external pressures in making professional decisions in their work than they had previously anticipated.

There was a significant difference between the groups in the domain of "autonomy" only when the C1 group was compared to the combined scores for the groups who had either individual mentors or group mentoring for the year. Although the experimental, the C1 and the C2 groups' scores increased on this index, scores for the C1 group increased by a significantly greater amount than the other two groups' combined scores, highlighting these subjects' belief in their own autonomy and desire for independent decision-making. This is not an unlikely result in a group who did not feel the need for a mentor and the difference may be explained at least partially by this "personality" factor. An additional explanation may have been the fact that there was a significant difference between the groups' ages. There were no subjects in the C1 group in the youngest age group category, indicating differences in maturity from the outset. The group who were older and more mature and did not have a mentor could have perceived themselves as becoming more autonomous in the transitional year.

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5.2.7 Career and Psychosocial Development Activities

The Career Index (Difference) and Psychosocial Index (Difference) were both included in the Professional Identity Index (Difference) regression model (see Table 7). This showed that these two indexes, which had been constructed to indicate achievement of sub-objectives (or contributory risk factors) related to the two domains of mentoring, had a significant effect on the dependent variable (the development of a professional identity). There was not, however, a significant difference between the treatment groups.

Professional identity (the outcome variable) was shown to be affected by the psychosocial development of new graduates. Psychosocial development was indicated by self-assessment measures which related to the subjects' perceptions of themselves as belonging to the profession and participating in professional activities, being involved in their peer support network, having a belief in their own knowledge and ability to apply their skills in the workplace, being aware of issues affecting their area of work and their profession. An increase in scores on this attitudinal scale was significantly related to an increase in professional identity.

Career development activities were measured quantitatively and self-reported by the subjects. Items included were: preparation of a *curriculum vitae* and having professional objectives to achieve for the year, membership of the professional association, committee membership of the association's special interest groups or sections, attending meetings and continuing education events. These were devised to indicate an index of activities that would lead to successful career outcomes. The inverse relationship between career development activities and professional identity suggested that where an individual focused on career outcomes and activities, the development of a professional identity was not enhanced (at least not in the first year of a new graduate's career). Thus although career development and professional development are related, in the short-term and particularly for new graduates, an increase in one implies a lack of development in the other.

Thus it can be inferred from these results that it would be beneficial for continuing professional development programmes (including mentoring programmes) which aim to promote professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity to incorporate specific psychosocial development strategies and to clearly differentiate these from career development strategies.

5.2.8 Outcome Measures

In comparison to the findings in Fidler's research (Fidler, 1995), which showed that peer interactions were the only significant predictor of professional identity, this research did not support the hypothesis that peer group mentoring activities affected the development of a professional identity. Although the literature on mentoring often refers to the outcomes of mentoring as being professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity, this may not have been the most appropriate choice of outcome measure. A number of reasons may explain this.

5.2.8.1 Content Validity of the Scale

Hall's Professionalism Scale was developed in 1968, and although the underlying constructs and dimensions of professionalism are still valid, there may be a need to update the questions to make it more relevant to contemporary professions. Snizek (1972: 112) has noted the ambiguity of some of the terms and suggested that some modifications could be made. In particular, he noted that the term "colleague" may signify both "professional associates" and "co-workers", and that the two may not be synonymous in today's work environment.

In adapting Hall's Professionalism Scale in this study, the term "librarianship" was inserted to differentiate clearly between references to the organisational and the professional contexts. However, there may have been some questions in which the meaning of the term "colleague" (whether a professional colleague or a work

colleague from a different profession) was not clear. It is therefore considered to be important that in future, when this scale is used to measure professional identity in a professional context and it is not intended as a measure of organisational socialisation, the name of the professional group be inserted to qualify the term "colleague".

It has already been noted in 1.6 Limitations of the Study that the scale was chosen because its reliability and validity had already been established, and because librarians were one of the groups who were included in the development and validation of the scale. In addition to this, the instrument had been used in other studies where professionalism was being measured as an outcome of mentoring, and also on a similar study population of masters students in librarianship.

5.2.8.2 Professional Versus Organisational Socialisation

The distinction between professional and workplace colleagues also points to the difference between professional socialisation and organisational socialisation and the contention that there may be some confusion between the two concepts. This distinction and possible confusion of terms has been highlighted in the literature review. Professional socialisation refers to the process of learning the values and roles of a particular professional group and thus acquiring a professional identity, while organisational socialisation describes the process by which an individual is acculturated to a workplace or organisation.

Professionalism implies a broadly conceived notion of responsibility to society, rather than identification with and loyalty to a particular organisation. The term "professional socialisation" is, however, often used in a career development context. In the literature on mentoring as a career development strategy, there has been some confusion and overlapping with the term "organisational socialisation".

In the programme under study, professional socialisation has referred consistently to the process of identification with the profession of librarianship and not to any particular organisation. This is particularly important in the development of a

professional identity for librarians, as they are most often in a minority in organisations comprising other professional groups. In addition to this it has already been noted that Hall's Professionalism Scale was originally developed using librarians as one of the eleven professional groups under study (Snizek, 1972: 110), and that the scale (as modified slightly in this design) had been used in research about the development of a professional identity in a group of masters students in librarianship (Fidler, 1995). Therefore, the choice of outcome measure and scale, which have been used to predict the development of a professional identity, has been deemed appropriate. The reasons for an overall non-significant result must therefore be further examined.

5.2.8.3 Possible Reasons for an Overall Non-significant Result

A significant result was found in one domain of professionalism (having a sense of calling to the field) but not in the total index of professionalism. Professionalism is a complex set of behaviours which, it has been posited for at least one professional group (medical practitioners, Cruess & Cruess, 1997) needs to be taught as part of a formal curriculum. In contrast to this, it has been found in the field of librarianship in a study of the informal curriculum activities of graduate students with their peers, the faculty and professional practitioners, that peer activity was the only significant predictor of professional identity (Fidler, 1995).

The Group Mentoring Programme incorporated and encouraged mentoring activities on three levels: individual mentoring between the participants and the facilitators as professional practitioners, peer mentoring among individual participants, and co-mentoring between all participants (facilitators/leaders and peers) within the group. The main aim of the Programme was to facilitate the transition of new graduates into the profession, and there were objectives and strategies which addressed the issue of professionalism, but these were not taught in any formalised way.

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It has also been shown that in the first year of a mentoring programme (the initiation stage), the levels of both career and psychosocial support are at their lowest, and that the benefits of mentoring continue over time, extending beyond the duration of the mentoring relationship (Chao, 1997). This evaluation was designed to measure short-term outcomes, and the <u>limited time-frame</u> of one year may not have been long enough for any significant outcomes in relation to the complex process of developing a professional identity to be achieved.

For many new graduates getting a job, rather than becoming a professional, is the main personal objective of their first year following graduation. The anticipated and experienced sources of stress, and the focus of the Group Mentoring participants' learning objectives reflected the primacy of this goal. Group Mentoring Programme participants reported that finding their first job was the largest single source of stress they experienced, and were thus likely to be preoccupied with career outcomes rather than developing their professional identities. Indeed, the results of the evaluation also showed that career development outcomes were significantly higher in the experimental group than in the comparison groups, suggesting that this group was in fact focusing most of their efforts in the career direction, rather than into the activities which directly enhanced their identification with the profession.

There are thus three main factors which may have contributed to the limited significant effect of the Group Mentoring Programme on new graduates' professional identity. These were:

- the lack of a formal, structured curriculum for teaching professionalism;
- the limited duration of the programme and the fact that both career and psychosocial support are at their lowest in the initial developmental stage of a mentoring relationship;
- the fact that new graduates were directing their efforts into the career-related activities of attaining and adjusting to their first employment position and coping with the demands (both personal and professional) associated with this transitional stage of their lives.

In view of this overall non-significant result, it is recommended that the teaching of professionalism should be incorporated into the formal curriculum using a mentoring model for continuing professional development. A three-stage model for describing mentoring within a profession with the broad general purpose of professional education has been described by the author (Ritchie & Genoni, 1997: 95; see Appendix E) and is summarised in the following:

Stage One: Preservice training with a practicum supervisor in the role
             of mentor
Stage Two: Transition into the profession facilitated by the Group
             Mentoring Programme
Stage Three: Continuing education with the guidance of an individual
             mentor.

This can be extended to a four stage model with the addition of a final stage:
Stage Four: The mentoree becomes a mentor.

5.2.9 Background Variables

Because the experimental group was self-selected and subjects were not allocated randomly to the treatment groups, there was a risk of bias inherent in the research design. Self-selection of subjects to join a group mentoring programme pointed to the possible influence of a "propensity" for mentoring as a likely source of bias. However, no significant difference between the groups on the variable "previous experience of having a mentor" was found in the chi-square test of association. The possible confounding effects of having a current mentor were controlled for in the design by dividing the comparison group into those who had a current individual mentor and those who had no mentor during the year of the study.

It is recognised in the mentoring literature that in evaluating mentoring programmes it can be difficult to attribute any outcomes directly to a mentoring programme. There may have been additional variables which were not controlled for in the research design, and this could be a topic for further research.

It has already been alluded to that the differences between the groups in terms of age, qualification and professional association membership suggested differences in levels of maturity at the outset. The experimental group was younger and the majority had attained their first university qualification in librarianship, whereas the comparison groups were more likely to be in the older age groups and had a teaching qualification as well as a library qualification. It was likely that those who were older and already had the experience of a first career (either teaching, or in the discipline of their initial degree) were also more likely to have created a professional identity for themselves, albeit in a profession other than librarianship.

The regression analysis, which controlled for any differences between the groups at the pre-test stage, revealed that for the professional identity outcome, there was not a significant difference for any of these background variables.

