

Metaphysical Mentorship for Holistic Development of Adolescents: A Qualitative Need Analysis

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Abstract



This qualitative study investigates expert perspectives with the purpose of need analysis regarding metaphysical mentoring in the educational environment with an emphasis on how it could support adolescents' holistic development. Metaphysical mentoring is an integrated approach that addresses themes that aren't included in regular curricula, such as meanings of life, values, purpose, and connections. It has been demonstrated that these factors affect moral development, identity, and emotional resilience of students. Within a qualitative paradigm, the study explored the scope of Metaphysical Mentoring through semi-structured interviews with educational professionals and experts in Punjab. Thematic analysis of their thought-provoking reflections established that metaphysical mentoring offers a safe space for teens to develop their own values and contemplate existential issues, leading to their holistic development. Practical issues including curriculum limitations, cultural scepticism, and the requirement for facilitators with specialised training were additionally highlighted by the participants. The study suggests that schools should employ reflective, goal-oriented mentoring techniques to promote inclusive adolescent well-being. Further study is recommended to fully comprehend the practicality and results of these mentoring strategies.

Keywords: Metaphysical Mentorship, Adolescent Development, Holistic Education

Introduction

The adolescence is a phase of radical change where rapid biological, cognitive, and social change is experienced by young people (Akbar et al., 2024). During their increase in maturity, teens struggle more with issues of identity, purpose and values as well as learning academic content (Gustina, 2024). Traditionally, education systems had been focusing on both cognitive and social-emotional learning, although studies reported that education curriculum tended to ignore higher levels of human growth, including existential and religious requirements (Binti Norman et al., 2024). This can be seen in the learning outcomes. For example, in social-emotional learning, holistic education begins by considering important factors such as students' sense of purpose and their moral identity, which shape their inner life (Molitor, 2024). Simultaneously, the fewer young people felt connected to organized religion or more customary spiritual groups, leaving a gap in the information about the most significant issues of life (Ashok et al., 2022).

In that regard, the concept of metaphysical mentorship started to appear as a means to explain deliberate guidance of young people in searching meaning, values, and nature of reality that transcends material interest (Crone & van Drunen, 2024). This paper explored how metaphysical mentorship when used in education is perceived by the experts with the intention of establishing the possible advantages and issues associated with it. All the previous studies rationally investigated this construct in modern schooling. The study aimed to find out how the holistic development of adolescents can be benefited by getting metaphysical mentorship. It explored how professionals developed a definition of metaphysical mentorship, how they perceived its effects on adolescents' development, and how the implications of implementing metaphysical mentorship in schools were revealed. Through this, the study added a new aspect to mentoring research and offered guidance to educators and policymakers on how to support the development of the whole child.

Statement of the problem

Adolescents' development is not only growing physically, their thoughts and emotions; it also involves a deep sense of identity, meaning, and purpose. Yet modern education mostly focuses on academic results and often ignores these deeper aspects that are important for comprehensive

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development. This leaves several teens without a systematic orientation on how to answer their inner questions about who they are, what is right, and spiritual sensitivity. Lack of such guidance could cause further effects including anxiety, confusion of identity and purposelessness among the youth. Although the use of mentorship as a helpful tool in the development of adolescents is widely known, very little research has been conducted on the role of metaphysical mentorship in the growth and development of adolescents that is dealing with the needs related to spiritual and philosophical domain and their existential needs (Friedman et al., 2012; Tubbs, 2023). There is a dire need for research on how to include metaphysical mentorship in today's education system to support adolescents' overall personality development. To address this, the present study seeks expert views on the need for, benefits of, and challenges in using metaphysical mentorship for adolescent education.

Aim of the study

This study was aimed at finding the opinions of experts on the role and importance of metaphysical mentorship and challenges to its implication into adolescent education.

Research Objectives

The following objectives were followed for the study,

1. To understand how experts define metaphysical mentorship for adolescents.
2. To identify the perceived benefits of metaphysical mentorship in adolescent holistic development.
3. To explore the challenges and barriers to implementing metaphysical mentorship in educational settings.

