

A Consistent yet Flexible Curriculum to develop a Personalized Mentoring Culture in Medicine: A Systematic Scoping Review

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Background

Mentoring promotes personal and professional development of mentees and mentors, boost research and academic productivity, and enhances organizational performances. Its success is influenced by the culture within the program, which is characterised by the values, beliefs, practices, structures and curriculum adopted by the program. A nurturing mentoring culture supports the development of enduring and personalized mentoring relationship.

Despite its pivotal role, there is a paucity of studies on Mentoring Culture (MC). To overcome this gap, study of the closely related concept of Learning Culture (LC) is proposed to guide curriculum planning and design of effective mentoring programs.

Methodology

Using Arksey and O'Malley's approach to scoping review, 4 authors performed independent literature reviews pertaining to the LCs and curriculum in Medicine published between 1st January 2000 to 19th September 2018 using PubMed, Embase, PsycINFO, ERIC, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Google Scholar, Scopus, GreyLit, OpenGrey, and Web of Science databases.

Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis approach was adopted to circumnavigate LC's evolving, context-specific, goal-sensitive, learner-, tutor-, relational- and host organization-dependent nature that makes comparison of LC across different settings difficult.

Results

Based upon a set of common inclusion and exclusion criteria, 11,723 abstracts were identified and 73 full-text articles were selected, and thematically analysed. Two themes were identified – the formal and informal and hidden curriculum.

- MC is the shared values, beliefs, attitudes, behaviours, practices and vision of mentees, mentors, and host organization (stakeholders).
- MC influences the mentoring environment and relationships.
- MC's entwined, evolving, context-specific, mentoring approach sensitive, mentee, mentor, host organization, mentoring relationship dependent nature influences the ethical, clinical, academic and professional practice within the mentoring program.

Formal Curriculum

- Establishes mentoring process with a flexible mentoring structure and training opportunities
- Sets a consistent standards of practice and code of conducts of the program
- Supports the development of personalized mentoring relationship, following an effective pairing of mentees and mentors



Informal and Hidden Curriculum

- Reveals the team dynamics and informs stakeholders of appropriate behaviours and values in nurturing mentoring relationship
- Guides the host organization in providing timely and personalized support to the mentees and mentors
- Directs changes in formal curriculum and advances in mentoring practices

Conclusion

- Design and assessment of mentoring programs must consider the impact of the curricula and the healthcare and educational systems, and prevailing sociocultural factors upon the mentoring culture.
- Future research needs to holistically review impact of the setting, healthcare and educational systems, and prevailing sociocultural factors to develop deeper insights into its impact upon the curriculum and mentoring.

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