There was a significant difference found in two outcome measures for those new graduates who were members of one of the professional association's committees - in their sense of calling to the profession, as well as in their psychosocial development. It can be surmised that the individual activities involved in committee membership and the increased opportunities for networking would enhance a new graduates' commitment to the profession, as well as increase their self-confidence and sense of belonging to the profession. This informal mentoring phenomenon may be similar to the "group-level mentoring" referred to by Dansky (1996: 7). Whereas Dansky found significant career outcomes for professional association members, this research has identified significant professional and psychosocial outcomes for new graduates who were committee members.

<u>5.3 Results: Hypothesis Two</u>

There was partial support for the research hypothesis H2: that there is a significant difference in career and psychosocial outcomes for new graduates who participated in the Group Mentoring Programme compared with those who did not participate in the Programme. Career but not psychosocial development was found to be a significant difference between the groups.

In contrast to the significant career outcomes of this research, Noe (1988: 473) found significant outcomes in the psychosocial functions of mentoring after six month's participation in an individual mentoring programme, but not in career outcomes. Noting that the initial task focus of a mentoring relationship was more conducive to psychosocial than career outcomes, he suggested that future research should explore the possibility that proteges could receive career functions from participating in short-term mentoring relationships (p. 477).

Chao (1997) used Noe's Mentoring Functions Scale to test the hypothesis that there would be significant differences in perceived levels of mentoring for both the career and psychosocial domains for the different stages of mentoring relationships. This was supported for the initiation phase (six months to one year) as proteges experienced the lowest levels of career and psychosocial functions in this stage (p. 23). Chao's outcome measures comprised a range of career and psychosocial measures, including two career-related scales, five organisational socialisation scales, a job satisfaction questionnaire and an income scale. In the initiation phase Chao found that there was a significant difference on five of the nine outcome measures (Table 2, p. 25) between those who had a current mentor and those who had never had a mentor. These outcome measures were: career planning and involvement, socialisation regarding organisational relationships and politics, and job satisfaction. Thus the significant findings in both career and psychosocial outcomes in the first year of a mentoring relationship appear to be consistent with Noe's research (significant psychosocial

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outcomes) as well as the current group mentoring research (significant career outcomes).

5.3.1 Career Development

The career outcome measure showed a significant difference when the experimental group was compared to both comparison groups (see Table 12). For the Group Mentoring participants, the year of transition had a very strong career focus. This fact was borne out by the reporting of sources of stress experienced during the transition year (see Table 18). For the experimental group employment issues and in particular, the stresses associated with getting their first job, were the most frequently cited sources of stress. The Group Mentoring participants also gave priority in the formulation and prioritisation of their learning objectives to those objectives which related to getting a job (for example, the learning objectives for the first four months of the Programme focused on preparing a *curriculum vitae*, addressing selection criteria, interviewing skills, exploring alternative methods of getting a job).

The learning objectives of the Group Mentoring Programme were formulated by the participants themselves, and it was with regard to the career-related learning objectives (learning the skills of applying for jobs) that one of the formal objectives of the Programme (teaching mentoring skills, specifically the skills of professional coaching and feedback) was achieved. As mentioned in 1.7.3.2 Forms of Mentoring in the Group Context, there was the potential for synergistic learning (learning by members of a team through structured interactions) to occur in the Group through this experiential learning process. It was also noted that there was no formal evaluation of this outcome, but it is reasonable to infer that the structured interactions by which the participants practised their mentoring skills fostered the creative process inherent in the synergogic model.

In this one year programme, the population of new graduates were more focused on achieving career outcomes than psychosocial benefits. Related to this career focus, it

may have been the group mentoring format itself which affected the amount of emphasis placed on desired outcomes. In a one-to-one mentoring relationship there is likely to be a greater degree of comfort and more freedom to express personal concerns than in a group discussion. Thus individual mentoring partnerships, at least in the initial, formative stages of the relationship, would be more conducive to outcomes in the psychosocial dimension than the more open group mentoring context provides. In the first year of a group mentoring programme, when the group itself was going through the initial phase of group development, it is logical to assume that levels of trust and confidence which would facilitate the sharing of more personal psychosocial concerns in the group would not yet have developed.

5.3.2 Psychosocial Development

The psychosocial outcome measure did not show a significant difference between the groups, and committee membership was the only significant predictor in the model. That is, subjects who were committee members in one of the professional association's special interest groups or sections achieved greater psychosocial development outcomes during the transition year than those who were not committee members.

The psychosocial outcome measure was largely a measure of the affective dimensions of psychosocial support. It was likely that for a new graduate, involvement in a committee would provide informal mentoring opportunities, and that these activities were conducive to the individual's psychosocial development.

Twomey's evaluation of a peer mentoring programme also failed to find any significant psychosocial outcomes for mentorees in individual peer mentoring partnerships, or for participants in a peer group with a single mentor (Twomey, 1991). The psychological well-being outcomes examined were change in positive affect, change in negative affect, and change in quality of life. For the subjects in the study, no significant effect was found for these variables. However, for the individuals who

acted as peer <u>mentors</u> for participants in the programme the results did show a significant increase in their quality of life scores with increased effort put into the programme.

This benefit to peer mentors is consistent with the higher mean scores for the Psychosocial Function (3.79) when compared with the means for the Career Function (2.95) in Noe's Mentoring Functions Scale (see Table 11). Although seemingly in contrast to the significant career outcomes, and lack of significant outcomes in the psychosocial dimension, these scores indicated that the Group Mentoring participants <u>experienced</u> psychosocial functions to a greater extent than they experienced career functions. This finding is also similar to the observation made by Butorac and Rowland (1996: 6) that "the psychosocial aspects of mentoring underpin the career development even where there is a clear focus on the latter."

Thus it would appear that the outcomes for peers in a group mentoring programme are more likely to be significant in the career development sphere, even though the psychosocial functions of mentoring for peers who act as mentors to each other are experienced to a greater degree than career-related mentoring functions. As noted in 3.3.3, high Cronbach's alpha coefficients for Noe's Mentoring Activities questionnaire were recorded in both domains of mentoring when all twenty-nine scale items were included in the reliability calculations. It was also noted that both Noe and Chao used only twenty-one of the scale items to record similar coefficients, and that contrary to Kram's original inclusion of the coaching role in the career-related functions of mentoring, these results indicated that coaching shared more common variance with psychosocial functions. Further research and analysis are needed regarding the internal consistency of the scale items to enhance the construct validity of the scale in the group mentoring context.

5.4 Results: Research Objective 3

The third research objective was to identify anticipated and experienced sources of stress which were perceived by new graduates during their transition from being a student to becoming a professional. This had a purely exploratory purpose and no hypothesis was formulated.

As reported in Table 18, most categories of anticipated pre-employment stress decreased for all groups in the post-test, indicating that the new graduates had coped with these areas of potential concern. However, for the experimental group, "finding a job" remained the largest single source of stress in the post-test, indicating that this issue was the main cause of concern for the year, and suggesting that this group experienced more difficulty in finding a job than the two comparison groups.

Sources of stress relating to "on the job issues" were anticipated and experienced by similar percentages of subjects. It was noticeable that "adjusting to a new job and workload" was the largest single source of stress experienced by the total group falling only very slightly from the level anticipated at pre-test.

For all groups, post-test scores increased in most areas of organisational, professional and personal issues. There was an increase for all groups in the stresses associated with organisational/industrial issues. Responses increased in a couple of areas for those who had an individual mentor (C2) and members of the Group Mentoring Programme, while declining in the group who did not have a mentor (C1). These categories were: professional issues/professional identity and psychosocial issues. This suggested that these two groups were experiencing similar concerns, which may have been related to the fact that they felt the need to be in a current mentoring relationship or programme, or that the mentoring had the effect of raising awareness of these issues. The reason that they differed in this respect from the group who did not have a current mentor (C1) could be explored in further research.

The research has indicated that the transitional stage between being a student and becoming a professional can be stressful for new graduates, and that the main areas of stress experienced in their first year as professional librarians fall into the categories of finding employment and adjusting to the demands of a new job and workplace. Thus in addition to the process of professional socialisation, new graduates experienced pressure imposed on them by their organisational context.

Modern organisations may exert different and sometimes conflicting demands on professionals. The basic tenets and values of a profession, however, remain the same. For librarians, these values have related generally to qualitative issues such as rights of access to information, the duty of care to clients, and the power relationships which ensue from decision-making and control over access to information. The information professions have developed rapidly in the last half of this century since the advent of the "information explosion". These professional groups also include information workers such as systems analysts, computer programmers and information brokers. These have evolved in conjunction with the revolutionary developments in information and communication technologies, and the computerisation of most aspects of information work. There has been some blurring of boundaries between the information professions, and it is not unlikely that these tensions are played out in the workplace adding to a lack of clarity experienced by new graduates with regard to delineation of professional roles and responsibilities.

For the Group Mentoring participants, similar concerns were expressed in both the responses to the question about possible sources of stress that they were anticipating in the coming year and in the learning objectives that they formulated to be addressed in the group. This suggested that the anticipated sources of stress were viewed as problems for which a coping mechanism could be learnt within the mentoring framework or problems for which a mentoring strategy could be devised which would resolve or alleviate the source of stress.

It was likely that positive stress would be experienced by new graduates at the time

when they felt both apprehensive and excited about entering their chosen profession. This positive aspect of stress could have been built on in the Group Mentoring Programme, thus strengthening the link with a social model of health. While one of the learning objectives of the Group related to developing strategies for coping with stress, this was intended to minimise negative stress, rather than developing the beneficial aspects of stress. As positive stress was not the subject of the research, it was not included in the analysis of the responses.

It was interesting to note that financial constraints were mentioned only once in relation to a separate category of perceived sources stress (the cost of attending professional development activities), but did not warrant a separate category as this was not the main focus of the response.

5.5 Limitations of the Research

The main objective of this research was to conduct an impact evaluation of the Group Mentoring Programme. Because the study design was a quasi-experimental one, and the subjects were self-selected, the results were generalisable within the profession of librarianship, but not to other professional groups.