Research Questions

1. How is metaphysical mentoring defined by specialists in relation to adolescents' growth in educational settings?
2. What advantages or functions do professionals think metaphysical mentoring has?
3. What challenges do specialists point out in relation to metaphysical mentoring in modern education?

Significance of the study

By addressing the existing spiritualist and existentialist sides of the teenage development which are often discussed, the research paper can contribute to the body of knowledge on comprehensive education and provide insights on how to incorporate metaphysical guidance into the educational process.

Review of literature

The review highlights the need for further research that explores qualified experts' views on how metaphysical mentorship contributes to the overall development of adolescents.

Conceptual Foundations of Mentoring in Educational and Metaphysical Contexts

Mentoring has evolved from a relational approach to a dynamic technique that fosters academic relationships, emotional growth, and moral and spiritual direction. Through introspective dialogue, mentoring shapes students' character and enhances their thinking and emotional intelligence. A metaphysical analysis allows mentors to investigate life's meaning, human ego existence, and the authenticity of knowledge (Rincon-Flores et al., 2024).

Mentorship has a rich history in various civilizations, dating back to classical antiquity (Amacher et al., 2024) like Confucian traditions, Islamic scholarship, mediaeval and Renaissance periods, and the Enlightenment era (Savage, 2024). It has been a structured guidance process, involving dialogue, critical reasoning, ethical and hierarchical relationships, spiritual and scientific education, guild and apprenticeship systems, intellectual and philosophical discourse, and cognitive development (Tan, 2024). Institutionalized contemporary mentorship models focus on cognitive development over affective and metaphysical dimensions, reflecting the cultural and historical context of mentorship.

Psychological and Sociocultural Perspectives on Mentoring

Psychological theories of mentorship suggest that mentors provide structured guidance for higher-order thinking, promoting self-actualization through reflective dialogue (Carranza-Pinedo & Diprossimo, 2025). However, contemporary sociocultural perspectives criticize traditional models of mentoring for perpetuating patriarchal knowledge structures and promoting reciprocity of learning (Freire, 1970). Postmodern critiques advocate for inclusive, decentralized mentorship systems that

include diversity and experiential learning, addressing the relationship of power and power dynamics in mentoring (Ben-Amram & Davidovitch, 2024).

Defining Metaphysical Inquiry in Education

Metaphysics in education focuses on the existential, spiritual, and ethical dimensions of learning, aiming to help individuals become conscious of themselves, have an out-of-the-self experience, and discover their purpose (Kalyani, 2024). This theory is based on the fundamental metaphysical concept of self-realization, which has been resurged in recent years. The educational process of metaphysical inquiry enables learners to seek answers about reality, existence, and knowledge beyond empirical evidence (Hawkins, 2024).

According to Oral (2023), this process encourages deep reflective thinking, helping students discover the purpose of existence and the nature of true being. Metaphysical inquiry goes against traditional educational practices, promoting philosophical contemplation and intuitive learning above content standards and measurement data. Students must address learning through three aspects: actual knowledge, reasons for learning, and personal identity development. Through metaphysical inquiry, educational environments develop learners' capabilities to think about themselves and their moral choices, with the added advantage of spiritual mindfulness. Students ask fundamental questions about life meaning and personal goodness (Malin, 2023).

In modern educational settings, metaphysical inquiry promotes comprehensive student development by establishing links between cognitive progress, religious self-awareness, and emotional experiences (Werder & Otis, 2023). Educational programs that integrate metaphysical studies transform students into knowledgeable individuals who become purposeful, wise, and express compassion. Mentors assist learners in their development through meaningful discussions addressing personal beliefs, identity, values, and life goals (Kantola & Penttilä, 2024).

