

# Mentorship Programmes for New Agricultural Educators: The Transformative Role of Curriculum Experts in Enhancing Teaching and Learning Outcomes

Dr. Mercy Afe Osagiede<sup>1</sup>  
Department of Educational Foundations  
University of Delta, Agbor  
osagiedemercy@gmail.com

## Abstract

*The impact of curricular experts on teaching efficacy and learning outcomes is examined in this research as it relates to mentorship programs for novice agriculture educators. With the speed at which sustainable practices and agricultural technology are developing, new teachers frequently struggle to make the shift from practice to pedagogy, navigate challenging courses, and incorporate innovation into their lessons. By offering specialised assistance in curriculum alignment, instructional tactics, and the integration of contemporary pedagogical approaches, this study contends that curriculum specialists play a critical role in bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and real-world application. Educators can better offer high-quality, aligned courses that promote student engagement and accomplishment by integrating curriculum expertise into mentorship programs. The article highlights the main advantages of mentorship, such as increased teacher competency, greater retention, and improved student results, while presenting best practices in the field, such as collaborative models, curriculum-focused activities, and continuous feedback. Suggestions are also given for institutional policies and training programs to guarantee the success of mentorship programmes.*

**Keywords:** *Agricultural Education, Mentorship Programmes, Curriculum Experts, Sustainable Practices, Curriculum Alignment, Technology Integration*

## INTRODUCTION

The future of farming and food production is greatly influenced by agricultural education, especially at a time when sustainability and technological innovation are crucial to tackling global issues (Settle et al., 2024). The next generation of farmers and business executives must be prepared to strike a balance between environmental stewardship and productivity as the need for creative and sustainable farming methods grows. To fulfil this duty, teachers must be proficient in technical knowledge, effective teaching methods, and curriculum delivery (Osagiede et al., 2024; Ajao et al., 2022).

However, new agricultural educators frequently encounter formidable obstacles as they settle into their positions. Many have agricultural science or farming expertise and little experience with curriculum development, classroom management, or pedagogy. The complexity of contemporary agricultural education, which necessitates the integration of cutting-edge technologies, sustainable

practices, and a range of learner needs, further exacerbates these difficulties. These teachers might find it difficult to adjust without the right help, resulting in low confidence, less effective instruction, and high turnover rates (Saucier et al., 2012).

It has long been known that mentoring programs are an effective way to help new teachers advance their careers. Mentoring provides new instructors with direction, criticism, and useful tactics to help them deal with the demands of their positions (Alordiah, 2024; Jackevicius et al., 2014). However, many mentorship programs now fail because they overlook a crucial element: curricular expertise. These schools lack curriculum specialists, leaving new teachers ill-prepared to incorporate novel methods, match their instruction to academic standards, and prepare students for the changing demands of the agriculture industry (DiBenedetto et al., 2018).

The crucial role that curriculum specialists play in mentoring programs for aspiring agriculture educators is examined in this research. It makes the case that enlisting curriculum specialists in mentorship improves agricultural education's general caliber and effectiveness and addresses the difficulties experienced by novice teachers. Curriculum specialists guarantee that mentorship programs are more successful in equipping teachers to provide creative, pertinent, and sustainable agriculture education by bridging the gap between curriculum design and classroom implementation.

### **The Critical Role of Agricultural Education in Fostering Sustainable Farming Practices and Technological Advancement**

Agricultural education is the foundation of initiatives to guarantee sustainable farming and technological advancement. Agriculture education is uniquely positioned to provide upcoming farmers and industry professionals with the knowledge and skills necessary to balance productivity and environmental stewardship as the world's population rises and environmental problems become more pressing (Nesbitt et al., 2024; Osagiede & Alordiah, 2024a).

Farming methods must now be sustainable; it is no longer an option. These ideas are largely taught by agricultural educators, who teach techniques like crop rotation, water conservation, soil fertility management, and organic farming. Teachers can guarantee that the next generation of farmers knows how to maximise harvests while protecting natural resources for future generations by including sustainability in their curricula (Saadvandi et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the development of agricultural technology, including genetically modified crops, drones, precision farming, and intelligent irrigation systems, necessitates educators who can use these tools and instruct others on how to integrate them into their operations successfully.