There were a number of variables which were not measured. These included: external or internal student status (this could have affected the graduates' ability to enrol in the Group Mentoring Programme), full-time or part-time student status, marital status, previous work experience (either in libraries or non-library environments), previous management experience, other member/s of the family being librarians, employment outcomes. These factors may have affected the outcomes, and could be included in future research designs.

A second objective was to explore and develop the conceptual and theoretical bases of mentoring. This could only be done in a limited fashion i.e. the results could only be

applied to the group mentoring format and were not applicable to individual mentoring programmes or informal mentoring arrangements.

The third objective was limited to an exploration of sources of stress perceived by new graduates. Descriptive data were obtained and used to help in the understanding and interpretation of the quantitative results.

No data on costs of the Group Mentoring Programme were collected. Thus it was not possible to ascertain the cost-effectiveness of running such a programme in comparison with other types of mentoring programmes or other forms of continuing professional development which may have beneficial effects for the development of a new graduate's professional identity.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because this research utilised a quasi-experimental research design, the results of this short-term evaluation of the Group Mentoring Programme can be generalised to the library and information professions and the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. Career outcomes are significantly greater for Group Mentoring Programme participants than for graduates who do not participate in this type of programme;

2. A one year Group Mentoring Programme does make a significant difference to new graduates' sense of calling to the field, increasing their belief in the profession as a vocation, rather than "just a job";

3. A one year Group Mentoring Programme is not sufficient by itself as strategy for the development of new graduates' professional identity;

4. Psychosocial but not career development activities are successful strategies in the development of new graduates' professional identity;

5. Career development activities have a significant effect on the development of a professional identity among new graduates, but this is an inverse relationship;

6. New graduates who are professional association committee members have a higher level of psychosocial development and a greater sense of calling to the field of librarianship than non-committee members;

7. A Group Mentoring Programme is a successful strategy for the retention of professional association membership in the year following a new professional's graduation.

6.1 Professionalism and Mentoring

With regard to the development of a professional identity for new graduates of librarianship, this research has a number of implications. Professionalism is a complex

construct, generally described in terms of a number of essential characteristics or domains. The process of professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity are concepts which are related to this construct. Professional identity implies both recognition by others (external identity) as well as by the individuals themselves (internal identity) and is the main outcome of professional socialisation. The adoption of a professional identity is a gradual process of learning about the central tenets of a profession and what it means to be a professional in practice. This occurs in different ways, both informally and formally.

The results of this research have indicated that despite the role modelling and other professional development functions which occur as part of the mentoring process, a one year group mentoring programme is not sufficient to make a significant difference in the development of a new graduate's professional identity. Thus, this research has supported the proposition that the development of a professional identity cannot be left to the informal influence of the mentoring process and that professionalism should be taught as part of a structured, formal learning programme. It has been recommended that a four-stage model of mentoring as continuing professional development be incorporated into the professional association's strategies for the training and education of new professionals. This has implications for educators, practitioners, professional association members and administrators, researchers and participants in mentoring programmes.

It can be deduced from these findings that because the outcome variable (professional identity) has been shown to be affected by psychosocial development and committee membership, it would therefore be beneficial for any mentoring programme which aims to promote professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity to focus on psychosocial development strategies and encourage new graduates to become members of one of their professional association's committees.

Professional development can be differentiated from career development, and in the context of mentoring, it has been found that career development is a significant outcome in the first year of a group mentoring programme.

6.2 Mentoring Theory

With regard to the conceptual and theoretical bases of mentoring, three essential characteristics of mentoring have been described. It has been suggested that these should be taken into account when designing a group mentoring programme to ensure that the essence of mentoring is incorporated into such a programme. Forms of mentoring which occur in the group context have been outlined, and it is further suggested that the objectives of a group mentoring programme should include the teaching and practising of mentoring skills in order to ensure that the group functions as a "mentoring" group and not simply as a support group.

As a result of this programme evaluation which has highlighted the structure and processes involved in implementing a facilitated group mentoring programme and indicated some areas where successful outcomes are possible, a fourteen-step process has been developed to outline the steps necessary for the establishment of such a programme (Ritchie & Genoni, 1999). (See Appendix F.)

6.3 Stress and Mentoring for New Graduates

Employment issues (either finding a job or adjusting to the demands of a new job and a new workplace) were both anticipated and found to be sources of stress for new graduates. Mentoring as a strategy for adult learning and development is both adaptable and responsive, and therefore suitable as a method for "point of need" learning. As the career-related outcomes were significantly greater for participants in the Group Mentoring Programme, it is suggested that group mentoring is an effective

strategy at this transitional stage for directly addressing employment-related issues and concerns which may be factors contributing to chronic stress. It is suggested that in order to alleviate these sources of stress the facilitators of similar mentoring programmes should focus on these issues incorporating specific coping mechanisms and support strategies into the practical mentoring activities and learning objectives for the group.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

There are a number of areas which have been highlighted in the previous discussion which could be the subject of future research leading to an increased understanding of the group mentoring construct. In particular it is suggested that because the benefits of mentoring have been shown in the literature to increase after the initiation phase, and to continue even after the formal mentoring relationship has been terminated, longitudinal research in the following areas should be conducted to evaluate the long-term effects of group mentoring programmes:

- professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity (using Hall's Professionalism Scale with the name of the professional group inserted to qualify the term "colleague", thus clearly differentiating professional associates from co-workers);

- objective measures of career outcomes (employment outcomes, job classifications and salary levels attained);

- psychosocial outcomes (changes in positive and negative effect, quality of life measures);

- professional association membership retention and activity levels;

- further analysis of the Group Mentoring Programme participants' mentoring functions data (measured by Noe's Mentoring Activities questionnaire), and the relationship of this baseline data to objective, longer-term outcome measures.

In addition to these longer term studies, group mentoring research could be extended to include:

- further exploration of the three forms of mentoring (individual, peer and co-mentoring) which occur in a group mentoring programme;

- further research and analysis using Noe's Mentoring Activities questionnaire regarding the internal consistency of the scale items within the two spheres of mentoring in order to enhance the construct validity of the scale in the group mentoring context;

- an exploratory study of other variables (professional and personal) which may affect mentoring outcomes with a view to controlling for the confounding effects of these variables in future mentoring programme evaluations;

- cross-sectional surveys comparing group mentoring programmes for new graduates in librarianship from different universities and in other states;

- studies of professional socialisation and the development of a professional identity in other professional groups;

- cost effectiveness studies, such as comparisons of group versus individual mentoring programmes, mentoring versus other forms of continuing professional development;

- evaluative research into the effectiveness of other types of group mentoring programmes, particularly those whose purposes relate to adult development and learning, and coping with the stress associated with transitional stages.

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Appendix A
Hall's Professionalism Scale

The following questions are an attempt to measure certain aspects of what is commonly called 'professionalism'. Each item should be answered in light of the way you both believe and think you behave as a member of the library profession.

There are 5 possible responses to each item. If the item corresponds VERY WELL (VW) to your own attitudes and /or behaviour, circle that response. If it corresponds WELL (W), POORLY (P), or VERY POORLY (VP), mark the appropriate response. The middle category (?) is to indicate an essentially neutral opinion about the item. Please answer ALL items, making sure that you have ONLY ONE RESPONSE FOR EACH ITEM.

1. I will systematically read the professional journals.   VW W ? P VP

2. Other professions are actually more vital to society than librarianship.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

3. I will make my own decisions in regard to what is to be done in my work.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

4. I will regularly attend professional meetings at the local level.   VW W ? P VP

5. I think that librarianship, more than any other profession, is essential for society.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

6. My fellow professionals will have a pretty good idea about each other's work.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

7. People in librarianship have a real 'calling' for their work.   VW W ? P VP

8. The importance of my profession is sometimes over stressed.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

9. The dedication of people in librarianship is most gratifying.   VW W ? P VP

10. I don't think that I will have much opportunity to exercise my own judgement.

                                                                   VW W ? P VP

11. I believe that the professional organisation should be supported. VW W ? P VP

12. Some other occupations are actually more important to society than librarianship.

VW W ? P VP

13. A problem in librarianship is that no one really knows what their colleagues are doing.

VW W ? P VP

14. It is encouraging to see the high level of idealism which is maintained by people in the library field.

VW W ? P VP

15. The professional organisation doesn't really do much for the average member.

VW W ? P VP

16. We really have no way of judging each other's competence.   VW W ? P VP

17. Although I would like to, I really don't read the journals very often.   VW W ? P VP

18. Most people would stay in librarianship even if their incomes were reduced.

VW W ? P VP

19. My own decisions will be subject to review.   VW W ? P VP

20. There won't be much opportunity to judge how another person does their work.

VW W ? P VP

21. I will be my own boss in almost every work-related situation.   VW W ? P VP

22. If ever an occupation is indispensable, it is librarianship.   VW W ? P VP

23. My colleagues pretty well know how well we all do in our work.

VW W ? P VP

24. There are very few librarians who don't really believe in their work.

VW W ? P VP

25. Most of my decisions will be reviewed by other people.   VW W ? P VP

Appendix B
Pre-test questionnaire

<div align="center">LIBRARY STUDIES GRADUATES' QUESTIONNAIRE</div>

Please tick the correct answer or write your answer in the space provided.

1.   How old were you on your last birthday?

20-25 years
26-35 years
36-45 years
46 and over

2.   Are you :

female
male

3.   What qualification in librarianship are you now completing?

4.   Do you have a CV prepared?

Yes
No

5.   Were you a member of ALIA prior to November 1996?

Yes
No

6.   Are you a <u>committee</u> member of an ALIA Special Interest Group or Section?

Yes
No

7.   How many ALIA meetings have you attended in the past year?

8.   How many professional development events have you attended in the past year?

How would you rate yourself for each of the following :
Please circle one response for each question.

