
Developing Hybrid Digital Mentorship Models and Micro-Credentialing: A Framework For Professional Excellence and Burnout Prevention

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Abstract

Despite the benefits of mentoring programs, numerous studies have revealed that traditional mentorship programs often encounter difficulties and fail to meet the needs of all educators, resulting in teacher burnout and reduced opportunities for professional excellence. (Gobena, 2022, Monir and Amin, 2018). These challenges include unclear expectations for mentees, a lack of motivation among mentors, limited feedback exchange and poor-quality guidance. Indeed, educators may be reluctant to provide constructive criticism because they are worried about projecting a positive image or being completely open about the current state of the mentoring relationship. Micro-credentials exhibit significant promise with the rise of professional learning strategies for educators. Micro-credentialing and mentorship models together set a learning course that is personalized, relevant, result-oriented, unbiased, scalable, and flexible (Almond, 2020). Therefore, to fulfill the study's aim, conventional mentorship challenges are addressed to illuminate a transformative change in the hybrid digital mentorship model program and micro-credentialing via Moodle practiced in the contemporary world. A mixed-method design is employed to explore the depth and diversity of experiences. The quantitative data is collected from 50 male and female participants across different colleges and universities in Muscat using the 5-Likert type scale questionnaire, focusing on the following key dimensions: perceptions of micro-credentials, quality of digital mentorship, the usability of Moodle, professional excellence, and burnout prevention. Additionally, the qualitative data consists of open-ended responses, which investigate the mentors' and mentees' views on the most vital concerns of mentoring for the effectiveness of the practices. The researchers provided the Participants with an information sheet detailing the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. This study contributes to the understanding of digital mentorship dynamics and the utilization of collaboration platforms and communication tools to provide insights for enhancing mentorship practices and outcomes via micro-credentialing.

Keywords: Hybrid Digital Mentorship, Micro-Credentialing, Teachers' Burnout And Professional Excellence

INTRODUCTION

In the field of education, mentoring cannot be overlooked because it gives educators the knowledge and confidence they need to become exceptionally successful teachers. According to research, mentorship is vitally significant for new educators because it can guide them to tackle classroom challenges, create curriculum strategies and build positive relationships with school community (Huang et al., 2024). Financial limitations, logistical inconsistencies and a lack of institutional assistance, however, contribute to making it challenging for numerous educational institutions to maintain successful mentorship programs (Anis, 2024; Maxwell et al., 2024). Thus, it indicates that interested parties should discover a beneficial approach to motivate mentors and mentees.

A valuable technique that aims to prevent educators' burnout while simultaneously fostering enthusiasm and illuminating the path for both mentors and mentees is digital mentorship platforms. Mentoring software enables educators and instructors to establish precise aims and track advancements through mechanisms that are both user-centric and accessible. This attribute proves to be notably advantageous for teachers, as a shortage of time and conflicting objectives can frequently make it difficult for mentors and mentees to communicate consistently and meaningfully. These strategies ensure that every individual continues on the same page about their aims and deadlines by providing unified dashboards to monitor further achievements and developments. Automated notifications that serve as reminders optimize the procedure substantially by promoting frequent task completion and check-ins, which encourage accountability and continual involvement and participation (Gehreke et al., 2024). This is exemplified by findings from a study by (Jayathissa et al., 2024) illustrating that analytics-integrated digital platforms provide the heads of educational institutions insight into the program results, high standards of mentorship and participation rates, permitting them to enhance the tactics further and spot the domains in need of focused intervention, data-driven decision-making is made feasible by these assessments, which enhance the broader effectiveness and sustainability of mentorship programs (Bagai & Mane, 2024).

Meanwhile, micro-credentials via the Moodle platform and other E-learning platforms offer focused, short and engaging courses, tailored to the learners' needs. It will present personalized, paced learning for both mentees and mentors. This suggests that it will motivate and increase the practice's applicability and practicality so that the instructors and the learners can set goals and demonstrate willingness to pass each module, thus getting a digital badge for passing and achieving the desired result.

Therefore, the primary purpose of the present study is to observe how micro-credentialing and hybrid digital mentorship through the Moodle platform can evolve mentoring initiatives and improve the academic setting to inspire and promote perpetual learning for both mentors and mentees. A hybrid digital mentorship model, supported by micro-credentialing and facilitated through Moodle, may offer a flexible, structured, and feedback-driven method. This will fill existing mentorship gaps and promote the growth of both mentors and mentees. This exploratory mixed-method study examines educators' perceptions of hybrid digital mentorship and micro-credentialing via Moodle, focusing on feasibility, acceptance, and perceived professional value.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Although mentorship is a significant part of professional development within the field of education, present-day practices are frequently unstructured and informal. Usually, the results of mentorship programs are unsatisfying, based on subjective observations made at various colleges and universities. There are several key challenges existing regarding mentorship programs, such as the lack of mentor motivation to guide their mentees due to several aspects, including workload, mentoring burnout, inadequate time for substantive conversation, an absence of institutional benefits and concerns about crossing interpersonal boundaries, and vague expectations on both the mentor and the mentee's side. Additionally, mentors may hesitate to provide constructive feedback to mentees due to the lack of structured guidance or out of fear of destroying connections. Similarly, mentees may exhibit low participation or reject feedback.