Therefore, agricultural education links creativity and execution, equipping students with the skills they need to adjust to a continually shifting agricultural environment (Osagiede & Alordiah, 2024b; Misbah et al., 2019).

### **The Need for Robust Mentorship Programs to Support New Agricultural Educators**

Even though agricultural educators are essential, many new teachers encounter major challenges when they enter the profession. These issues can be resolved by a strong mentorship program, which provides new teachers with direction, encouragement, and useful tactics. These programs are essential for several reasons:

#### **1. Bridging the Knowledge Gap**

Although they lack experience in pedagogy and curriculum delivery, new agricultural educators frequently come to the field with knowledge of agricultural science or farming techniques. They can get the assistance they require to close this gap through mentoring programs, which can guide curriculum alignment, classroom management, and efficient teaching techniques (Saadvandi et al., 2019).

#### **2. Fostering Confidence and Professional Growth**

The responsibilities of their jobs can overwhelm rookie teachers without proper training, which can result in burnout or high turnover rates. A mentorship program provides a safety net, guaranteeing that novice teachers get helpful criticism, support, and the tools they require to develop into self-assured experts (Koenen et al., 2015).

#### **3. Promoting Innovation and Adaptability**

Mentorship programs can be used to encourage creative teaching methods and keep abreast of sustainable practices and new technological developments. New teachers connected with seasoned mentors can access real-world expertise that keeps them fresh and innovative in their methods (Wesselink et al., 2010).

### **Challenges Faced by New Agricultural Educators in Adapting to Modern Teaching Environments**

New agricultural educators frequently find it difficult to adjust to modern teaching contexts' increasingly complex and multidimensional nature. Among the main obstacles they encounter are:

#### **1. Balancing Practical and Theoretical Knowledge**

New teachers must figure out how to successfully combine theoretical knowledge with practical agricultural techniques. This is especially challenging when they have no prior experience creating lesson plans covering both elements (Osagiede & Alordiah, 2024c).

## 2. **Keeping Pace with Technological Advances**

Because agricultural technology is developing so quickly, educators must always learn new things. Many new teachers struggle to incorporate these developments into their lessons, especially if they don't have access to training or resources (Moghadam et al., 2020).

## 3. **Catering to Diverse Learner Needs**

Students in today's classes are diverse, ranging from agricultural experts to future farmers. New teachers frequently find it difficult to address the disparities in prior knowledge and professional aspirations in their classrooms.

## 4. **Understanding and Implementing Curricula**

Environmental science, agribusiness, and biotechnology are just a few topics in the frequently extensive and diverse agricultural curricula. Since many new teachers are unfamiliar with the curriculum, it might be not easy to teach it successfully (Bergsmann, 2015).

### **The Gap in Mentorship Programs that Fail to Integrate Curriculum Expertise**

Although there are many kinds of mentorship programs, many overlook one important component: curricular expertise. A major vacuum is created when curriculum experts are not included in mentorship programs, which leaves new teachers ill-prepared to understand and deliver the curriculum successfully.

#### 1. **Limited Focus on Curriculum Delivery**

Conventional mentorship programs frequently overlook the significance of curriculum interpretation and implementation in favour of general teaching techniques or classroom management. New teachers may thus find it difficult to match their instruction to the goals of the curriculum.

#### 2. **Disconnected Mentorship Models**

Curriculum specialists with in-depth knowledge of agriculture education standards and educational frameworks are often absent from mentorship programs. This disparity may result in inequalities in how the curriculum is taught at various academic institutions and geographical areas (Brauer, 2021).

#### 3. **Missed Opportunities for Innovation**

Experts in curricula are frequently in the vanguard of educational innovation, creating materials that incorporate the newest methods, tools, and research. New teachers miss

important ideas that could improve their instruction because they are not included in mentorship programs.