9. Your current feeling of belonging to the profession of librarianship?

high   medium   low

10. Your current level of activity in ALIA networks?

high   medium   low

11. Your current level of involvement in your peer support network?

high   medium   low

12. Your awareness of issues affecting librarianship and libraries?

     high   medium   low

13. Your ability to apply your professional knowledge and skills in the workplace?

     high   medium   low

14. Do you have any professional objectives that you hope to achieve in the next 12 months?

                    Yes
                    No

15. If yes, how confident are you that you will achieve your objectives?

     high   medium   low

16.   In the coming year, in the transition from being a student to being a professional, what potential sources of stress (if any) do you anticipate?

_____

_____

17.   Do you or have you had anyone who you would regard as a mentor during your working life?

                    Yes
                    No

18.   If yes, what role/s did they play as a mentor?

☐ sponsor   ☐ role model
☐ coach   ☐ counsellor
☐ facilitated exposure   ☐ offered confirmation
☐ offered challenging work ☐ friend
☐ offered protection   ☐ other (please specify)

Post-test questionnaire

LIBRARY STUDIES GRADUATES' QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the correct answer or write your answer in the space provided.

1. Do you have a CV prepared?

    Yes
    No

2. Are you a member of ALIA?

    Yes
    No

3. Are you a <u>committee</u> member of an ALIA Special Interest Group or Section?

    Yes
    No

4. How many ALIA (or other professional library association) meetings
    have you attended in the past year?

5. How many professional development events have you attended in the past year?

How would you rate yourself for each of the following :
Please circle one response for each question.

6. Your current feeling of belonging to the profession of librarianship?

    high   medium   low

7. Your current level of activity in ALIA (or other professional library association) networks?

    high   medium   low

8. Your current level of involvement in your peer support network?

    high   medium   low

9. Your awareness of issues affecting librarianship and libraries?

    high   medium   low

10. Your ability to apply your professional knowledge and skills in the workplace?

    high   medium   low

11. Do you have any professional objectives that you hope to achieve in the next 12 months?

    Yes
    No

12. If yes, how confident are you that you will achieve your objectives?

    high   medium   low

13. In the past year, in the transition from being a student to being a professional, have you experienced any particular types of stress?

Comments:

14. In your professional life, do you currently have anyone who you would regard as a mentor?

    Yes
    No

15. If yes, what role/s do they play as a mentor?

    ☐ sponsor   ☐ role model
    ☐ coach   ☐ counsellor
    ☐ facilitated exposure ☐ offered confirmation
    ☐ offered challenging work ☐ friend
    ☐ offered protection   ☐ other (please specify)

Comments:

Appendix C
Noe's Mentoring Activities Questionnaire

MENTORING ACTIVITIES QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to measure the extent to which mentoring activities have taken place in the Group Mentoring Programme.

The term 'mentor' refers to:
- the facilitators of the Group Mentoring Programme as individual mentors; and
- the participants in the Group as peer mentors.

Please answer the following questions with regard to the extent to which you believe the statement describes your experience of mentoring activities in the 1997 Group Mentoring Programme (circle your response).

> 1 = no experience of this function of mentoring
> 2 = to a slight extent
> 3 = to a moderate extent
> 4 = to a large extent
> 5 = to a very large extent

1. My mentor(s) has encouraged me to prepare for advancement.   1 2 3 4 5

2. My mentor(s) has encouraged me to try new ways of behaving in my job/job seeking behaviour.
                                                                                 1 2 3 4 5

3. My mentor(s) has shared the history of their career with me.   1 2 3 4 5

4. I try to imitate the professional behaviour of my mentor(s).   1 2 3 4 5

5. I agree with my mentors attitudes and values regarding librarianship.   1 2 3 4 5

6. I respect and admire my mentor(s).   1 2 3 4 5

7. I will try to be like my mentor(s) when I reach a similar position in my career. 1 2 3 4 5

8. My mentor(s) has demonstrated good listening skills in our conversations.   1 2 3 4 5

9. My mentor(s) has discussed my questions or concerns regarding feelings of competence, commitment to advancement, relationships with peers and supervisors or work/family conflicts.
                                                                                 1 2 3 4 5

10. My mentor(s) has shared personal experiences as an alternative perspective to my problems.
                                                                                 1 2 3 4 5

11. My mentor(s) has encouraged me to talk openly about anxiety and fears that detract from my performance.   1 2 3 4 5

12. My mentor(s) has conveyed empathy for the concerns and feelings I have discussed with them.
                                                                                 1 2 3 4 5

13. My mentor(s) has kept feeling and doubts I shared with them in strict confidence. 1 2 3 4 5

14. My mentor(s) has conveyed feelings of respect for me as an individual.   1 2 3 4 5

15. My mentor(s) reduced unnecessary risks that could threaten the possibility of achieving my goals.
    1 2 3 4 5

16. My mentor(s) helped me to finish assignments/tasks or meet deadlines that otherwise would have
been difficult to complete.   1 2 3 4 5

17. My mentor(s) helped meet new colleagues.   1 2 3 4 5

18. My mentor(s) gave me assignments that increased my written and personal contact with librarians.
    1 2 3 4 5

19. My mentor(s) assigned responsibilities that have increased my contact with potential employers
    1 2 3 4 5

20. My mentor(s) gave me assignments or tasks that have prepared me for employment.   1 2 3 4 5

21. My mentor(s) gave me assignments that present opportunities to learn new skills.   1 2 3 4 5

22. My mentor(s) provided me with support and feedback regarding my performance as a professional
librarian.   1 2 3 4 5

23. My mentor(s) suggested specific strategies for achieving my career goals.   1 2 3 4 5

24. My mentor(s) shared ideas with me.   1 2 3 4 5

25. My mentor(s) suggested specific strategies for accomplishing my professional objectives.
    1 2 3 4 5

26. My mentor(s) gave me feedback regarding my performance in my present situation.   1 2 3 4 5

27. My mentor(s) has invited me to join them on social occasions.   1 2 3 4 5

28. My mentor(s) has asked me for suggestions concerning problems or issues they are encountering.
    1 2 3 4 5

29. My mentor(s) has interacted with me socially outside the work environment.   1 2 3 4 5

Appendix D
Indexes: Comparison of Means by Treatment Groups
D1: Professional Identity Indexes by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Professional Identity Index (Pre-test)	Professional Identity Index (Post-test)	Professional Identity Index (Difference)
C1: No mentor	Mean	85.39	86.78	1.39
	N	18	18	18
	Std. Deviation	8.79	8.74	9.78
C2: Individual mentor	Mean	85.64	86.36	.73
	N	22	22	22
	Std. Deviation	7.58	8.66	7.00
E: Group mentoring participant	Mean	81.87	84.13	2.26
	N	23	23	23
	Std. Deviation	5.53	5.64	5.70
Total	Mean	84.19	85.67	1.48
	N	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	7.39	7.68	7.40

D2: Professional Identity Indexes (Professional Organisation) by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Professional Organisation (Pre-test)	Professional Organisation (Post-test)	Professional Organisation (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	20.22	18.56	-1.6667
	Std. Deviation	2.67	3.75	3.6137
	Minimum	15	9	-11.00
	Maximum	25	24	3.00
C2 (N=22)	Mean	19.50	18.23	-1.2727
	Std. Deviation	2.87	3.72	4.0495
	Minimum	13	11	-9.00
	Maximum	23	24	6.00
E (N=23)	Mean	19.35	18.91	-.4348
	Std. Deviation	2.10	3.12	2.4648
	Minimum	15	11	-8.00
	Maximum	23	24	3.00
Total (N=63)	Mean	19.65	18.57	-1.0794
	Std. Deviation	2.54	3.47	3.3997
	Minimum	13	9	-11.00
	Maximum	25	24	6.00

D3: Professional Identity Indexes (Public Service) by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Public Service (Pre-test)	Public service (Post-test)	Public Service (Difference)
C1 **(N=18)**	Mean	13.28	13.89	.6111
	Std. Deviation	4.00	4.47	5.2708
	Minimum	9	6	-7.00
	Maximum	23	21	12.00
C2 **(N=22)**	Mean	15.14	15.77	.6364
	Std. Deviation	3.67	3.96	4.1923
	Minimum	9	10	-6.00
	Maximum	22	25	12.00
E **(N=23)**	Mean	14.65	14.30	-.3478
	Std. Deviation	3.27	3.31	2.9941
	Minimum	8	8	-7.00
	Maximum	22	20	6.00
Total **(N=63)**	Mean	14.43	14.70	.2698
	Std. Deviation	3.65	3.92	4.1200
	Minimum	8	6	-7.00
	Maximum	23	25	12.00

D4: Professional Identity Indexes (Self-Regulation) by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Self-regulation (Pre-test)	Self-regulation (Post-test)	Self-regulation (Difference)
C1 **(N=18)**	Mean	16.83	17.50	.67
	Std. Deviation	4.26	3.35	4.17
	Minimum	9	9	-6
	Maximum	25	22	11
C2 **(N=22)**	Mean	17.41	16.91	-.50
	Std. Deviation	2.89	3.05	2.99
	Minimum	12	12	-7
	Maximum	22	22	3
E **(N=23)**	Mean	16.87	17.35	.48
	Std. Deviation	2.51	2.37	2.79
	Minimum	13	14	-4
	Maximum	21	23	4
Total **(N=63)**	Mean	17.05	17.24	.19
	Std. Deviation	3.18	2.88	3.29
	Minimum	9	9	-7
	Maximum	25	23	11

D5: Professional Identity Indexes (Calling) by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Calling (Pre-test)	Calling (Post-test)	Calling (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	18.67	17.06	-1.6111
	Std. Deviation	3.87	3.57	3.7907
	Minimum	12	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	4.00
C2 (N=22)	Mean	18.14	18.14	-7.6328E-17
	Std. Deviation	3.28	2.75	2.3905
	Minimum	14	13	-4.00
	Maximum	24	23	5.00
E (N=23)	Mean	16.43	17.52	1.0870
	Std. Deviation	2.97	2.59	2.9374
	Minimum	10	11	-6.00
	Maximum	21	22	6.00
Total (N=63)	Mean	17.67	17.60	-6.3492E-02
	Std. Deviation	3.44	2.94	3.1820
	Minimum	10	11	-9.00
	Maximum	25	24	6.00