Hence, these obstacles adversely affect mentorship, limiting opportunities for skill development and ultimately resulting in mentorship burnout and dissatisfaction. Therefore, this study investigates these concerns and explores how hybrid digital mentorship—supported by structured modules and micro-credentialing via Moodle—can address these barriers. To further elaborate, the challenges regarding mentorship illustrate the necessity to inspect the existing mentorship nature, grasping the fundamental reasons for these drawbacks; in addition, investigating innovative mentorship frameworks that foster clarity, reciprocal responsibility and structured development.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To explore educators' challenges in today's mentorship procedures, such as constructive feedback communication, time constraints and motivation.
2. To investigate how mentor-mentee dynamics—such as fear of judgment and concerns about harming relationships—impact the mentorship process.
3. To examine if educators are open to using technology, specifically structured platforms corresponding to Moodle, to enhance mentorship productivity.
4. To evaluate curiosity, interest and perceptions of the worth of micro-credentialing to encourage mentorship participation.
5. To create recommendations for a future hybrid digital mentorship model tailored to the needs of educators.

Research Questions

1. What obstacles do mentors and mentees face in current mentorship practices?
2. How does the limitation of time and different motivation levels effect the quality of mentor-mentee interactions?
3. How do interpersonal dynamics, such as fear of judgment and hesitation in receiving and giving feedback, impact mentorship outcomes?
4. How do educators view using digital platforms such as Moodle to structure and support mentorship activities?
5. How widely recognized and appealing is micro-credentialing as a way to enhance the relationship between mentors and mentees?

Significance of The Study

This study is significant because it directly tackles issues with mentorship that are seen in the present and in practice, such as mentor fatigue and burnout, unclear expectations, lack of structured advice, and fear of giving and receiving feedback. The presented problems diminish the overall effectiveness of mentorship and can result in professional individuals' stalled career development or even burnout.

For this reason, by systematically investigating these problems, the study offers an empirically supported perception into how hybrid digital mentorship supported through Moodle can further provide and strengthen positive reinforcements, specifically through micro-credentials, improve communication, and identify responsibilities. The findings will direct the establishment of a flexible, scalable mentorship model that values educators' restricted time, encourages open criticism, and promotes both parties' professional development.

Mentoring Burnout

One significant way to make any mentoring program successful is to maintain a solid and uplifting relationship between the mentee and the mentors. Mentoring burnout exists for several reasons. It is often caused by working long hours, unachievable expectations, lack of support, inadequate resources, and unpredictable

mentee behavior. Therefore, when considering potential mentees, one should focus on specific qualities to create and elevate the success of the mentorship relationship, such as commitment, maturity, motivation, and adaptability. To further elaborate, organizations could utilize focused mentoring platforms to determine if mentors and mentees are compatible—that is, to learn more about the characteristics required for a successful compatibility between a mentor and a mentee (Samaraweera, Abd Hamid, Khatibi, Azam and Dharmaratne, 2018).

Hybrid Digital Mentorship Programs

Motivation to use technological tools to improve conventional mentorship models has risen as a result of the increased use of digital technologies in education during and after COVID-19. Through the use of data-driven approaches, real-time interaction tools, and systematic progress tracking, digital mentoring platforms offer structured, flexible alternatives that can fill in the gaps in traditional mentoring programs (Bagai & Mane, 2024; Choudhary et al., 2024).

Development of Micro-Credentialing Framework

Micro-credentials are small, short, bite-sized units of learning that focus on specific skills or knowledge areas, which allow users to complete specific tasks in a small period of time, typically ranging from a few weeks to a few months (Thi Ngoc Ha et al, 2023). They are digital certifications obtained through micro-learning programs, evaluating participants' skills rather than learning a particular skill. According to the instructional design principle of microlearning, people learn better when knowledge is presented in manageable chunks that are simple to understand and apply (Habitzel, et al. 2006). Therefore, these courses are broken into smaller units and offered online in a self-paced mode. Micro-credentials, such as badges, certificates, or nanodegrees, may manifest in different ways. In addition, various institutions can provide it, such as universities, colleges and online educational platforms. These credentials are developed to reinforce traditional degree programs, providing students with further opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge to increase their employability and career prospects. In this paper, the research will explore the current state of micro-credentials specifically within higher education, their advantages and limitations and the potential implications for the future of learning.

Additionally, Crow (2017) highlights 4 key elements that define educator micro-credentials. Firstly, it is competency-based, personalized, on-demand and shareable. Secondly, since micro-credential courses are personalized regarding their learning design, educators can concentrate on a specific skill related to their career and professional development, student needs, or school goals. For example, an educator might want to investigate ways of monitoring students' grasp of the material presented in the classroom. Thirdly, they acquire a certain technique and gather necessary proof, such as a class video, to show that they understand it. Finally, educators can earn micro-credentials at their own speed using a flexible online platform that clearly indicates the competency associated with each micro-credential and the necessary evidence.

Future Scope and Improvements

However, Pesina (2025) argues that the development of mentoring software has a great potential to enhance teachers' development. Some of the most promising developments in the area of teachers' development include the incorporation of artificial intelligence and machine learning to effectively forecast the outcomes of the mentoring programs and match the mentors with the mentees precisely (Bagai & Mane, 2024). In addition to the above points, artificial intelligence can be used to generate a deeper and broader knowledge of the efficiency of the mentoring programs. Moreover, data security is a crucial concern. Thus, with the aim of protecting sensitive data, the development of the mentoring programs can be improved with regard to data security features.