The Nexus Between Mentoring and Metaphysical Thought

Mentorship is a transformative approach that connects metaphysical learning with the intellectual and transcendent evolution of human beings. It involves mentees asking existential questions under the guidance of a mentor, leading to the development of an education that focuses on the inner self at its core. Mentors provide metaphysical insight by teaching their mentees practical know-how and the discovery of existential meaning. This dialogue helps mentees process questions about purpose, self-realization, and the fundamental meanings of life and learning, leading to a clear inner awareness and conscious existence (Freimann et al., 2025).

Metaphysical thought provides the inspirational basis for change, as mentors develop their mentees' mind, emotions, and spirituality (Whitlock, 2024). Philosopher Ibn Tufail supported mentoring methods through his teachings about sensory learning and spontaneous wisdom, which united introspection with objective success (Qadri, 2024). Mentors serve as companions, helping learners develop their ability to discern, think morally, and feel deeply interconnected to existential purposes (Zachary & Fain, 2022). This link becomes essential today as learners face external disturbances and identity complications. Through metaphysical mentoring experiences, students find unity through frameworks that create meaning and foster identity. Young people gain the ability to understand their developing self-identity when they base their decisions on spiritual and moral understanding. This approach enables the formation of competent, conscious, purposeful, and compassionate human beings (Akhtar, 2025).

Holistic Development in the Contemporary Era

Holistic development is an educational approach that supports students' growth in all four domains: spiritual, physical, emotive, and cognitive. It has been influenced by various philosophers and educators throughout history, and the history of educational theories can be defined by fusing metaphysical concerns with holistic instructional developments (Saito & Akiyama, 2024). Holistic education and pedagogy based on Lauri Rauhala's approach are essential for fostering transformative creativity, as they integrate viewpoints from emotional, volitional, cognitive, ethical, and physical domains (Kallio et al., 2024). When wisdom and creativity are combined, they can lead to new discoveries and understandings. Holistic pedagogies serve the individual and the environment, fostering transformative creativity. Metaphysics is deeply ingrained in the Whole-Person Education paradigm, which is founded on Socratic foundations and philosophical advances. This historical foundation provides context for modern ideas of self-formation through the cult of the personality in integrated educational programs that stress the building of the individual as the intellectual and

emotional subject. Socrates' method of critical reflection is still relevant for teaching and developing moral and intellectual virtues, and his ideas are significant in today's educational paradigms. Contributors to integrative education include Parker Palmer, Ken Wilber, and Abraham Maslow (Winer, 2024).

Emerging Needs for Metaphysical Mentorship

Adolescence entails academic development and also identity-seeking, meaning-seeking, and existential contemplation. Although social-emotional learning is promoted by current educational systems, the educational systems experience difficulties in meeting the needs of the adolescents in terms of spiritual and metaphysical needs (Granillo-Velasco et al., 2024). The conventional mentoring has more consideration in relation to school performance or career advancement leaving a gap in high level innocence, values, and self. There are a few faith-based and holistic programs, but most of them are restricted to the cultural or religious environment (Weiler et al., 2024). The emergence of digital media, social pressures and diminished participation in organized religion have further increased the difficulties in adolescents and a sense of purpose and well-being (Cloth et al., 2025). The direct discussions of values and the existential questions in the classroom occur rarely because mindfulness and character education programs are less supported (Hemming & Arat, 2025). The concept of metaphysical mentorship suggests a cross-cultural, culturally sensitive model of helping adolescents adapt to meaning-making, resilience, ethical awareness, and emotional integrity (Palmer et al., 2025). Though this can be promising, no such models of structured metaphysical mentorship are the staple of proper education, which is why more experiments should be conducted in this regard.

Methodology and Research Design

The present study is based on qualitative approach under interpretive paradigm, as it intends to explore the experts' opinions about establishing the need of metaphysical mentoring of adolescents and the upcoming challenges in its implications.

The design of this research was qualitative research with thematic analysis involving the semi structured interviews of professionals.