D6: Professional Identity Indexes (Autonomy) by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Autonomy (Pre-test)	Autonomy (Post-test)	Autonomy (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	16.39	18.11	1.7222
	Std. Deviation	3.66	3.20	3.7855
	Minimum	10	13	-5.00
	Maximum	22	25	8.00
C2 (N=22)	Mean	15.45	16.05	.5909
	Std. Deviation	2.36	2.48	2.1747
	Minimum	12	10	-3.00
	Maximum	21	21	4.00
E (N=23)	Mean	14.57	15.61	1.0435
	Std. Deviation	2.02	3.24	3.6616
	Minimum	12	10	-6.00
	Maximum	20	23	11.00
Total (N=63)	Mean	15.40	16.48	1.0794
	Std. Deviation	2.75	3.12	3.2394
	Minimum	10	10	-6.00
	Maximum	22	25	11.00

D7: Career Indexes by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Career Index (Pre-test)	Career Index (Post-test)	Career Index (Difference)
C1 (N=18)	Mean	1.9711	1.7401	-.2309
	Std. Deviation	1.1072	1.1063	.8825
	Minimum	.00	.00	-2.28
	Maximum	3.69	3.41	1.22
C2 (N=22)	Mean	1.9640	2.2552	.2911
	Std. Deviation	.8402	.9560	.9000
	Minimum	1.00	.06	-1.61
	Maximum	4.13	3.41	2.00
E (N=23)	Mean	2.7246	3.7740	1.0494
	Std. Deviation	1.0766	.7862	1.0342
	Minimum	.00	2.56	-.78
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39
Total (N=63)	Mean	2.2437	2.6625	.4188
	Std. Deviation	1.0591	1.2762	1.0692
	Minimum	.00	.00	-2.28
	Maximum	5.33	5.58	3.39

D8: Psychosocial Indexes by Treatment Groups

Treatment Groups		Psychosocial Index (Pre-test)	Psychosocial Index (Post-test)	Psychosocial Index (Difference)
C1: No mentor	Mean	9.94	9.39	-.56
	N	18	18	18
	Std. Deviation	1.86	2.28	1.50
C2: Individual mentor	Mean	9.27	8.95	-.32
	N	22	22	22
	Std. Deviation	1.52	1.73	1.32
E: Group mentoring participant	Mean	9.57	9.96	.39
	N	23	23	23
	Std. Deviation	1.93	2.01	1.92
Total	Mean	9.57	9.44	-.13
	N	63	63	63
	Std. Deviation	1.77	2.01	1.64

Group Mentoring: a first experience in continuing education

Abstract

This paper outlines the role of mentoring as an emerging form of continuing professional development. In particular it describes the development and implementation of a Group Mentoring Programme for graduate librarians. Group mentoring is defined, the current programme is described, the relationship of group mentoring to more traditional forms of one-to-one mentoring is examined, and the ways in which the Programme contributes to the learning process and continuing education are explicated. An impact evaluation of the Group Mentoring Programme was conducted and the short term effects of the programme are discussed. A three stage model designed to outline the ongoing role of various forms of mentoring in the development of the new professional is provided.

Introduction

For the newly graduated librarian the question will arise as to how they should begin to pursue their continuing professional education and development. At university, their education needs have been identified for them and structured into a coherent curriculum; and the learning outcomes, which are recognised by the relevant accrediting professional bodies, have been tested and graded according to means specified by the course controllers. At the point at which graduates complete a first professional qualification they are transposed from an environment where their education needs have been met by the provision of programmed exposure to suitably qualified and experienced teachers, to an environment in which they are responsible for their own learning, there is no compulsion and few guidelines.

At this crucial point in their professional life graduates are also faced with many other challenges created by the transition from student to professional. Not only are they deprived of the structure provided by their programme of study; they may also be separated from the support of their student peer group; their job prospects may be doubtful; and they are uncertain as to how they should make progress in order to gain acceptance in the wider professional groups. In such circumstances they are almost

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certainly unsure (or even unaware) of the needs they have for continuing professional education.

It is because of the very particular and personal nature of the stresses faced by newly graduated professionals that mentoring has been seen as a means of providing for their continuing education needs. It is a key feature of mentoring that it provides a means by which young or new members of a professional group can negotiate transitional phases of their careers with the assistance of a senior member of the profession.

In discussing the nature of individual, informal mentoring relationships, Kram and Isabella (1985: 110-111) describe the functions and roles which characterise mentoring relationships in the following terms:

> Mentors provide...career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility and offering challenging work or protection, all of which help the (mentoree) to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement. In the psychosocial sphere, the mentor offers role modelling, counseling, confirmation, and friendship, which help the (mentoree) to develop a sense of professional identity and competence.

This description of the functions and roles of mentoring incorporates both the career and psychosocial goals that are characteristic of most definitions. Clearly it is aimed, however, at the prospect of providing mentoring to employees in the workplace. Many organisations have introduced mentoring schemes as a mechanism for induction into the organisation or orientation to a new job, as well as a strategy for ongoing training, and management and leadership development.

In the context of organisational culture, mentoring has been used either as a strategy for socialisation (or acculturation), which aims to perpetuate the existing cultural values and norms and maintain the status quo, or for the purpose of cultural change (for example, affirmative action and minority group programmes).

Whatever the organisation's purpose, mentoring is an attempt to draw upon the acquired wisdom and skills of more senior employees, in recognition of the more inexperienced employees' needs for support during transitional stages in their careers.

New graduates of a particular profession, however, are looking for support of a different kind. Their needs relate not to induction into the work practices and philosophy of a particular organisation but to socialisation into the broader responsibilities, roles and networks that are a vital component of professional life. Exposure to professional colleagues and networks will lead to a deeper understanding of the attitudes and ideology of the profession, and this in turn helps the new professional to meet other immediate job and career-related goals. Library schools will provide some exposure to these aspects of the professional socialisation process, in particular through the provision of work-based practicum placements. To

overemphasise the professional socialisation process at this stage would, however, be both distracting and premature for the student.

It was in response to the particular needs of new graduates that the authors developed and implemented a group mentoring programme, a concept which is designed to combine the benefits of both one-to-one mentoring and peer support, and to ease the transition of newly graduated librarians into professional life. As such, it also becomes their first experience in continuing professional education, and is therefore crucial to their recognition of the importance of this professional responsibility, as well as in the identification of their particular ongoing educational and developmental needs.

Group Mentoring Defined

Group mentoring is a relatively new concept, inadequately defined and poorly represented in the literature to date. Although the term 'group mentoring' has been used to express the function of professional associations in influencing the career outcomes of members of that profession (Dansky, 1996) no adequate definition has been created to describe the concept of group mentoring as it has been implemented by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) in Western Australia. It appears that this Group Mentoring Programme is a new and unique means of providing members of a professional association with opportunities for professional socialisation and a first experience of continuing education.

Incorporating and building on Kram and Isabella's definition of conventional mentoring, the following three essential characteristics of mentoring have formed the basis of the Group Mentoring Programme. Mentoring is:

1. a two-way learning relationship which draws upon the knowledge and wisdom of suitably experienced practitioners;

2. designed to fulfil two broad purposes of career development and psychosocial development, with the specific goals of the relationship being determined by the individuals involved; and

3. a relationship which develops over time, i.e. there is more than just a passing interest on the part of the mentor in the mentoree, and the relationship passes through a series of developmental stages. (This is one of the features of mentoring which distinguishes it from other forms of professional development and training, such as coaching.)

Thus, the term group mentoring is used to describe the process in which the functions and roles of mentoring are shared by the group's leaders and participants and carried out in a group environment.

The ALIA (WA) Group Mentoring Programme

Programme aim and objectives

The central aim of the Group Mentoring Programme is to facilitate the transition of newly graduated librarians into the profession. In their broadest sense, the programme objectives relate to continuing education in librarianship and professional socialisation. Du Toit (1996: 164-165) defines professional socialisation as:

> a developmental process of adult socialization. Not only does it involve the recognition of an assumed identity by the outside world; it also involves individuals' recognition of the identity within themselves and the non-deliberate projection of themselves in its terms - referred to as *internalization.*

Thus professional socialisation results in the recognition and projection of a professional identity. This concept may be equated to the career and psychosocial functions and outcomes of mentoring as outlined in Kram and Isabella's definition of mentoring i.e. the career outcomes which help the individual to gain recognition and establish a role in the organisation (or, in this case, the professional association); and the development of a professional identity and competence, which are suggested as the main outcomes in the psychosocial sphere.

The stated, formal objectives of the Group Mentoring Programme are:
1. to provide opportunities for continuing professional development in librarianship;
2. to facilitate the sharing of information, ideas and feedback in a supportive environment;
3. to encourage the application of the theory learnt in formal education to practical issues and experiences;
4. to assist participants to develop and achieve their career plans;
5. to provide opportunities for participants to learn and practice mentoring and peer support skills;
6. to encourage the development of leadership roles within the group;
7. to introduce the participants to ALIA committees, groups and networks.

Description of the Programme

Information about the programme was circulated prior to the end of the final semester to graduating students from the two Western Australian universities' library schools. Seventeen new graduates attended the first meeting. Numbers fluctuated slightly and eventually stabilised with eleven completing the year, the other six having dropped out due to relocation or clashing commitments. The programme is now in its second year, and there are approximately thirty participants in 1997. The following discussion will be limited to describing the 1996 programme.

In the original group of seventeen participants there were fourteen females and three males. There were eight graduates of the three year Bachelor degree, and nine who had completed the one year Graduate Diploma. ALIA membership was an eligibility criterion for participation in the programme. Only six were already student members of ALIA and most had not previously attended an ALIA event.

The meetings were held monthly from December 1995 to November 1996. A pretest was administered at the first meeting to collect baseline data to assist in the final evaluation of the Programme. The needs analysis and formulation of the group's learning objectives was carried out in the first session. The participants discussed their individual objectives for the year and from this, nineteen learning objectives for the group were developed and prioritised. These fell into two main categories corresponding to the mentoring functions of career and psychosocial development.