Therefore, future research focuses should be conducted through research investigations that will tackle the effects of mentoring software, especially in the long term, regarding students' performance, satisfaction, and retention of educators. These research focuses will significantly contribute to the improvement of the best practices, as well as a valuable perception, regarding policymaking (Jayathissa et al., 2024). By addressing these challenges, the future of mentoring software will significantly improve, especially regarding diversity, effectiveness, and scale, resulting in an ethical and successful education process. Consequently, micro-credentialing seems to be an appropriate option. Micro-credentials, especially regarding educators, have the potential to be an essential part of a fruitful process of learning. Micro-credentials enable teachers to develop a variety of skills and approaches that will promote fruitful processes of learning within classrooms (Crow, 2017).

Related Work

The Vygotsky theory of socio-constructivism, which directs the components of cooperative learning and describes the growth of both mentees and mentors, including the advancement of academic success, ability to communicate clearly, inter/intrapersonal skills, and capacity for problem-solving, among other aspects, supports the value of mentoring in promoting learning (West, 2016). In addition, over the years, the nature of mentoring has changed with the focus from individual to collective (Paris, 2013). Thus, new mentoring methods are significant in meeting the needs of the modern 21st century by providing the educators with the necessary tools and confidence to become highly effective educators (Li, 2018; Tsotetsi and Mile, 2021). According to research, mentorship is vital, specifically to new educators, since it gives them a greater understanding and polishes their skills, such as providing support in navigating classroom challenges, developing curriculum strategies, and fostering strong connections with the school community (Huang et al., 2024).

Integrating mentorship programs employing digital tools is a rapidly developing area of study that has drawn greater academic scrutiny in recent years and recent investigations. In addition, to make it more compelling for mentors and mentees, researchers also reinforce and expand on existing literature regarding hybrid digital mentorship programs. For instance, Pesina (2025) investigated "Mentoring Software In Education And Its Impact On Teacher Development". The study's main aim is to examine the benefits and drawbacks of using mentoring software in the classroom, utilizing an integrative literature review methodology. Security of information issues, organizational backing gaps and funding constraints are substantial barriers making it necessary for cautious countermeasures. The study illustrates versatile techniques, including employing open-source resources, collaborating across sectors, and incorporating mentoring software alongside current career advancement frameworks based on successful corporate and healthcare projects.

In terms of the benefits of digital mentoring, it is revealed that mentoring software enables educators to set clear goals and observe progress in real time through intuitive and user-friendly interfaces. Such an outcome is exceptionally beneficial for educational institutions such as schools, where teachers and learners frequently struggle to communicate regularly due to the lack of time and conflicting priorities. These solutions ensure that everyone stays on the same page regarding their goals and task deadlines by providing a standardized and integrated dashboard to track the learner's progress. Scheduled reminders further improves the process by encouraging frequent check-ins and task completions, promoting accountability as well as ongoing participation (Gehreke et al., 2024). For instance, a digital platform that incorporates analytics enhances insight into mentorship quality, participation rates, and program outcomes. It enables school administrators to improve their tactics and pinpoint areas needing focused interventions (Jayathissa et al., 2024). By establishing decision-making guided by data, these measurements boost the comprehensive productivity as well as the longevity of mentoring schemes (Bagai & Mane, 2024).

Moreover, Gobena (2023) studied Challenges and Effectiveness of Mentoring in Teaching-Learning Practices. The findings presented in this paper indicate that 75% of mentors and mentees have developed a

decline in attitude, while 25% have developed a positive perspective. There are various reasons that have contributed to 75% of mentors and mentees developing a negative attitude towards the mentoring practice. This is because, first and foremost, these individuals have not developed a way to express their needs as professionals. Second, these individuals have not developed a sense of responsibility and accountability towards their profession. Third, these individuals have not developed objectives, especially regarding mentees' continued growth. In addition, these individuals have not developed a sense of concentration while spending time on achieving objectives. Finally, these mentees have not developed an accepting attitude towards receiving feedback. In this respect, mentoring practice is a significant factor that indicates failure within the new teacher education system.

Furthermore, the study by Semingson (2023) on the trends in digital mentoring for language teachers identified three categories of digital mentoring practices for teachers: asynchronous, synchronous, and social media-based mentoring practices. These categories represent the wide spectrum of digital mentoring approaches and their consequences for efficient communication and learning processes; thus, the need for these classifications exists (Semingson, 2023). In addition, the discussion of difficult issues in the digital mentorship process can help create an encouraging mentoring situation. In the end, the digital mentorship process can contribute greatly to the advancement of the mentoring process in the modern era by recognizing and taking advantage of the opportunities provided by the digital mentorship process for the advancement of diversity, accessibility, and the development of the individual on both professional and personal levels. Therefore, the present study has identified that micro-credentialing has advantages for the mentoring process; on the contrary, the lack of study on the micro-credentialing digital mentorship process for the avoidance of burnout for teachers and the advancement of academic excellence is evident.

At the same time, a report by Digital Promise (2016) highlighted that teachers who took part in micro-credentials revealed that educators responded positively to the approach and felt that their practice had improved through earning them. Also, the Friday Institute at North Carolina State University designed 15 different micro-credentials, collected survey and interview data from teachers earning them, and reported their findings in a report (Acree, 2016). The findings revealed that educators utilize what they have learnt in their teaching from their micro-credential courses, and the web platform and design impact the users' experience. The report included examples of the material submitted by the teachers as proof of their proficiency in the instructional skill outlined in the micro-credential. Therefore, the literature revealed that research, throughout the years, highlighted the importance of mentorship programs in addition to micro-credentialing for educators as a means to develop professionally. However, the importance of both components are expressed and studied separately. This exhibits a clear gap within the existing studies that needs to be explored to comprehend how both can come together and prevent burnout for educators.