#### 4. **Challenges in Preparing Students for Industry Needs**

Mentorship programs may not effectively educate new teachers to meet industry demands if curriculum specialists are not consulted. This undermines the broader objectives of agricultural education by producing graduates who are less equipped to handle actual agricultural difficulties (Moreira, 2022).

It is impossible to overestimate the importance of agricultural education in promoting technological innovation and sustainable farming methods. Nonetheless, the difficulties encountered by novice teachers and the deficiencies in existing mentorship initiatives underscore the necessity of a more comprehensive and integrated strategy. We can better prepare new agricultural educators to succeed in their positions by bringing curriculum experts into mentorship programs, which will ultimately benefit the agriculture education system. The development of students equipped to lead agriculture in the future with creativity, sustainability, and competence is also ensured by this alignment, in addition to the professional advancement of educators.

### **Challenges Faced by New Agricultural Educators**

#### **Transitioning from Practice to Pedagogy**

Despite having no formal training in teaching pedagogy or techniques, many agricultural educators come to the field with a wealth of real-world farming or agricultural scientific expertise. This shift from practice to pedagogy can be intimidating because it calls for a change from solving problems hands-on to assisting students in following standardised educational procedures. For example, an expert in crop management might find it difficult to convert their knowledge into lesson plans, tests, and classroom management techniques. These teachers could feel unprepared to engage students effectively or to establish a learner-centred atmosphere that encourages critical thinking and skill development if they don't receive enough mentorship (Bezanilla, 2019).

#### **Navigating Complex Curriculums**

Traditional farming methods, and more recent advances like precision agriculture and agribusiness management, are all covered in agricultural education curricula, which are frequently comprehensive and multidimensional. It can be difficult for novice teachers to comprehend and fit in with these extensive curricula. Many find it difficult to prioritise content, understand learning objectives, and balance theoretical instruction and real-world applications. Furthermore, some

curricula strongly emphasise interdisciplinary knowledge, mandating that teachers incorporate aspects of economics, technology, and environmental science into their lessons. Without precise instructions, novice teachers could find it challenging to give courses that satisfy the various requirements of their pupils while also adhering to curriculum standards (Moreira, 2022).

### **Integrating Sustainability and Technology**

Sustainability and technological innovation are increasingly emphasised in contemporary agricultural education as essential elements of educating students for farming's future. It can be not easy to integrate these new trends into teaching methods, though, as many novice teachers are unfamiliar with them. For instance, theoretical knowledge and real-world implementation are necessary for sustainable agricultural methods, including soil health management, organic crop production, and water conservation. Similarly, some new teachers might not have the technical know-how needed for technology like drones, GPS-guided equipment, and digital farm management systems. This disparity not only restricts their capacity to instruct but also runs the risk of ill-preparing pupils for the quickly changing agricultural industry (Ramesh, 2020).

These difficulties highlight the critical need for organised mentorship programs to provide aspiring agricultural educators the resources, direction, and self-assurance they need to overcome these barriers.

### **The Role of Curriculum Experts in Mentorship**

#### **Curriculum Experts**

Professionals with extensive expertise in curriculum design, educational theories, and instructional methodologies are known as curriculum experts. Their main responsibility is to create, coordinate, and execute courses that satisfy students' requirements and educational standards. Regarding agricultural education, curriculum specialists are crucial in ensuring that the course material is current, pertinent, and in line with industry standards, sustainable practices, and technology developments. These experts usually construct assessment instruments, develop and evaluate course curricula, and advise on the most effective teaching and learning strategies (Boateng et al., 2023).

To guarantee that the curriculum is not only pedagogically sound but also useful and flexible enough to be applied in real-world situations, curriculum specialists also work in tandem with educators. They support teachers in their endeavours to make the material relevant and interesting for students by guiding them through the intricacies of curriculum frameworks. This knowledge is

quite beneficial for novice agricultural educators who might not be familiar with the complexities of curriculum implementation and the changing trends in the agricultural industry (Lozano et al., 2021).