The objectives were prioritised with the most important and urgent chosen as topics for the first few months' meetings. These related to writing *curriculum vitae*, job applications, addressing selection criteria, and interviewing skills. As the programme progressed participants' interests broadened to consider issues related to establishing professional contacts (an introduction to ALIA and other networks); coping with the demands of a professional role (stress issues, time management and relaxation strategies); and dealing with matters related to the creation and maintenance of a professional profile (personal authority in the workplace and marketing).

Strategic objectives were adopted by the leaders to ensure that some progress was made on the programme's seven formal objectives. These included training in mentoring skills (such as giving and receiving feedback, coaching, self-evaluation and providing supervision); reinforcing leadership roles within the group by encouraging participants to take responsibility for achieving particular learning objectives by organising and facilitating meetings; providing opportunities for more informal discussions and social activities in order to develop a supportive environment.

Other roles of the facilitators have been :
• provision of leadership in the form of initial establishment and ongoing administration of the group;
• ensuring the maintenance of a supportive environment;
• suggestions for learning activities;
• teaching mentoring skills;
• providing introductions to the wider ALIA networks;
• monitoring progress on the achievement of the group's objectives;
• evaluation of the Programme.

During the course of the Programme attempts were made by the facilitators to maintain the personal contact with participants that is the feature of more traditional one-to-one mentoring partnerships. This has included encouraging participants to

meet individually with the facilitator of their choice; providing feedback on *curriculum vitae* and written job applications prior to submission; and arranging introductions to selected practitioners or visits to libraries as requested by the participants.

Group Mentoring and Continuing Education

There are a number of ways in which the Group Mentoring environment provides the structural and attitudinal context for continuing education to occur. The qualities of continuing education outlined by Stone, Patrick and Conroy (1974:23) are consistent with the philosophy of the Programme and have been reiterated throughout this discussion. These qualities are:

1. It implies a notion of <u>lifelong learning</u> as a means of keeping an individual up-to-date with new knowledge; it prevents obsolescence
2. It includes <u>updating</u> a person's education (e.g. makes an individual's education comparable to that of a person receiving a like degree or like certificates at the present time)
3. <u>It allows for diversification to a new area within a field</u> (e.g. supervisory and management training)
4. It assumes that the <u>individual carries the basic responsibility</u> for his or her own development
5. It involves education activities which are <u>beyond those considered necessary for entrance into the field</u>

Mentoring relationships are typically supportive of individuals' learning, and this is translated into the group by creating a 'safe' learning environment. Norms which are supportive of individuals are consciously reinforced (e.g. maintaining confidentiality within the group, encouraging peer coaching and other paired or small group learning activities, and noting individuals' successes and achievements).

The learning objectives
Professional socialisation is a developmental process, beginning in the student's first year of tertiary study, and continuing on through the early years of professional life. It involves learning (or internalising) new knowledge, skills and attitudes which are the distinguishing characteristics of a particular profession. Once internalised, this professional identity is then 'non-deliberately' projected by the individual and is recognisable to the outside world.

Although the ages and life experiences in the group vary from those who have proceeded through university immediately following their secondary schooling, to those who have returned to study at a mature age, in terms of professional experience and knowledge, the group is a fairly homogeneous one. Because participants have just achieved their first qualification in librarianship, a similar baseline level of knowledge and skills can be assumed. The most obvious and

clearest stimulation to learning is apparent in the needs analysis when the gap between the participants' current levels of knowledge, skills and attitudes and those of a professional librarian, is identified. In this initial needs assessment the group's learning objectives are created through a process of brainstorming, and formulating and prioritising the learning objectives; these then form the focus of the monthly meetings. The learning objectives are thus not simply the sum of all the individuals' personal objectives. They are the result of the first piece of work that the group performs as a group. This is the first step towards establishing a cohesive group which is conducive to a self-directed, adult learning style; a group in which the individuals involved take responsibility for their own learning. Throughout the year the topics which have been selected are subject to a process evaluation and ongoing review. This responsiveness, flexibility and 'point of need' learning is one of the main advantages of the mentoring process. In accordance with the principles of adult learning and in order to maximise the learning for all the group members, the group leaders for the session are encouraged to plan the sessions carefully, ensuring that the methods are congruent with the objectives they are hoping to achieve and utilising a variety of different teaching strategies to accommodate different learning styles. The sessions are highly participative, with didactic methods minimised.

Mentoring roles and skills
The concept of mentoring implies a two-way learning relationship, incorporating the joint functions of career and psychosocial development. In particular, the mentoring roles of role modelling, coaching and counselling highlight the educational aspects of the mentoring process. Within the group context, the facilitators, as experienced practitioners, are de facto professional role models, and participants are presented with an ongoing opportunity for vicarious or observational learning. Perry, Baranowski and Parcel (1990 : 171-172) draw on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, to describe this concept of observational learning. Regarding the efficiency of using role models for learning complex behaviours, they note:

> A person can learn from other people, not only by receiving reinforce-ments from them but also through observing them and utilizing his or her symbolic capability...In observational learning... the learner discovers rules that account for the behavior of others by observing the reinforcements they receive for their behavior.

In the more direct teaching roles of mentoring, the facilitators offer individual coaching and counselling. The counselling role is used mainly as a mechanism for clarifying and monitoring individual objectives and providing feedback to help the individual to learn from their own experience. One of the Programme's objectives is to provide opportunities for participants to learn and practice mentoring and peer support skills. Mentoring skills are modelled by the group facilitators, but deliberate strategies need to be set in place if this is to occur on a peer level. For this reason the session leaders are encouraged to incorporate ongoing coaching, feedback and supervision exercises into their teaching strategies.

Group processes

The group context provides an opportunity for the formal learning to be enhanced by group processes. Not only is there an opportunity for information sharing and discussion; there is also the added dimension of the synergistic effect and creative outcomes of the group work, which will have repercussions beyond the scope of the formal evaluations. In addition, the group process (and the individual's role in the group) may be viewed as parallelling the larger organisational and professional environments, in which committees, teams and project work form a large and growing influence. Thus individuals have an opportunity to learn about themselves, and experiences gained and new skills practised in the safety of the group can often be a stimulus to reflect on and apply the new learning in the larger environment.

Programme Evaluation

An impact evaluation of the programme to assess the short-term outcomes was conducted at the end of 1996. A post-test questionnaire was administered to the eleven participants who completed the year's programme, and the results were compared to the pre-test data. This programme has been considered a pilot, and the information gathered will be used to improve subsequent programmes and refine the measuring instruments for future use.

Since the main aim of the programme has been to facilitate the transition into the profession, the main outcome measures relate to the achievement of a professional identity. For the purpose of the programme evaluation, sub-objectives relating to the two dimensions of mentoring i.e career and psychosocial development, were developed in order to indicate the achievement of a professional identity. Career development was measured quantitatively by recording employment outcomes; psychosocial development (developing a professional identity and competence) was conceptualised as having a positive attitude regarding one's own level of ability as a professional and involvement in professional activities.

Career development

By the end of 1996, ten of the original group of seventeen had achieved full-time, professional positions. Two participants had to drop-out from the group as they relocated to take up professional positions; others returned to further studies or dropped out for various reasons.

Of the eleven participants who completed the programme, seven have been employed as professional librarians in twelve month contracts or permanent positions; one is participating in a volunteer programme, and one is employed in another area and continues to apply for jobs and pursue professional interests. The two remaining group members are not currently seeking employment.

An unexpected development of the programme was that there were a number of occasions when we were contacted by librarians who were looking for someone to

fill a position at short notice. While we acknowledge that using our professional networks is sometimes the way that such appointments are made and we were happy to provide a list of names and contact numbers, it was not our intention to act as an employment agency and it is advisable to be cautious about taking on this role. It should be noted, however, that these informal networks do exist and are at times the mechanism by which employment is found. Three participants were employed in this way as a direct result of their networking in the Programme.

Psychosocial development

The development of a professional identity and competence was measured by participants' self-ratings in the areas of professional ability and involvement. A Likert scale was used to measure participants' perceptions of their own levels of activity and involvement in professional and peer networks, their levels of knowledge and skills in librarianship and their ability to apply these in the workplace. Their ability to plan and create twelve month professional objectives, and their levels of self-confidence to achieve these objectives were also used as indicators of psychosocial development.

Individual's pre- and post-test scores were compared, and were found to have increased, suggesting that the Programme had a positive influence on the participants' self-perception of their professional identity and competence. The numbers were too small to test for statistical significance. There was, however, a larger difference in the pre- and post-test scores between those holding a Graduate Diploma (a one year course) and those having a Bachelor (a three year course). Scores for the latter group also measured a rise, although the increase was slightly smaller. This suggests the positive influence of a more gradual transition into the profession. The longer the period involved in study and the more prolonged the contact with educators, peers and practitioners, the greater the likelihood of a higher level of professional identity at the point of graduation.

In addition to the time element, the hypothesis that activities in the informal curriculum are important in the development of a professional identity is supported by the research conducted by Fidler (1995). In Fidler's study of the influence of informal interactions of masters students of librarianship with faculty, peers and practitioners, it was found that peer activity was the only predictor of professional identity. This suggests that the peer support aspect of the Group Mentoring Programme is a crucial ingredient in the professional socialisation process.

Professional outcomes

As previously stated, ALIA membership was a pre-condition for participation in the programme. An immediate outcome of the programme therefore was that ALIA acquired eleven new members. This had return benefits for the new graduates in that they gained access to ALIA publications; became informed of and involved in the activities of the Association's special interest groups, and were eligible for

discounted rates for attendance at professional development activities sponsored by the Association.