Criteria for Respondents Selection

The participants were selected purposively with specific characteristics. The participants were selected based on the academic qualifications and professional experience in the field of education. Having at least 15 years of experience in education, three experts on the panel were Ph.D. Professors with vast experience in curriculum and research and had strong knowledge about metaphysical concepts. Two informants were secondary school teachers having 20 years of experience of teaching adolescents. Each of the participants participated in a semi-structured interview that took 45 to 60 minutes. Individual interviews were held using a video conference method between January and March 2025 by means of an interview guide that contained open-ended questions related to the definition, objectives, perceived advantages, and obstacles of metaphysical mentorship. Some of the typical questions were: What is your understanding of metaphysical mentorship? and how do you think that such mentoring could have an influence on adolescent students? The participants were invited to give their examples. Interviews were all tape recorded with their permission and later transcribed verbatim. Confidentiality was kept by assigning numeric identifiers to the participants (Expert 1-Expert 5) so no real names or institutions were used in transcripts or reporting.

Tools of investigation

The researchers prepared an interview schedule with four major questions and six to seven probes for each question to be asked after a relevant answer. The interview was accompanied by a covering letter regarding participants' written consent and the essential demographics of the informants.

Pre-interview

The researchers scheduled appointments with participants before the interview through phone calls or personal meetings. They briefed the interviewees about the rationale of the research, collected demographic information through a questionnaire and received their written consent. The respondents were assured that they could withdraw at any moment from the interview and that the information would not be used for any purpose other than research. It was also made clear that their anonymity would be strictly maintained.

Data analysis

The research followed thematic analysis, and an inductive approach was used to derive themes, and patterns left by the experts. The audio files were transcribed by the researchers, who listened to them

many times to match transcriptions with the actual data. The authors used a six-step guided process, (1) becoming conversant with the data by reading the transcripts repeatedly, (2) generating the initial codes to name important features, (3) identification of candidate themes by compiling related codes, (4) re-analysis and clarification of themes to make sure they accurately described data, (5) definition and naming of each theme, and (6) writing a report (Özden, 2024). The process of coding and theming went on until saturation. The researchers sorted out themes emerging under each research question.

Results

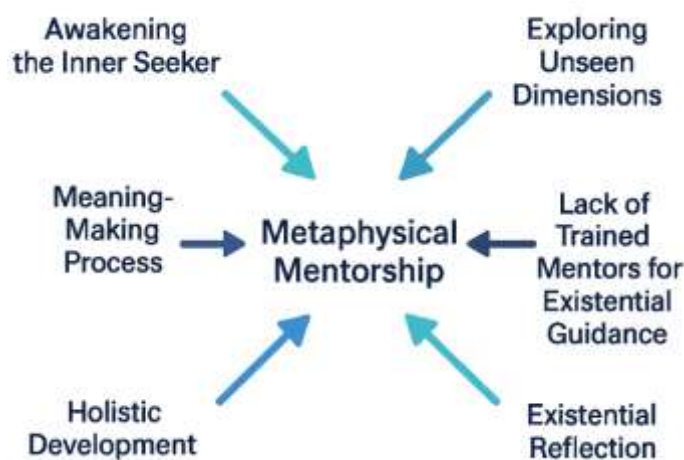
Research question 1. How was metaphysical mentoring defined by specialists in relation to adolescents’ growth in educational settings?

Researchers were requested to describe what they meant by the term metaphysical mentorship. All participants emphasized that this metaphysical mentoring was more than the usual academic or career mentorship strategy in that it covered the inner lives of the adolescents. They explained that it assisted young persons in investigating such basic issues of meaning and belonging. To give an example, one professional described it in the following way: *“Metaphysical mentorship is considered not only academic guidance but also the mentoring of the soul, E1.* Another participant explained that it entailed approaching learners as complete individuals and including moral and existential aspects. E 2 reported, *“It was a heart and mind mentoring, not a religion, but getting the students realize, what is important to them.”* Practically, the participants emphasized that metaphysical mentorship implied establishing a reflective or purposeful space, in which teenagers could overlay, consider values and beliefs and establish their position in the world. In the words of one mentor, *“they wanted to take them through their internal questions, such as: “Why am I here?” or: “What do I value?” (E1).* Simply, scholars referred to metaphysical mentorship as a personified type of mentorship where students are welcome to be involved in the processes of meaning-making themselves.