### **Supporting Educators in Curriculum Interpretation**

Helping new teachers comprehend the curriculum's objectives, structure, and expectations is one of the core responsibilities of curriculum specialists in mentoring. Interpreting a curriculum can be daunting for novice agricultural educators, particularly if they lack background knowledge in educational philosophy or curriculum design. Curriculum specialists assist in simplifying intricate curriculum frameworks by outlining the main learning objectives, results, and evaluation standards in a simple way to comprehend and implement in the classroom (Brătianu et al., 2020).

For instance, an agricultural curriculum might incorporate theoretical and practical elements, such as practical fieldwork and the science underlying sustainable farming methods. Curriculum specialists help novice teachers determine which subjects need more in-depth explanation, how to pace classes, and how to match activities to the intended results. With this support, new teachers may confidently present curriculum-aligned content and help students have meaningful learning experiences.

Curriculum specialists also offer advice on modifying the curriculum to accommodate different student demands and levels of past knowledge. Curriculum specialists assist teachers in interpreting the curriculum and help them avoid potential pitfalls like forgetting important subjects or not matching lessons to the general objectives of education.

### **Bridging Theory and Practice**

Effectively converting theoretical information into useful, real-world applications is a major problem for novice agricultural educators. By providing ways to convert academic knowledge into interesting, practical learning experiences, curriculum experts play a critical role in assisting educators in bridging the gap between theory and practice. Curriculum specialists assist instructors in juggling the dual responsibilities of classroom instruction and hands-on fieldwork in agricultural education by offering guidance on developing coherent lesson plans that combine theory and practice (Burnette, 2016).

For instance, if the curriculum emphasises soil health management, curriculum specialists could advise novice teachers on designing lessons that integrate field-based activities like crop rotation exercises or soil testing with the scientific concepts of soil composition. They assist teachers in

developing lessons that are immediately relevant to the difficulties students may encounter in the agricultural sector and line with academic ideas. This method guarantees that students are ready for real-world scenarios, including utilising contemporary technology or putting sustainable farming methods into practice, and it also increases the curriculum's practical worth.

Curriculum specialists can assist teachers in creating successful lesson plans for various classroom settings, such as laboratories, workshops, and outdoor learning areas. Curriculum specialists help new teachers bring curriculum content to life by providing advice on creating experiential learning opportunities, encouraging students to engage and comprehend it more deeply (Curry, 2017).

### **Promoting Innovative Teaching Approaches**

Teaching that incorporates sustainability and technology is crucial in today's quickly changing agricultural scene. Curriculum specialists assist new agriculture educators in successfully integrating these emerging trends into their lessons and making sure they are aware of them. Curriculum specialists enable teachers to remain at the forefront of agriculture education and provide students with the most current, relevant instruction possible by encouraging creativity in the classroom (Sturing et al., 2011).

For example, curriculum experts advise teachers to use contemporary teaching strategies that complement the practical character of agricultural education, such as project-based learning, flipped classrooms, and experiential learning. With the help of these techniques, students can work directly on real-world issues like planning a sustainable irrigation system or evaluating the financial feasibility of various farming practices. To improve student's learning experiences and foster critical thinking, curriculum specialists assist novice teachers in comprehending how to apply these strategies in their instruction.

Additionally, curriculum specialists assist novice teachers in incorporating state-of-the-art agricultural technologies into their teachings. This could involve using digital platforms for farm management, drones for crop monitoring, or precision farming equipment. Curriculum specialists ensure that students have the abilities necessary to succeed in a high-tech agricultural environment by encouraging incorporating such technology into the curriculum. These developments also assist novice teachers in keeping abreast of market developments, guaranteeing that their instruction is consistently current and progressive (DiBenedetto et al., 2018).

According to curriculum experts, sustainability ideas should be incorporated into the agricultural curriculum. They assist teachers in creating courses that consider the growing significance of

sustainability in agriculture, whether through encouraging organic farming practices, conserving biodiversity, or using water efficiently. This all-encompassing method of instruction guarantees that students acquire technical know-how and a solid grasp of agriculture's social, economic, and environmental aspects (Pant, 2012).

