Virtual Mentoring

- Virtual Mentoring is a structured relationship between an experienced and novice individual in which mentoring takes place via the utilization of technology as a means to add value to the lives of those involved.

Introduction

- Background
  - Shortage in doctoral prepared nurse educators
  - Experienced researchers in nursing retiring
  - New, innovative methods of mentoring needed

Problem and Purpose

- Problem
  - Virtual mentoring research exists in disciplines outside of nursing (doctoral education)
  - Need for research with doctoral nursing students and graduates who participated within a virtual mentoring program

- Purpose
  - To explore the lived experiences of research-focused doctoral nursing students and alumni who participated within a virtual mentoring program

Significance

- Mentoring assists doctoral nursing students in their development as future scholars
- Virtual mentoring may assist in the creation of a more robust mentoring environment in doctoral education

Research Questions

- “What is the lived experience with virtual mentoring within a virtual mentoring program?”
  - “Tell about your experience with virtual mentoring within a virtual mentoring program?”
  - “Building on that experience, how has it assisted you in your professional life?”
  - “Have you found other mentors along the way?”
  - “Are you mentoring others?”
  - “What additional suggestions would you recommend regarding a virtual mentoring program within an online doctoral program to better assist doctoral students?”

Research Plan

- Descriptive phenomenology (Husserl)
  - Data collection
    - Semi-structured interviews
    - Telephone interviews
    - Demographics

Limitations

- Convenience sample
- Lack of exposure to virtual mentoring
- Limitation of neutrality in the role as a doctoral student (Researcher bias)

Theoretical Framework

- Theoretical Framework
  - Descriptive phenomenology
  - Husserl's framework
  - Bracketing
  - Intentionality

Traditional Review of Literature

- Virtual Mentoring
  - Interdisciplinary fields
  - Interprofessional fields
  - Nursing

- Gaps in literature identified
- Virtual Mentoring in Interdisciplinary fields
  - Qualitative study: Gifted math students
  - Mixed Method study: Roles of virtual mentor
  - Qualitative study: Educational & business sector

- Virtual Mentoring in Interprofessional fields
  - Descriptive study: Online Occupational therapy students
  - Educational offering: Core competencies for medical students using virtual mentoring
  - Quantitative study: Radiology students in Kenya

- Virtual Mentoring in Nursing
  - Educational offering: Development of virtual mentoring, Ontario nurses
  - Quantitative study: Nurses and facilitators attitudes and constraints with virtual mentoring

Scoping Review of Literature

- Virtual Mentoring in Nursing Education: A Scoping Review of the Literature
  - Scoping review: What is known from the existing literature about virtual mentoring in nursing education?
  - Gap in literature reinforced the need for further research in Virtual Mentoring in Nursing Education (doctoral education)

Methodology

- Setting
  - ATLAS Research-Issued Doctoral Nursing Program
  - Telephone interviews

- Participants
  - A convenience sample of research-focused doctoral nursing students or alumni who participated in a virtual mentoring program (PhD, DNS, EdD)

Data Collection

- IRB approval
- AACN list of research-focused doctoral program Deans and Directors
- Recruitment letter sent to current doctoral students and alumni
- Digital recorded telephone interviews with semi-structured questions
- Demographic information

Summary of Colaizzi’s Method of Analysis

- Steps in Analysis
  - Transcribing full interviews from the telephone interviews
  - Organizing tapes into a list of sentences and phrases
  - Elaborating on the students'.token and contrasting with others
  - Identifying the core category, which is the patients' experience
  - Generating an explanation and synthesizing a category (self-interview)
  - Conducting a phase to data, which summaries the interview
  - Formulating a description of the interview and providing an idea of the universal features of phenomenon

- Purpose
  - To present theoretical model that comprehensively reflects phenomenology
  - To validate findings
  - To illuminate meanings hidden in various contexts of the phenomenon
  - To generate information pertaining directly to the phenomenon
  - To acquire general feeling for experience

Data Analysis

- Concurrent with data collection
- Thematic analysis
  - Supported by ATLAS.ti software
  - ATLAS.ti (2012)
  - Colaizzi, P. (1978)

Trustworthiness

- Lincoln and Guba
  - Credibility
  - Dependability
  - Conformability
  - Transferability
  - Authenticity

Ethical Considerations

- IRB approval prior to recruitment
- Informed Consent
- Participation is voluntary
- Identity protected with pseudonyms
- Security of telephone transcripts/study documents
- No risks to participants

Conclusion

- Ongoing research is needed and taking place in Virtual Mentoring in Nursing Education by the author
- Current research is:
  - Doctoral Nursing Students and Graduates Lived Experience of a Virtual Mentoring Program and Building Upon the Mentoring Experience: A Phenomenological Study