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What is the relationship between peer mentors’ qualities and mentees’ successful progression in a Nursing PhD program?

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Conflict of interest & Learning Objectives:

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• At the end of this session, the participant will:
  • 1. Identify the defining attributes of peer mentoring.
  • 2. Describe a peer mentoring model for academic success and professional growth.
  • 3. Discuss future research for building frameworks mentoring by assessing student’s ideal mentor or peer mentor.
Barriers for Preparing Doctoral Nurses

• Extended time between entrance to the program and graduation

• Associated increased risk for drop-out (Grasso, Barry, & Valentine, 2007)
Peer Mentoring Promotes Student Outcomes

• Increases retention and degree completion (particularly among underrepresented groups) (Brown et al., 1999)

• Reduces anxiety (Hamrin et al., 2006)

• Promotes critical and diverse thinking (Brown et al., 1999)

• Fosters personal and professional growth of mentors and mentees (Hamrin et al., 2006)
Defining Mentor Attributes

• Attributes of mentors include supportiveness, high levels of interaction, timely and purposeful assistance, and review of progress of mentees (Zhao, Gold, & McCormick, 2007)

However...

• Limited information on the attributes of effective peer mentors of PhD-student mentees who progress and graduate
Purpose and Aims

• The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between students’ description of:
  • Peer mentors’ skills performance
  • Peer mentors’ skills performance and completion of the Second Exam
  • Ideal peer mentor attributes and time to degree
  • Ideal peer mentor attributes among first, second, and third year students and alumni
Progression through Nursing Doctoral Program

• Matriculation

• End of Year 1: First Exam (Integrative Literature Review)

• End of Year 3: Second Exam (Proposal Defense)

• Successful dissertation defense and graduation
Conceptual Framework

• Model of mentoring (Anderson & Shannon, 1988)

• Levison’s model of adult development (Levinson et al., 1978)
Methods

• Descriptive correlational design

• PhD Nursing program in a large urban public university in New York City

• Convenience sample (N=96)
  • n=38 nursing doctoral program students
  • n=13 nursing doctoral program graduates
Methods

• Obtained IRB approval

• Instruments:
  • Socio-demographic form
  • Ideal Mentoring Scale (IMS; Rose, 2003)
  • Mentoring Competency Assessment (MCA; Fleming et al., 2013)
Methods

• Descriptive statistics calculated for socio-demographics

• Spearman correlation coefficient calculated for aims 1, 2, and 3

• Kruskal Wallace test conducted for aim 4
Findings

• Most participants identified as:
  • female (84.3%)
  • greater than 46 years old (76.5%)
  • Caucasian/white (45.1%), followed by black or African American (21.6%)

• Current students averaged 2.68 years in the doctoral program
Findings

• Negative relationship between number of times the Second Exam is taken and scores on mentors’ competencies

• No significant relationship between peer mentors’ competencies and time to Second Exam
Findings

• Strong positive relationship between IMS Relationship subscale and time to degree

• Negative relationship between scores of guidance as an attribute of the ideal mentor and number of years student is in the doctoral program
Limitations

• Generalizability
  • Convenience sample

• High non-response rate

• Cannot determine causation
  • Cross-sectional design
Conclusion

• Value in providing mentoring and promoting successful relationships for doctoral students

• Preference for formation of personal relationships early in program

• Match mentors by ideal mentor attributes

• Ideal mentor attributes may evolve over time (e.g., guidance)
Future Directions

• Maintaining effective communication, aligning expectations, and addressing diversity are essential to promoting academic success and professional growth.

• Future studies are warranted to build on the framework of mentoring by assessing students’ preferences and perceptions of an ideal mentor or peer mentor.
Thank you!