Furthermore, Demonte (2017) stated that at the present time, research on micro-credentials for educators is limited. The majority of the existing studies are based on teacher feedback regarding their personal use of micro-credentials. For example, a report by Teaching Matters (2016) on the use of leadership micro-credentials noted that educators enjoy the use of micro-credentials, owing to their belief that the skills and knowledge they have developed were significant to their professional growth; additionally, they considered their information gained would lead to better learning outcomes towards students.

Based on earlier observation, it appears that a few papers focused on mentoring programs through micro-credentialing. As Bhola, Ajeevsing, Baichoo, Radha Rani, Ramkissoon, Bhima, Sider, Steve (2022) mentioned, micro-credential courses aims to acknowledge mentoring as a professional activity, in addition to providing opportunities for career advancement and capability enhancement. The MCF englobes four professional domains with their associated competencies, specifically, (i) professional identity which specializes in self-development; (ii) domain-specific knowledge and skills which is dedicated to the mentors and mentees growth, creativity and innovation; (iii) professional relationships in particular to communication, collaboration and problem solving and (iv) professional dispositions - development of effective dispositions.

This fresh perspective to mentoring could be useful to ensure both pre-service and in-service educators acquire the skills necessary for teaching and learning in today's competitive marketplace. Simultaneously, leaves a clear gap of understanding how holistic approaches of micro credentialing and mentorship can be a strong strategy to prevent burnout to educators not only through professional development but also through emotional growth as well.

Methodology

This research applies an exploratory, mixed-method design to assess educators' perceptions, expectations and concerns. Its final objective is to suggest a hybrid digital mentorship model that is backed by micro-credentialing using Moodle. The investigation intends to gather information that can guide the future development and application of optimized mentorship frameworks. It is conceived as an assessment of requirements and an exploratory study rather than a controlled trial.

Participants

A purposive sample of approximately 50 educators, in addition to both mentors and mentees. The researchers will invite different colleges and universities, specifically in Muscat, Oman, to participate. To guarantee a range of perspectives on mentorship needs and practices, participants will include both experienced and newly appointed academics from several disciplines.

Data Collection Instruments

1. Quantitative Component:

Regarding the Quantitative method of collecting data, the study will rely on structured, research-designed questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire concentrates on 5 main parts:

1. Mentors and mentees current experiences with traditional mentorship
2. Perceptions of digital mentorship platforms
3. Awareness and perceived value of micro-credentialing
4. Preferred mentorship features (e.g., flexibility, feedback, goal-tracking)
5. Attitudes toward hybrid models of mentorship

2. Qualitative Component

On the other hand, the Qualitative method of collecting data will follow open-ended questions, which will be included at the end of the questionnaire to collect rich insight based on experience into the perceived challenges, expectations, and potential benefits of transitioning to a hybrid digital model. These responses will help clarify the emotional and relational dynamics that underlie mentorship experiences.

Ethical Considerations

The researchers put high importance on the autonomy and confidentiality of the participants; therefore, the researcher will provide a participant information form outlining the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, guarantee the participants of anonymity and confidentiality as well as the right for participants to withdraw at any stage without consequences.

Purpose of The Study Design

Considering that this study is preliminary and non-interventionist, it is not intended to evaluate the hybrid model but rather to gather data that can aid future development and pilot implementations of such a concept. The results will enable to researchers to determine the following:

- Existing gaps in current mentorship programs.
- Educators' adaptability and receptivity to digital platforms.

- Characteristics that would make hybrid mentorship both successful and engaging.

The study will provide a flexible, feedback-based hybrid mentorship model that incorporates micro-credentialing resources, specifically tailored for educators in higher education.

Data Collection Methods

The data was collected online using a Five-Likert scale type questionnaire through Google Forms or Moodle, using a quantitative research method. The questions asked include Current mentorship experience, Effectiveness of existing mentorship and Perceptions of hybrid mentorship and micro-credentialing. Following that, a qualitative research method was utilized in order to have a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions, needs and expectations on the mentoring program. Therefore, this resulted in using 7 open-ended questions attached to the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed in two different ways. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, and mean scores. While the Qualitative data was analyzed using Thematic analysis to distinguish recurring patterns and insights.

Findings and Results of the Study

In this study, 50 participants from diverse demographics, encompassing a wide age range, engaged in the exploration of hybrid digital mentorship programs via micro-credentialing through Moodle platforms. As illustrated in Table 1, the gender-specific classification of the participants' age distribution exhibits how many males and females are in each age group. The table initially presents that within the 27-29 age group, there were 4 participants in total, comprising 1 male and 3 females. In addition, the 30-39 age group included 21 participants, consisting of 6 males and 15 females. Furthermore, the age group 40-49 consisted of 16 participants in total, with 7 males and 9 females. Lastly, the 50-59 age group comprised 4 males and 5 females. Therefore, these varied participants indicate a notable representation from of several age groups, from younger to older.