Curriculum specialists support new agricultural educators in a variety of ways. Curriculum specialists assist new teachers in navigating the challenges of contemporary agriculture education by offering advice on curriculum interpretation, fostering creative teaching methods, and bridging the gap between theory and practice. Their participation guarantees that teachers are prepared to provide excellent, timely, and interesting instruction that prepares students for the future of agriculture.

### **Best Practices in Mentorship Programs**

#### **Collaborative Mentorship Models**

One of the most effective ways to ensure the success of mentorship programs for new agricultural educators is to adopt a **collaborative mentorship model**. Several stakeholders participate in this strategy, including administrators, curriculum specialists, and seasoned teachers. Mentorship programs can provide new teachers with a more thorough and well-rounded support system by including a variety of viewpoints.

- **Experienced teachers:** Contribute real-world teaching knowledge, classroom management techniques, and understanding of the challenges of daily instruction. Through their own experiences, they may offer professional and emotional support, discuss best practices for student engagement, and guide new teachers through typical classroom obstacles. They can also serve as mentors on managing various learning demands, building trusting connections with students, and keeping a balanced teaching style (Mathur, 2012).
- **Curriculum Experts:** These experts are crucial in ensuring novice teachers know how to match their methods to industry norms and curricular objectives. Curriculum experts can assist new teachers in understanding educational frameworks, creating courses that incorporate technology and sustainability, and ensuring that teaching methods are current and creative. When curriculum specialists participate in mentoring, new teachers gain a thorough understanding of the curriculum's goals and are better equipped to implement it (Gimbert et al., 2021).

- **Administrators:** Incorporating school administrators into mentorship initiatives guarantees new teachers' institutional support. In addition to ensuring new teachers have access to the materials they need and giving them feedback on their overall performance, administrators may assist in fostering a culture that values professional development. Additionally, they are essential in encouraging teamwork and creating an atmosphere that values ongoing development (Pratyush, 2023).

Bringing together experienced teachers, curriculum experts, and administrators, a collaborative mentorship model not only supports the professional growth of new educators but also creates a network of resources and knowledge that enhances the overall quality of agricultural education.

### **Curriculum-Focused Mentorship Activities**

Mentorship programs for new agricultural educators should include curriculum-focused mentorship activities to provide structured, hands-on guidance in navigating the curriculum and effectively implementing it in the classroom. These exercises ought to be created to improve the novice teacher's teaching abilities and solidify their grasp of the material.

- **Workshops on Curriculum Alignment:** Workshops that concentrate on matching the curriculum to national standards and student requirements should be one of the main initiatives. New teachers can learn how to deconstruct the curriculum, pinpoint important learning objectives, and create lesson plans that address those objectives by attending these courses. These seminars can be led by curriculum specialists who will show how to incorporate sustainability and technology into agriculture education while developing coherent units that connect theory to practice (Whitlock, 2023).
- **Lesson Planning Sessions:** A crucial ability that calls for training and guidance is lesson planning. New teachers can get practical experience creating organised, interesting classes that integrate curriculum principles through regular sessions devoted to developing and improving lesson plans. The significance of student-centred learning, active learning, and the incorporation of real-world scenarios should all be emphasised in these sessions. To improve their ideas, get feedback, and investigate fresh approaches to successfully teaching agricultural concepts, new teachers might collaborate closely with their mentors (DiBenedetto et al., 2018).
- **Instructional Strategies Workshops:** Instead of training in pedagogy, new agricultural educators frequently have a background in practical experience. To help new teachers look

beyond conventional teaching methods, workshops that concentrate on various instructional strategies—such as inquiry-based learning, project-based learning, and flipped classrooms—are crucial. To ensure that teachers are prepared to meet the requirements of a diverse student body in their classrooms, these workshops may also address differentiated instruction. The relevancy of the lessons being taught will be further increased by integrating contemporary technologies and sustainable farming methods into these teaching methodologies (Ramesh, 2020).

