

## 45th Biennial Convention (16-20 November 2019)

### A Concept Analysis of Mentorship

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**Background/Aims:** The nursing faculty shortage continues in the United States and it impacts the overall nursing shortage. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) (2017) reported that in 2016, 50,598 suitable applicants were excluded from admission to baccalaureate nursing programs in the United States. Overall, the number of suitable applicants rejected from baccalaureate nursing programs in the United States from 2006-2016 was approximately 495,880 (AACN, 2017). Nardi and Gyurko (2013) report that budgetary restrictions, inadequate numbers of clinical training sites, and vacant nursing faculty positions creates an impediment to admission for all suitable candidates to nursing programs. Hence, there is a need to analyze whether mentorship aids in the recruitment and retention of nursing faculty.

Mentorship is a concept that has been used interchangeably with other terms such as coaching and precepting. Bharwani, Kline and Patterson (2017) discuss how coaching differs from mentorship in that coaching is time-limited, task-specific and based on skill development alone. There is increasing emphasis on utilizing mentorship programs to increase job satisfaction, recruitment, retention and to ensure that workers are proficient within their areas of expertise. A concept analysis was completed to provide a working definition of mentorship. Rodgers and Knafl (2000) state that the purposes of concept analyses are to differentiate concepts from each other and pull together the overall meaning of a concept from existing viewpoints. With a refined definition, there may be increased precision with how mentorship programs are developed, utilized, evaluated and updated. Mentorship programs may be the key to recruiting and retaining nursing during the nursing shortage in the United States. Consistent operational use of a mentorship definition may improve the applicability and generalizability of research findings.

**Methods:** Walker and Avant's stages of concept development were used for this concept analysis. Published literature was reviewed from the Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and the Business Source Elite (BSE). Within all three databases the search term used was mentorship. The steps to this concept analysis were: define the aims of the analysis, identify uses of the concept, define the attributes, identify a model case, identify an alternative case, identify antecedents and consequences, and define empirical referents (Walker & Avant, 2019).

**Results:** A new definition emerged as a result of this content analysis. The definition of mentorship is: A supportive relationship sustained over time between an experienced individual and a less experienced individual where feedback, guidance and role-modeling enhances the individuals' growth.

**Conclusion:** Nurse educators would benefit from quality mentorship programs to assist in recruiting and retaining faculty members. Mentorship may benefit nurses throughout their career and not just when they are within the novice role. Researchers suggest that there is a correlation between mentorship and retention and recruitment (Hall, Hughes, & Thelk, 2017). Mentorship may enhance clinical practice and may improve clinical outcomes of patients. Nursing science may benefit by coming to a consensus on a definition of mentorship in nursing. Additionally, it is

important to operationally define mentorship within studies that implement and evaluate mentorship programs.

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**Title:**

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**Keywords:**

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**References:**

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**Abstract Summary:**

Mentorship has been a poorly defined concept. Mentorship may increase retention and recruitment of nurses. A concept analysis based on Walker and Avant's methodology was completed to clarify a working definition of mentorship. Consistent operational use of a mentorship definition may improve applicability and generalizability of research findings.

**Content Outline:**

1. Introduction
1. Background: In the United States there continues to be a nursing shortage. Suitable applicants are being turned away from nursing programs due to lack of available faculty. Mentorship programs have been implicated as methods to increase recruitment and retention of nursing faculty.
2. Aims: This concept analysis was completed to provide a working definition of mentorship. Use of this definition within mentorship research may aid in improving generalizability and applicability of research findings.
2. Body

1. There is a lack of precision in the definition of mentorship within the nursing literature.
1. Precepting and coaching are terms that have been used interchangeably with mentorship.
2. Walker and Avant's stages of concept analysis were used to clarify a working definition of mentorship within the nursing and allied health, education and business literature.
3. A definition for mentorship within nursing is described along with the antecedents, consequences and attributes of mentorship.
3. Conclusion
  1. The field of nursing would benefit from consistent use of a common definition of mentorship.
  2. In order for correlation to be drawn between recruitment and retention with mentorship programs, mentorship must be clearly defined.
  3. Mentor-mentee relationships provide an opportunity for professional nurses to collaborate in a supportive relationship. Mentorship can facilitate growth of both individuals.

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