Table 1

	Age of Respondents				Total	Percentage
	27-29	30-39	40-49	50-59		
Male	1	6	7	4	18	
Female	3	15	9	5	32	
					50	

As shown in Table 2 and Graph 2, the results collected from the 5-likert type questionnaire were used to answer the quantitative data questions and investigate mentors' and mentees' perspectives toward current mentorship programs. The majority of the participants (46%) disagreed with traditional mentorship methods, and about 92% were interested in having access to formal mentorship programs. On the other hand, almost 85% of them expressed that scheduling meetings and maintaining regular communication are challenging.

Table 2

	Agree	Disagree
<i>Current Traditional Mentorship Experience</i>	20%	46%
<i>Perception of Digital Mentorship</i>	52%	17.6%
<i>Awareness and attitude toward Micro credentialing</i>	64.4%	19.5%
<i>Preferences of digital mentorship programs</i>	92%	

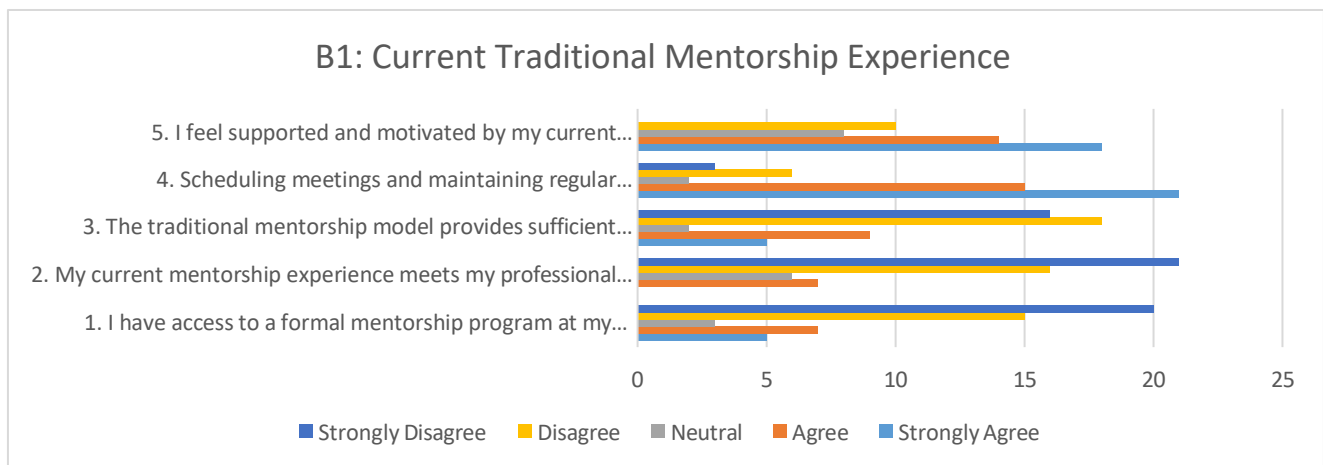


Figure 1. JPEG Image of Current traditional Mentorship Experience

Figure 2 highlights the second section of the questionnaire. According to the findings regarding the participants' perception of implementing digital mentorship, nearly half of the participants, accounting at 52% were receptive to participating in a mentorship program such as Moodle. Moreover, a substantial number of educators believed that platforms such as Moodle could offer immediate feedback, clear communication, and, most importantly, enhance mentorship accessibility and flexibility.

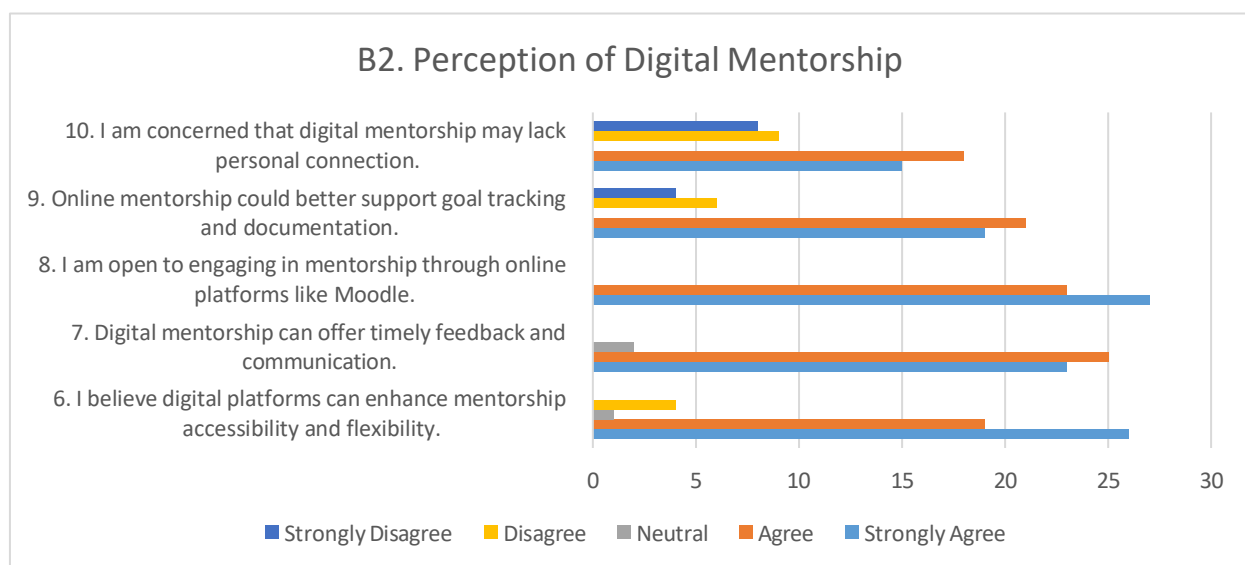


Figure 2. JPEG Image of Perception of Digital Mentorship

In order to gather data about the participants' outlook on their awareness and attitudes toward micro-credentialling, as depicted in Graph 3, the majority, accounting for 64%, believe micro-credentials can effectively be used in professional development or informal learning to build skills. Moreover, a substantial majority preferred to receive certificates within a mentorship program to highlight achieving a milestone.