Figure 1 below presents all themes emerged under question no 1.

Figure 1:

Metaphysical Mentorship



Research Question 2. What advantages or functions did professionals think metaphysical mentoring would have?

Experts concurred that metaphysical mentorship might be significant to teenagers. They observed that the emphasis of the meaning and purpose by mentors helped the teenagers have a complete development. As an example, during the interviews, participants indicated that students who took part in metaphysical mentoring tended to be more resilient and self-perceptual. One scholar reported *“having witnessed stronger definition of a personality in the adolescents being given a chance to have their values legitimized” E3.* According to E5, *“when individuals of a young age sense a sense of purpose, they can bring a difference or rather engage in a manner where they started becoming more motivated and persistent at school”.* A different mentor pointed out a change in an attitude of a student that happened after the mentorship: *a teenager told me that he feels like he is a part of something bigger, and this confidence led to his change in the perception of his issues, E4.* Metaphysical mentorship also associated empathy and community involvement in the participants. They found that when teens also contemplated such value as the importance of kindness or justice,

they were more inclined to help others and become leaders (e.g., to organize an event in order to raise funds to support a cause they were passionate about). Participants also noted the benefits of emotional well-being. As one expert E2 clarified, *the anxiety proved to be less as those adolescents could comprehend their values*. They would be able to use that feeling of meaning in dealing with stress.” All study participants came to a conclusion that metaphysical mentorship empowered teens by enhancing their sense of self, meaning, and connectedness to the community and thus facilitating their general growth.

Figure 2 below presents all themes emerged under question no 2.

Figure 2:

Perceived Benefits of Metaphysical Mentorship



Research Question 3. What challenges did specialists point out with relation to metaphysical mentoring in modern education?

The experts pinpointed various challenges of introducing metaphysical mentorship in schools. One of the factor was lack of understanding its purpose. Other teachers and experts first thought it referred to religious education or to the so-called new-age practices. An expert remembered: *“One of our colleagues advised us that it was new-age, and we had to explain that we really meant the values and purpose in general meaning,”* (E1). Experts emphasized that metaphysical mentoring must be approached with care, clarifying that it does not involve preaching but rather guiding students toward discovering their own sense of meaning. However, limited time and lack of training remain significant challenges. Stuffed or overburdened curricula made the teachers/mentors uncomfortable since there were limited activities to perform for mentoring sessions. One expert said *“that any kind of reflection program such as a modest one needed a justification with the academic demands”* E4. Furthermore, some among them have confessed that not many teachers at first had the feeling that they were prepared to take on existential conversation. Expert stated, *“we soon discovered that mentors required training otherwise we would end up imposing our self-perceptions on students”* E3. This revealed that there is need of professional growth in the provision of the facilitation skills. Another thing was culture and individual differences. Teenagers had very different backgrounds, thus the mentors were compelled to be aware of various worldviews. The first concern was fear among some of the students to recommend deep questions because they thought they would be judged. Yet, participants had the opinion that with the help of trust and process explanation most of the students became accustomed to reflection in the course of time. Overall, in spite of practical and perceptual limitations, professionals believed that these barriers could be overcome by effective communication, specific training, and inclusionary and student-centred approach.

Figure 3 below presents all themes emerges under question no 3;

Figure 3:

Perceived Benefits of Metaphysical Mentorship



Discussion and Conclusion

The study gave new ideas concerning the opinions of experts related to the metaphysical mentorship in schools among adolescents. Thematic analysis showed that all of the experts had a vision of metaphysical mentors being supportive of not only the traditional academic needs of youth, but also existential and value-related needs. Such mentorship may help the participants have a better sense of identity, resilience, and belonging to the community, as the participants said. As an example, students think by the fact that learning was given a sense of purpose, thus inspiring them and making them hopeful with life. Through this, metaphysical mentoring was regarded to empower the whole child developments an amalgamation of mind, emotional as well as existential powers.