Participants had reported an average of one attendance for continuing education events and meetings in the year prior to joining the programme (1995). In the post-test the number had risen to an average of 9.1 attendances for 1996. In addition, one of the participants has joined the 1997 Programme to assist in the facilitation of the group. This increased contact is interpreted as a clear indication of the exposure to opportunities that participation in the programme offers, as well as an indication of a desire on the part of the participants to engage with their professional colleagues, to expand their professional networks, and to become involved in continuing professional education activities.

ALIA received immediate benefits from the Group Mentoring Programme through the new memberships which were generated. It is hoped that this can be converted into a longer term benefit for the Association. That is, by introducing new members to the Association by providing them with an immediate benefit; by easing their transition phase from student to practitioner; and by providing a path to other forms of participation such as committee membership, the Group Mentoring Programme will help ensure that participants begin an active and ongoing involvement in the life of their professional association.

It is also hoped that the Programme will provide participants with an early introduction to the concept of mentoring as an important means of continuing professional development, and some of the skills that are required to be effective in a mentoring partnership. By doing so, it will assist the profession to prepare a new generation of practitioners who are willing and able to share with newcomers the benefits of their developing expertise.

Comments from the participants

A further element of the evaluation of the Group Mentoring Programme was the holding of a focus group meeting for participants in the Programme. This was conducted as a part of the final meeting, and was held with the intention of soliciting more unstructured and qualitative feedback than was possible using the formal measuring instruments. It was hoped that this feedback would help the facilitators to understand the impact of the Programme on the participants, and provide useful information in planning subsequent programmes.

Although some minor problems were raised with the conduct of individual meetings, the feedback was generally very positive, with participants providing further evidence of the benefits that had been provided by the group mentoring experience. Comments made included the following:

- *the group offers support for professional development, assistance in applying for and obtaining work and support of peers in a similar position*

- *we were a group of beginners learning what it is to begin*
- *it is a 'stepping stone' into the networks - next year I will be able to contribute*
- *I leant it's not a 'closed shop' out there*
- *Group mentoring provides a friendly environment where you have no fear of failure*
- *I learnt about participation - that you get as much out as you put in*
- *I would have dropped out of the profession if I didn't have the peer support and also being able to refer to the group leaders about my CV and applying for jobs*
- *the meetings meant that I had someone to talk to in the outside world. For example, I knew people at public library committee meetings*
- *you hear about jobs and can pass on the information and recommend others because you know them*
- *I learnt that the profession cares.*

A Model for the Role of Mentoring in Professional Education

A typology for describing mentoring within a profession with the broad general purpose of professional education can be constructed by means of a three-stage model. It has been the intention that the Group Mentoring Programme contributes the second stage in which new graduate makes the transition from student to practitioner.

Stage one : Preservice training with a practicum supervisor in the role of mentor
Stage two : Transition into the profession facilitated by the Group Mentoring Programme
Stage three : Continuing education with the guidance of an individual mentor

Stage one : Preservice training with a practicum supervisor in the role of mentor

All first qualification courses in librarianship offered by universities in Western Australia include at least one, and sometimes two, practicum experiences. Students and practicum supervisors alike are encouraged to look upon this as a 'mentoring' experience. That is, the role of the supervisor has the potential to go beyond introducing the student into the particular work environment and the tasks required of them during the practicum. Ideally, the supervisors see their role as furthering the students' professional education and socialisation by discussing with them and where appropriate, advising them about broader issues related to the development of their professional profiles, skills and networks.

As indicated earlier, one of the characteristics of a true mentoring relationship is that it develops over time. This is not always possible in the practicum context. However, it is often the case that many relationships commenced during a practicum placement are ongoing, with both partners choosing to maintain contact beyond the duration of the practicum. For the student, this partnership is an important part of

their 'informal' or 'extracurricular' professional education, and later their continuing education.

Stage two : Transition into the profession facilitated by the Group Mentoring Programme

For the twelve month period immediately following completion of their first qualifying course in librarianship, the new graduate is assisted by participation in the Group Mentoring Programme. For most, this will be their first exposure to continuing professional education.

Stage three : Continuing education with the guidance of an individual mentor

ALIA (WA) also facilitates an individual mentoring programme, whereby members who self nominate are placed in contact with a practitioner with experience relevant to the needs of the prospective mentoree. Those who complete the Group Mentoring Programme are encouraged to continue to benefit from mentoring by joining in the individual mentoring programme. Intending mentorees are asked to nominate an individual who can be approached with a view to becoming their mentor. By having undertaken the Group Mentoring Programme, the new professional is in a far better position to nominate an individual (or at least to describe the characteristics they would like in a mentor) than if they had been required to make such a nomination immediately upon graduation.

The new professional who benefits from these three stages will not only develop more rapidly as an effective practitioner, but will also become far more able to return some of the benefits of mentoring to their profession. That is, they will in turn have made progress towards developing their own skills as a partner in a mentoring relationship. This recognises the two-way aspect of the mentoring relationship and implies that the mentoree has gained some knowledge and skills in how to make a mentoring relationship work well. As a result of the mentoring experience, they will in the future be able to make a significant contribution to the continuing education process, whether called upon to act as a practicum supervisor, an assistant facilitator in the Group Mentoring Programme, or an individual mentor.

Conclusion

The continuing professional education needs of library and information professionals can be accommodated in many ways. There are numerous providers of continuing education, both from within and from outside the information professions, who supply education and training courses based on the variety of skills required in order to remain an effective practitioner.

Inevitably, however, such courses are generic. They cannot cater for individual needs or provide 'point of need' learning opportunities; nor can they give the personal

support, encouragement and wisdom that are needed as we continue to develop our professional careers. This is a function that can be performed most effectively by some suitably qualified and experienced person (or persons) taking on the role of mentor.

Group mentoring as practiced in Western Australia offers a means by which the concept of mentoring can be implemented in such a way that it:
- facilitates the process of professional socialisation;
- invites the participation of mentorees at a time when they have particular continuing education needs;
- utilises and strengthens their existing network of peer support;
- provides access to senior practitioners who are available for personal mentoring;
- models and promotes the attitudes and skills needed for effective mentoring.

For participants the Group Mentoring Programme has been a very particluar form of continuing professional education, one which has built upon the knowledge and networks that have been gained as part of first degree courses, and has helped them to find their own way and develop their own voice within the profession.

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Appendix F

Ritchie, A. & Genoni, P. (1999). How to set up a facilitated group mentoring programme [in press]. Australian Library and Information Association Fifth Biennial Conference: Pathways to Knowledge: 25-28 October 1998: Adelaide.

How To Set Up A **Facilitated** Group Mentoring Programme

Aim of the workshop:
To assist the participants to set up a facilitated group mentoring programme for their own organisations.

Objectives:
1. To provide participants with an understanding of the concept of mentoring, including the individual and group mentoring formats.
2. To help participants to define the purpose of a mentoring programme for their own organisations and groups.
3. To introduce participants to the steps necessary for setting up a facilitated group mentoring programme.
4. To assist participants to develop an outline of a plan for implementing a group mentoring programme in their own organisations.

This outline will include:
- Statement of the purpose of the programme
- Definition of the target group
- Publicity and recruitment strategies
- Areas of responsibility - coordinating committee, facilitators, training, administrative support, evaluation, information/resources package, budget.
- Suggested activities
- Broad outline of programme for meetings, training etc

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Mentoring Functions and Roles

The main dimensions generally ascribed to mentoring are career development and psychosocial development. Kram and Isabella, as a result of their qualitative research into the characteristics of mentoring relationships in organisations, described the functions and roles of mentoring in the following terms (1985:111):

> Mentors provide young adults with career-enhancing functions, such as sponsorship, coaching, facilitating exposure and visibility, and offering challenging work or protection, all of which help the younger person to establish a role in the organization, learn the ropes, and prepare for advancement. In the psychosocial sphere, the mentor offers role modeling, counseling, confirmation, and friendship, which help the young adult to develop a sense of professional identity and competence.

Definition of Group Mentoring:

Three essential characteristics of mentoring have formed the conceptual basis of the Group Mentoring Programme (Genoni & Ritchie, 1996:190). These characteristics were based on a literature review and previous experience in mentoring programmes and were formulated by the authors to ensure that the newly developing group mentoring format would incorporate the essence of mentoring. These essential characteristics are that mentoring is:

1. a two-way learning relationship which draws upon the knowledge and wisdom of suitably experienced practitioners;

2. designed to fulfil two broad purposes of career development and psychosocial development, with the specific goals of the relationship being determined by the individuals involved; and

3. a relationship which develops over time, i.e. there is more than just a passing interest on the part of the mentor in the mentoree, and the relationship passes through a series of developmental stages.

Thus the term group mentoring is used to describe the process in which the functions and roles of mentoring are shared by the group's leaders and participants and carried out in a group environment.

A group mentoring programme can be adapted to any main purpose or aim of the organising body. Participants should form a fairly homogenous group with regard to eligibility criteria and with regard to the individual reasons for wanting to participate in the group. As with any mentoring relationship, individual objectives are formulated by the participants themselves. In a group context, these objectives need to be

compatible with the group's objectives and they must be able to be achieved in the group setting.

Forms of Mentoring in the Group Context

There is the potential for three forms of mentoring to be experienced within a small group context: individual mentoring, peer mentoring and co-mentoring.

1. Individual mentoring
   The facilitators of the programme act as mentors to the participants, both within and outside the group meetings. Participants are encouraged to contact the facilitators when they require personal support from an objective and more experienced practitioner. In this way they fulfil the counselling and coaching roles of mentoring. Career strategies, including facilitating exposure and offering challenging work also fall into this category of individual mentoring.

   The role model function of mentoring is a less obvious role. Within the group context, the facilitators, as experienced practitioners, are de facto professional role models, and participants are presented with an ongoing opportunity for vicarious or observational learning. Perry, Baranowski and Parcel (1990: 171-172) have drawn on Bandura's Social Learning Theory, to describe this concept of observational learning. Regarding the efficiency of using role models for learning complex behaviours, they noted:

   > A person can learn from other people, not only by receiving reinforcements from them but also through observing them and utilizing his or her symbolic capability... In observational learning... the learner discovers rules that account for the behavior of others by observing the reinforcements they receive for their behavior.