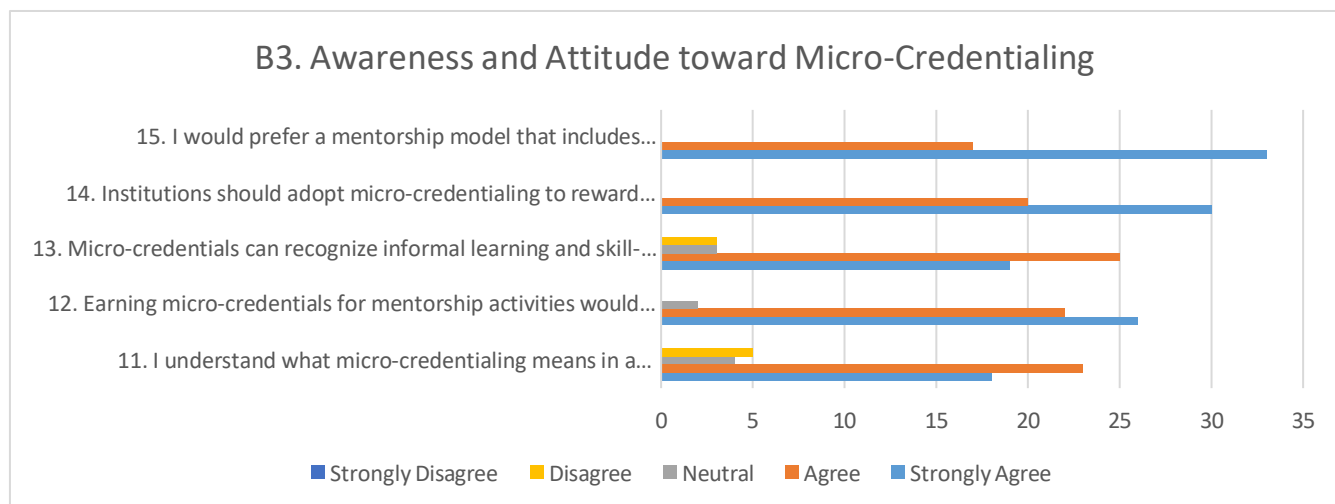
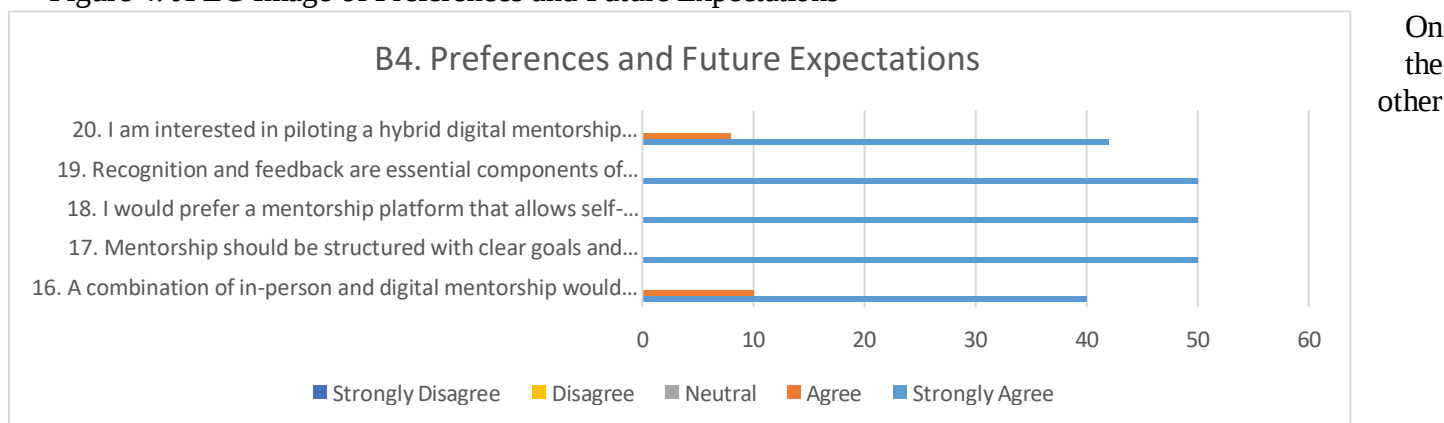


Figure 3. JPEG Image of Awareness and Attitude towards Micro-Credentialing

Finally, the final section of the questionnaire collected data concerning the participants' preferences and future expectations. As Figure 4 and Table 1 show, 92% of participants agreed that a blend of in-person and digital mentorship offers greater effectiveness than either alone. The consistent feedback they receive will allow self-paced engagement and lead to successful mentorship programs.