### **Ongoing Support and Feedback**

Ongoing support and feedback are essential components of successful mentorship. Throughout their professional journey, new educators require continuing opportunities for reflection, assessment, and constructive feedback to thrive. This ongoing guidance is crucial for addressing immediate challenges and fostering long-term professional growth.

- **Regular Check-ins:** Mentoring need to be a continuous intervention. New teachers and their mentors can talk about difficulties, ask for advice, and get direction on particular matters at regular check-ins. Mentors can evaluate new teachers' progress during these check-ins to ensure they reach curricular objectives and hone their teaching techniques (Annisa et al., 2020).
- **Peer Observations and Feedback:** One effective method in the mentorship process is peer observation, in which novice teachers watch more seasoned ones or vice versa. It allows educators to share knowledge and provide constructive criticism to one another in a safe, accepting setting. Peer observations can concentrate on several teaching-related topics, such as how lessons are delivered, how students participate, and how technology or sustainability concepts are incorporated into lessons. Getting input from colleagues promotes introspection and ongoing development (Kőmives et al., 2018).
- **Performance Reviews and Constructive Criticism:** A novice educator's progress can be evaluated through regular performance reviews conducted by administrators or mentors. These evaluations must be presented as a chance for development, including detailed, useful input on both areas of strength and room for development. Suggestions for professional growth should be included with constructive criticism so new teachers can take proactive measures to enhance their instruction (Moreira, 2022).

- **Professional Development Opportunities:** Mentors should also assist new teachers in locating chances for ongoing education and development. This can be taking part in online courses, attending agricultural education conferences, or interacting with the larger educational community. By giving new teachers access to continual professional development, they may stay current on the latest developments in agricultural science and pedagogy, which keeps their instruction fresh and relevant (Ramesh et al., 2019).

## **Benefits of Involving Curriculum Experts in Mentorship**

### **Enhanced Educator Competence**

One of the most significant benefits of involving curriculum experts in mentorship programs is the enhanced competence of new agricultural educators. Curriculum experts bring specialised knowledge and practical experience in designing, aligning, and implementing educational content that meets both academic standards and industry needs. Through mentorship, these experts help new educators understand the nuances of the curriculum, ensuring that they deliver content and align their teaching practices with overarching educational goals (Murkatik et al., 2020). Building a mentorship culture that promotes ongoing development requires constant assistance and feedback. Mentorship programs can help novice educators gain confidence, hone their abilities, and eventually become effective and influential educators by ensuring they are supported at every level of their development.

When mentored by curriculum specialists, they advise on understanding intricate curricular frameworks, establish precise learning goals, and develop engaging lesson plans. This assistance improves the teacher's capacity to create and present thorough and interesting lessons. New teachers have the skills and information necessary to organise their lessons to meet the unique needs of agricultural students while also reflecting best pedagogical practices. Ultimately, more structured and effective education results from an enhanced capacity to plan, instruct, and evaluate student development, making the teacher more skilled and competent (McKim et al., 2017).

### **Increased Confidence and Retention**

Feelings of inadequacy, dissatisfaction, and burnout can result from the difficulties faced by new agricultural educators, which range from incorporating contemporary teaching approaches to adjusting to curriculum demands. High turnover rates within the profession may result from this. These difficulties are lessened by enlisting curriculum specialists in mentorship, which greatly boosts the confidence and retention of new teachers.

Curriculum specialists who participate in mentoring programs offer new teachers ongoing assistance and useful advice, assisting them in overcoming obstacles and laying a strong basis for their teaching career. Teachers feel more prepared and less alone when curriculum specialists provide tailored guidance on lesson planning, classroom management, and matching learning objectives with student needs. Despite the unavoidable obstacles, this support encourages educators to persevere in their jobs by fostering a sense of competence and self-assurance (Karim et al., 2021).

Increased self-confidence directly impacts retention rates because teachers are more likely to stay in the field when they feel capable and supported. Additionally, curriculum specialists assist new teachers in navigating the challenges of agricultural education in a more manageable way, which lowers stress and burnout. Teachers empowered to succeed are more likely to stay in the field and continue to grow as educators.