The thoughts of the experts correspond to the current developmental theory. This conclusion that exploring meaning and purpose is of value to adolescents is supported by the idea of Erikson that the formation of one identity is the focus of this phase of life (Hattangadi & Shinde, 2025). Teenagers tend to pose questions such as Who am I? and why am I here? and an understanding mentor can come in to iron out the answers to these questions thus helping them achieve effective identity formation. The focus on purpose and values can also be linked to positive youth development studies, youth would demonstrate being more motivated and persistent when they have sense of purpose. As a fact, well-being and school persistence in earlier researches have been associated with a strong life purpose, especially in youths who have experienced adversity. In line with this, subjects noted that the students who joined metaphysical mentors were more active and confident. Furthermore, the stress-copying experience of meaning is justified by psychological works, the professionals in this research emphasized that the adolescents who had a mentor affirming them in their sense of personal purpose appear to be more oriented to bear stress and uncertainty (Stanley & Clinton, 2024).

Educationally, these results of research add to the literature of social-emotional and character education. Metaphysical mentoring might be interpreted as a further extension of those frameworks in supplying them with a direct incorporation of the reflection of the existence. The focus on empathy, values and community by the experts also correlates with the 21st century goals, like the social responsibility and global issues awareness. Nevertheless, metaphysical mentoring is a rather innovative factor. However, in contrast to more traditional models of mentoring, based on the relational and skills approaches, the current literature points out a much less researched aspect of youth support which questions and encourages educators and researchers to explore the potential of spiritual or philosophical engagement as a possible path towards holistic development.

Simultaneously, scholars pointed at functional limitations. Their perceptions of misunderstanding, shortage of time and training requirement affirm the difficulties of inculcating new programs into old systems. The implications of these difficulties suggest that every metaphysical mentorship program must be well-planned, non-discriminative, and scientific. Especially, specialists focused on a non-dogmatic attitude: mentors should not teach but influence the teaching and learning process by means of becoming someone to listen to and have a conversation with instead of speaking and giving a certain answer. This view is similar to recommendation of a youth-driven and culture-sensitive approach in best practices of mentoring research.

Limitations and Future Recommendations

Being qualitative data that represents the opinion of experts, the results lead to possibilities but not to the evidence of the results. Further studies ought to consider adopting the words of teenagers themselves, to evaluate the experience of metaphysical mentorship in the lives of young people. It would also be worth conducting interventions that include the metaphysical aspects of mentoring and the evaluation of their effects on the outcomes of students (e.g. sense of purpose, well-being, academic engagement). As an example, a mixed-methods study would be about how the meaning in life of youths is changed after engaging in a guided reflective discussion with mentors. The experimental study could analyse whether earlier involvement in purposeful mentoring can be a predictor of future civic or life satisfaction.

In conclusion, the informed respondents considered the approach of metaphysical mentorship as promising in terms of its potential to be used as a technique of enhancing teen life. They proposed that incorporating conversations about meaning and values into mentoring, the educators could provide the students with a chance to be better aware of themselves, driven, and more connected. Such results also prompt educators and researchers to spend more time investigating the question of how the reflective, purpose-oriented support can be integrated into modern education safely and effectively.

Recommendations

With reference to the findings, educators and program developers are presented with the following recommendations:

1. Teach teachers, counsellors and mentors how to lead existential and values discussions.
2. Boost reflective practices in the Curriculum and teaching
3. Develop optional forums (clubs, seminars, or retreats) in which students can optionally discuss their goals and values in life.
4. Connect parents and members of the community by helping them know what metaphysical mentorship is about.
5. Creating time and resources to administer metaphysical mentorship and understand that metaphysical mentorship is an aspect of holistic education.

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