Figure 4. JPEG Image of Preferences and Future Expectations



hand, the qualitative data was collected from 12 teachers, who were asked open-ended questions within the questionnaire. The first question allowed the researchers to explore the theme of the beneficiaries of the traditional mentorship program on professional growth. The participants' responses were analyzed into 2 categories—advantages and disadvantages. The table that follows exhibits their common experiences. As shown in the table, a larger portion of the participants highlighted the disadvantages of the conventional mentorship program on career advancement. Various individuals described their traditional mentorship experience as 'too informal to provide real value', making it difficult to 'schedule time... (or) ...connect' while stating that mentors were not 'invested' in their potential. In addition, some felt disrespected such as receiving 'advice without being asked'. However, some participants found that traditional mentorship is advantageous aiding them to 'build trust', providing 'emotional support' and receiving 'structured observation and feedback sessions', emphasizing how helpful it is.

Additionally, the second question enabled the participants to report several challenges they faced in a traditional mentorship program. The obstacles and disadvantages are highlighted in the table. The findings reinforce the notion that almost all participants believe that traditional mentorship programs alone are inadequate. For instance, the majority experienced and irregular guidance, such as mentors being not following up, are 'busy... (making them unable to) ... meet regularly', feeling that the mentorship is 'one-sided', 'rushed', and 'vague'. Additionally, lack of communication evidently is a great challenge that tends to make mentees feel inconvenienced. At the same time, mentors struggle to get motivated as they do not receive any recognition. Therefore, these drawbacks vastly exceeds any beneficial aspects, thus, exhibiting that tradition mentorship is disorganized and lacks encouragement and support. In addition, the follow-up question led to understanding the features that would make a digital mentorship platform successful. A significant number of participants exhibited the advantages of having a hybrid digital mentorship program. Firstly, digital mentorship platforms could allow for smooth communication, such as 'chat and video options' in addition, 'including task trackers' which allow the individual to stay up to date with their tasks by setting 'goals reminders, and shared Calander' which ultimately maintain organization for both mentors and mentees, making management easier. Moreover, participants expressed a fresh angle, incorporating a 'gamification' element where participants would receive badges to encourage users to keep going and motivated to complete the task. However, a few exhibited their concerns, thus the disadvantages. For example, mentors who are presumably from the older generation may struggle to adapt to technology. In addition, 'tech glitches' is a possible key issue affecting the overall mentorship experience. Lastly, some participants worry that the digital mentorship platform's is 'rigid' in structure, therefore restricting flexibility. Furthermore, to evaluate their perspective on the value of micro-credentials in professional development. The responses are analyzed by exhibiting that micro-credentials are highly advantageous for professional development, such as 'recognizing ongoing efforts'; however, some expressed concerns due to a lack of institutional support and limited opportunities for professionals to grow. The participants expressed the following:

- I think they're great for recognizing ongoing efforts, especially when traditional evaluations miss soft skills and continuous learning.
- They could be useful, but only if they're backed by credible institutions and linked to actual career advancement opportunities.

The Last question manifested in implementing a hybrid digital mentorship model. In this section, the participants highlighted their concerns and suggestions, reiterating their concern regarding 'technological literacy', where some educators might feel uncomfortable using modern tools. This leads to the other suggestion of 'ensuring that human connection is not lost', highlighting the importance of integrating both traditional and digital mentorship rather than relying on one alone. Additionally, emphasize the importance of training educators to develop digital literacy, allowing them to utilize digital tools to 'keep things organized and accountable'.

Overall, the findings illustrate that most educators prioritize flexibility and convenience when selecting a micro-credential as a result of having limited time. The elements that obtained the highest mean values were the flexibility to choose the preferred learning period, the ease of obtaining the material via a computer and the capacity to learn at one's own speed. According to this, the educators rather strongly endorse accredited and certified short courses with extremely adaptable training approaches that consider their time constraints, degree of commitment and other personal responsibilities through mentorship programs

Discussion

The focus of the present research was to seek out how distinct instructors felt about the advantages and disadvantages of the mentorship programs that are currently in place as well as how to use platforms like Moodle to construct a micro credential module. The scientific literature on micro-credentials has grown in recent years (Tamoliune et al., 2023), with many articles examining various facets of micro-credentials in the

transforming atmosphere of higher education, such as their role in recuperating from COVID-19, their distinctive features in higher education, and adoption challenges (Thi Ngoc Ha et al., 2023). Other studies have investigated the points of view of employers (Gauthier, 2020; Miller & Jorre, 2022), higher-education officials (Brown et al., 2023), or students (Pirkkalainen et al., 2023; Yilik, 2021). However, there is presently inadequate information regarding the perspectives of mentors and mentees within educational settings. The findings of the investigations demonstrated the complex nature of the mentor-mentee relationship, specifically within the virtual setting, which is consistent with the current literature. The broad range of strategies to digital mentorship discovered in the current research is reflected in Semingson's (2023) investigation of trends in digital mentoring for language teachers, which divides the activities into asynchronous, synchronous, and social media-based categories. Understanding the wide range of digital mentorship techniques and their consequences for efficient communication and learning requires this classification (Semingson, 2023).