### **Better Student Outcomes**

Improving student results is the goal of any mentoring program, and including curriculum experts in mentorship programs directly impacts agricultural education student outcomes. Mentorship programs help ensure that students receive high-quality instruction that fulfils their educational and industry goals by ensuring that new educators have the information and skills necessary to design an aligned curriculum.

Curriculum specialists assist teachers in developing demanding, pertinent, and captivating teaching resources and activities. They assist novice teachers in creating instructional strategies that encourage in-depth learning and active student participation, emphasising curriculum alignment. This connection guarantees that students gain the fundamental information and the practical, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities required to succeed in the agricultural industry (Jackevicius et al., 2014).

Curriculum specialists also help incorporate new developments like sustainability and technology innovation into the curriculum. This gives students up-to-date agricultural knowledge, preparing them to succeed in a quickly evolving sector. Teachers are more equipped to teach when they obtain specialised advice from curriculum specialists. This increases the likelihood that pupils will succeed academically and acquire the skills necessary to handle real-world agricultural difficulties (Ajao et al., 2022).

In the end, adding curriculum specialists to mentorship programs generally raises the standard of instruction, which benefits students' learning results. Curriculum specialists assist new teachers in creating an educational environment that promotes student growth, achievement, and future success in agriculture by ensuring that lessons are well-structured, pertinent, and reflective of industry demands (Settle et al., 2024).

Improved student outcomes, greater confidence and retention, and increased instructor competency are some of the main advantages of using curriculum specialists in mentorship programs for new agriculture educators. Curriculum specialists are essential in determining the efficacy of agricultural education and guaranteeing the success of both teachers and students by offering specialised advice and knowledge in curriculum design, pedagogy, and instructional techniques.

### **Counterarguments and Rebuttals**

#### **Counterargument: Mentorship Can Be Effective Without Curriculum Experts**

**Rebuttal:** Although they offer helpful assistance, generic mentors might not have the specific expertise needed for curriculum alignment. Curriculum specialists can help new teachers create classes that match market demands and educational standards since they thoroughly understand curriculum design, alignment, and implementation. Their knowledge guarantees that instructional strategies are successful and pertinent to modern agriculture technologies and practices.

#### **Counterargument: Curriculum Experts May Not Have Teaching Experience**

**Rebuttal:** By matching seasoned teachers with curriculum specialists, collaborative mentorship models can help. Through this collaboration, curriculum specialists can offer specific expertise in curriculum design and alignment, and seasoned educators can contribute useful teaching methods and classroom management skills. This kind of cooperation guarantees that new teachers receive all-encompassing assistance, fusing academic understanding with real-world implementation.

### **Recommendations and Call to Action**

#### **Integrating Curriculum Experts into Mentorship Programs**

To increase their efficacy, curriculum specialists must be included in mentorship programs for new agricultural educators. To guarantee that new teachers receive specialised assistance in curriculum design, alignment, and implementation, educational regulations and frameworks should be created to require the participation of curriculum specialists in mentorship. By bridging the gap between

theoretical understanding and real-world application, this integration will promote a more comprehensive educational experience.

### **Training Curriculum Experts for Mentorship Roles**

Giving curriculum specialists the tools they need to act as mentors is essential. Developing skills in effective communication, active listening, empathy, conflict resolution, teamwork, flexibility, and emotional intelligence should be the main goal of training programs. Curriculum specialists can assist professional development, offer helpful criticism, and modify their mentoring style to accommodate the various requirements of new teachers, thanks to this training. To improve teaching methods, mentoring training should also cover techniques for creating a community of instructors who support one another, offering resources when required, and encouraging organised reflection.

### **Institutional Support**

Governmental organisations, universities, and schools are essential in promoting mentorship programs. They should set aside funds for training programs, provide mentoring materials, and provide time for mentors and mentees to have meaningful conversations to facilitate the integration of curricular experts into mentorship programs. Institutions can also establish guidelines that honour and promote curriculum experts' mentorship services to foster a culture of ongoing professional growth. The success of structured mentorship programs is illustrated by the Minnesota Teacher Induction Program for Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources Educators (AFNR TIP), which has a 93% retention rate from year one to year two of teaching.