2. Peer mentoring
   The group acts as a forum for peer support, networking, information sharing, confirmation and friendship, and for mentoring skills to be learnt and practised. New contacts are made and existing contacts sustained and strengthened. Participants are also encouraged to contact each other outside the group meetings and to devote time to practising the skills learnt in the group and act as peer mentors for each other. These skills include giving and receiving feedback, supervision, goal setting and coaching (Genoni & Ritchie, 1996:192).

3. Co-mentoring
   It has been proposed by Dansky (1996:6) that group dynamics often take on mentoring qualities, and that in a professional association, informal mentoring which occurs in the group may be defined as "a group influence that emerges from the social norms and roles that are characteristic of a specific group".

Co-mentoring in a more formally constructed group context is characterised by complementarity, mutuality, equal power relationships between facilitators and peers, and teamwork. Regarding the mutuality between the facilitators and peers (as mentors and mentorees) which occurs as part of a small group's structured learning process, Challis et al (1997:23) state:

> There is, therefore, little difference in professional status between the mentor and the mentees, which gives the whole mentoring process a degree of dynamic interaction which goes beyond the role of mentor as 'expert' and the mentees as 'novices'.

The group meetings are structured so that experiential learning (learning by doing), as well as observational learning can occur. The latter type of learning is integral to the mentoring process and is exemplified in the role modelling performed by the facilitator/mentor. The added dimension of the group creates the opportunity for experiential learning and "synergogy", which is defined by Mouton and Blake (1984), cited in Quinn (1995: 108) as: "a systematic approach to learning in which the members of small teams learn from one another through structured interactions". Quinn differentiates synergogy from other approaches to teaching (pedagogy, which is generally associated with a teacher-led, dependent style used in teaching children; and androgogy, which is an independent, self-directed learning style most often used when teaching adults). Quinn states that synergogy has four fundamental differences from other approaches (p108):

1. it uses learning materials managed by a learning administrator rather than having a teacher who might be seen as an authority figure;
2. students have responsibility for their own learning through active involvement with other students;
3. it rests on the premise that learning that arises from teamwork is greater than that done by the individual alone, i.e. the principle of synergy; and
4. the planned interaction with colleagues acts as a motivator for learning.

The synergistic effect derives from the meetings of the group which are designed to foster a supportive and creative learning environment. Opportunities for experiential learning are integrated into the group process. There is also an intention to create a group which reaches a stage of development where there is a sense of cohesiveness, trust and teamwork.

Co-mentoring in the small group context provides a forum for the group members to learn from each other not only through information sharing and discussion, but also by practising mentoring activities. The brainstorming and

subsequent formulation of goals or learning objectives, together with the shared responsibility for creating strategies and tasks to achieve the goals, foster teamwork. Thus, in addition to the structured learning programme by which the individuals pursue the group's learning objectives, an extra dimension is added when the group begins to function as a team.

Facilitated Mentoring

Murray (1991:5) defined facilitated programmes as:

> a structure and series of processes designed to create effective mentoring relationships, guide the desired behaviour change of those involved, and evaluate the results for the proteges, the mentors and the organisation.

The coordinator and/or committee of a facilitated programme implements a formal structure and processes in which the programme operates. They also offer assistance and support to the participants in order to facilitate effective relationships. For example, liaison and guidance, training in mentoring skills, information kits, organisation of regular meetings; resourcing may also include payment of a stipend to the mentors. Mentoring often occurs during transitional stages and behaviour change may be one of the specific goals of a relationship. An evaluation of the programme's outcomes checks to see whether the groups involved achieved their objectives.

The term "systematic" mentoring has been used by Boyle and Boice (1998:174), who described a model of programme design which has three main components: planning, structure and assessment. This appears to be similar to the concept of a facilitated programme, as the programme they described to illustrate the model has a strong focus on involvement of both the participants and the facilitators or programme organisers.

Research has shown that there are at least seven characteristics of mentoring programmes which are critical to the success of the programme:

- Clearly defined purpose and goals
- Coordinator and/or committee support
- Mentors with interpersonal skills and an interest in the development of others
- Training in the skills of mentoring
- Mentors who are accessible
- Regular meeting may be a requirement
- It is what you <u>do</u>, rather than personalities involved that is important

<u>Steps to establish and implement a facilitated group mentoring programme:</u>

The following 14 points outline the steps necessary to develop and implement a facilitated group mentoring programme. It is expected that an individual or committee will coordinate this process. A group programme may stand alone, or be incorporated into the structure of an individual mentoring programme.

1. Purpose of the programme
    Why have a mentoring programme?

    3 levels of objectives must be defined - the organising body, the group/programme level, and the individual (peers and facilitators) level.

    1.1   <u>The organisation</u>
          What is the organisation trying to achieve by running a mentoring programme? i.e. what are the aims and objectives of the programme and how do these fit into the organisation's strategic plan?
          Are there any professional competencies that the programme is aimed at developing?
          Why do you (the coordinator/s of the programme) want to run a mentoring programme?
          Why is this an appropriate strategy (as opposed to other strategies which could achieve the same objectives)?

    1.2   <u>The group</u>
          What is the main aim of the mentoring group i.e. what is the group trying to achieve?
          Are there any other <u>objectives</u> of for the group?
          What are the group's learning objectives - these may be formulated by the group's participants when the group has been formed - they are not simply the sum of the individuals' objectives, but comprise the objectives which the group creates for itself.)

    1.3   <u>The individual</u>
          What are the individuals' reasons for being in the group, and what are they hoping to achieve as a result of their participation?
          What are their professional and personal objectives for the year?

2. Identify and define the target group
    Who is the programme for?

    What are the broad, general characteristics and needs of this group?
    They should be individuals with similar needs e.g. a particular stage of

development in their career, working in the same type of library, similar subject interest.

3. Identify the committee and coordinator/facilitators of the programme
    Who will be responsible for designing, implementing and running the group programme?

    The facilitators must have relevant work experience, subject knowledge, and skills in group facilitation and mentoring training to ensure that the purposes of the programme are achieved on all levels i.e. organisational, group and individual. It may be appropriate to engage the services of a consultant when considering the the design of the programme.

4. Budget
    What are the resourcing implications?

    What is the level of support offered by the organisation?
    Draw up a budget, taking into account administration costs.
    Are the facilitators paid for their time (by the organisation, group members, or by individuals requiring individual mentoring sessions)
    Are the guest speakers paid a fee or reimbursed for costs?

5. Design a pre-test
    This will gather baseline data (including any relevant demographics and background information).
    This will be used in the programme evaluation to measure whether the aim and objectives of the programme have been achieved.

6. Recruitment and publicity
    How will you let people know about the group?

    Publicise the group to the intended audience (potential participants and other members of the organisation) and ask for:
    - expressions of interest in participating in the group (names and contact details);
    - give notification of the first meeting date, time and place;
    - ask intending participants to think about their personal objectives i.e. their reason for wanting to belong to the group, what they want to learn and achieve in the year.

    A broad outline of the programme should be provided e.g. programme aims and duration, names and contact numbers of the coordinator/facilitator, suggested times and places of meetings.

    General information about mentoring can be provided at this stage (e.g. a mentoring information kit containing roles and responsibilities of mentors and mentorees, mentoring skills and activities, FAQs, possible benefits). Other

support resources can be made available during the programme.

7. Selection of group participants
   What are the eligibility criteria?

   Make selections according to the criteria to ensure a relatively homogenous group; around 30 participants is manageable as you can expect a drop-out rate. Small groups can also be formed at this stage.
   Send a letter confirming acceptance and the details of the first meeting.

8. The first meeting
   Ask the participants to record their individual learning objectives (these can be used for a mid-point assessment/supervision session).
   Brainstorm the group's learning needs (needs analysis) in order to formulate a programme.
   Prioritise these for the first part of the year.
   Ask for leaders for each session.
   Set meeting dates and place for the year - meetings can be held at different venues, depending on the purpose of the group, but dates should probably be regular, at least monthly or more frequently to ensure continuity and cohesiveness.
   Administer pre-test.

9. Organising each meeting
   Meet with leaders before each session to discuss the objectives and how they are going to achieve them.
   Incorporate mentoring skills development activities into the sessions (e.g. adult learning styles, communication skills, giving and receiving feedback, supervision skills, goal setting and career planning).

10. Individual supervision sessions
    Meet with leaders after each session for "supervision" regarding how they went and what they learnt from the experience. (Supervision can follow a simple formula: "what did you do well? what did you not do so well? what would you do differently next time?")

11. Individual mentoring
    Organise meetings outside the group between the facilitators/mentors and individual group members each month, or on request (e.g. coaching, counselling, specific career planning strategies, goal setting).

12. Peer mentoring
    Encourage peer support e.g. feedback exercises; circulate contact numbers; organise learning groups or partners for particular projects.

13. Process evaluation

Conduct a mid-point process evaluation to make sure that the individuals' needs are being met, and to reassess and re-prioritise the learning objectives. This should assess the following:

- Is the programme <u>reaching</u> its target population?
- Are participants <u>satisfied</u> with the programme?
- Are the activities <u>implemented</u> as outlined?
- Are the teaching and materials of good <u>quality</u>?

Are individuals achieving their personal objectives?

14. Short-term (impact) evaluation:

Administer post-test, and compare results to pre-test. Report on the evaluation.

<u>Operating principles and philosophy</u>

- mutuality and complementarity: we are all learners and teachers for each other;
- principles of adult learning: participants are responsible for their own learning and independent, self-directed learning is encouraged;
- transitional stages can be stressful: mentoring provides a network of support and teaches coping skills;
- mentoring relationships are supportive of individuals: norms which concur with this philosophy must be established in the group;
- teamwork: the aim will be to foster a team spirit by developing a group in which communication, cooperation and compassion are norms;
- 2+2=5 = synergogy: the creative potential of a group is greater than the sum of its parts.

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