Moreover, Kaufman et al. (2021) highlight the potential of digital mentoring models to foster non-judgmental communication between mentors and mentees. This is consistent with our research on using digital platforms to steer conversations on the importance of digital mentorship through micro-credentialing initiatives in fostering nurturing settings. Micro-credentialing will offer bite-sized content and microlearning to help students study independently while also developing a sense of accountability. Furthermore, Adeoye et al. (2024), encouraged and promoted the use of micro-learning strategies, which promote micro-learning techniques, which were self-paced education empowering people to develop new skills and enhance their work-life balance by allowing them to study and grow at their own speed. By breaking the content up into manageable chunks and allowing students to review it whenever needed, microlearning and personalized instruction help students absorb additional knowledge. The flexibility of self-paced instruction reduces stress on educators, reducing burnout and enhancing well-being in general. Therefore, reflective of the United States of America, within the realm of education, micro-credentials acts as an additional tool to support conventional professional development; additionally, it is a method that enables educators to exhibit mastery in teaching techniques. It is worth noting that some states, such as North Carolina and Wisconsin, allow using micro-credentials as “credit” for professional development toward the requirements needed to keep a teaching license; both of these states are free to choose whether to employ micro-credentials for this purpose (Sawchuk, 2016).

This program will facilitate the recognition of mentoring as a professional activity as well as offer opportunities for capacity building and career progression. The MCF englobes four professional domains with their associated competencies, namely, (i) professional identity - specialized development of self, (ii) professional knowledge and skills - commitment in the development of self and mentees, innovation and creativity (iii) professional relationships - communication, collaboration, problem-solving and (iv) professional dispositions - development of effective dispositions (Adeoye et al, 2024). The result of the current study is presented in Graph 1, exhibiting that 86% of the participants demonstrate a negative perception towards the traditional method of teaching. The data was validated through their open-ended responses. The participants indicated the key challenges in current mentorship programs, including lack of mentor motivation to share knowledge due to workload, mentoring burnout, insufficient time for meaningful interaction, a lack of institutional incentives, or concerns about overstepping relational boundaries, reluctance to give or receive feedback, and unclear expectations on both sides. Furthermore, based on the data presented in Graph 4 and the response to question number 7, the majority of 92% acknowledge on the execution of hybrid digital mentorship programs through micro-credential modules on platforms designed to achieve academic excellence and prevent burnout. These included the flexibility and availability of materials, personalized instructions that was tailored for different levels of proficiency and time of availability, unbiased, constant feedback and achieving goals based on badges in each step. Also, in Table 2, a significant number of the participants accounting for 92 agreed on implementing hybrid digital mentorship programs through micro-credential modules on platforms to fulfill academic excellence and avoid burnout.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research presents a mixed-methods research intended to investigate mentees' and mentors' perspectives on micro-credentials. Using a mixed approach provides a variety of rich and comprehensive insights. As previously mentioned, educators within a fast-paced educational setting tend to feel overstimulated and overwhelmed due to the heavy workload and the substantial duties associated with their position, such as overseeing classes, fulfilling curriculum standards, and attending to the needs of each student. In addition to the ongoing stress, educators tend to experience burnout, especially when they need to participate in mentorship programs due to the lack of time and limited communication between mentors and mentees to achieve academic success. Therefore, based on the current study's results, mentors and mentees can acquire the skillset and obtain essential information to effectively overcome challenges, address barriers, improve their work and ultimately, avoid feeling burnt out. Accordingly, micro-credentials are concise and focused courses that one can complete in a short period of time (Allela, 2021; Shail, 2019; Adeoye et al., 2024). Motivating and supporting educators to value their professional growth and regulate their workload will help avoid burnout in the classroom.

Self-paced training refers to learning independently in one's own pace. It gives educators the freedom to learn flexibly, suitable for their hectic lifestyle, in addition to customizing their learning process in a convenient manner. Self-paced training through micro-credentialing, have a great potential of altering how they develop professionally and acquire knowledge training. Educators utilizing these strategies can enhance their overall performance, knowledge and skills.

Overall, it is evident that micro-credentialing is the most beneficial way to prevent educators from experiencing burnout and achieve academic success through hybrid digital mentorship program via available platforms such as Moodle. institutions might enhance the influence and validity of micro-credentials in current educational environments by concisely linking such courses with pupil demands and market requirements.

Despite thorough study of the subject of interest in this study, there are still some limits to it. For example, in this study, diverse participants were given an opportunity to examine the subject of interest in a fair manner; however, it is also possible that it did not comprehensively portray all forms of digital mentorship experiences in various nations or sectors of society worldwide. Therefore, it is advised to use a costlier approach in which a larger sample of diverse participants is received from various universities to attain a higher level of awareness regarding micro-credentials.

In the future, it is important to continue to broaden the discussion regarding digital mentorship studies, as well as to incorporate them in a practical manner to enhance the generalization of the results obtained in the process. In addition, it would be important to consider the long-term effects of digital mentorship, especially in terms of career as well as personal development, in an attempt to make a significant contribution to the existing discussion as a way to analyze the result obtained in the process.

Highlighting the effects of cultural diversity as well as distinctions in the development of digital mentorship would be important in evolving the knowledge regarding international mentorship dynamics. The practitioner also needs to think about the variety of digital mentorship and its significance in building a powerful mentor-mentee relationship. Additionally, paying particular attention to building and understanding the concept of digital literacy skills between mentors and mentees is likely to enhance and strengthen mentor-mentee relationships. Another suggestion for further studies is to formulate policies when discussing sensitive issues in digital mentorship. This will eventually lead to building a feeling of security and a friendly environment. Digital mentorship is sure to make a significant contribution towards building and advancing mentorship in the digital age. Thus, it is true that there are many advantages of using digital mentorship programs as they are likely to enhance and promote inclusive and accessible mentorship and career development. Micro-credentials are part of a set of career development approaches for experienced teachers.

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