## **CONCLUSION**

A collaborative mentorship model that unites administrators, curriculum specialists, and seasoned teachers is one of the best practices for mentoring programs for new agricultural educators. To prepare new teachers to fulfil curricular requirements and teach effectively, curriculum-focused mentorship activities that prioritise alignment, lesson planning, and instructional practices are essential. Curriculum specialists are invaluable when it comes to mentoring programs for novice agricultural educators. Enhancing educator competency, boosting confidence and retention, and improving student outcomes depend on their expertise and direction. By incorporating curriculum specialists into mentorship programs, giving them the necessary training, and guaranteeing institutional support, we can transform agricultural education and better equip teachers to handle issues in the future. Teachers will gain from this strategic integration, which will also help develop

agriculture education overall. Finally, giving new teachers continual assistance and feedback guarantee they get the direction they require for long-term professional development and teaching effectiveness.

### **Implications**

1. **Transformation of Teacher Preparation:** Integrating curriculum experts into mentorship programmes will help to transform how new agricultural educators are prepared. It will shift teacher induction from general guidance to a more structured, curriculum-aligned, and industry-relevant professional development model.
2. **Enhanced Teaching Quality and Curriculum Delivery:** Mentorship enriched by curriculum expertise can lead to more coherent curriculum interpretation, lesson alignment, and effective pedagogy. This improves teaching quality, ensuring that lessons are relevant to both sustainability and technological innovation.
3. **Strengthened Link Between Education and Industry Needs:** Involving curriculum experts will help bridge the gap between classroom instruction and agricultural industry expectations. This alignment will ensure that students gain practical, market-relevant competencies, thereby producing graduates who can respond to real-world agricultural challenges.
4. **Improved Teacher Retention and Professional Confidence:** Curriculum-guided mentorship will help to reduce professional isolation and uncertainty among new educators. As a result, teacher confidence and satisfaction will increase, contributing to lower turnover rates in agricultural education.
5. **Institutional Advancement and Policy Reorientation:** Analysis of this writeup suggests that agricultural education institutions and ministries must restructure their teacher induction policies to formally recognize curriculum experts as vital partners in mentorship. This calls for institutional frameworks that promote collaborative mentorship culture.
6. **Advancement of Sustainable and Technological Agriculture Education:** The integration of curriculum specialists will ensure that sustainability and technology are not treated as optional topics but embedded as core pedagogical priorities in agricultural education programmes. This will prepare learners to meet global agricultural sustainability goals.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Integrate Curriculum Experts into All Mentorship Frameworks:** Educational institutions and ministries of agriculture and education should make it mandatory for curriculum experts to participate in mentoring new agricultural educators to ensure curriculum consistency and pedagogical relevance.
2. **Develop Structured Training for Curriculum Experts as Mentors:** Institutions should organize capacity-building workshops to train curriculum experts in mentorship skills such as coaching, reflective practice, communication, and adaptive pedagogy to enhance their effectiveness.
3. **Institutionalize Collaborative Mentorship Models:** Schools and universities should adopt mentorship frameworks that combine the expertise of administrators, seasoned educators, and curriculum experts. This triadic approach promotes holistic professional growth and consistent curriculum implementation.
4. **Provide Continuous Professional Development and Feedback Systems:** Institutions should establish ongoing mentorship programs with periodic reviews, peer observations, and reflective feedback sessions to help new teachers refine teaching strategies and sustain improvement.
5. **Allocate Resources and Policy Support for Mentorship Programs:** Government agencies, universities, and agricultural education boards should allocate funding, time, and recognition for mentorship activities. Policies should also reward curriculum experts and mentors for their contributions to teacher development.
6. **Promote Research and Innovation in Mentorship Practices:** Further research should be encouraged to evaluate the long-term impact of curriculum-expert-led mentorship on teaching outcomes, student performance, and the integration of sustainability and technology in agricultural education.

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