

Strategies adopted by Host Organizations to improve mentoring programs: A scoping review

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Background

Host organizations play an important role in structuring the mentoring process to ensure that there is consistency in the mentoring experience and to facilitate effective assessment and oversight of the mentoring relationships. Consistency within the mentoring process must be balanced with flexibility that accounts for the mentee's goals, needs, timelines and situation. This review seeks to study prevailing data on mentoring structures in order to inform design of mentoring programs.

Methodology

The authors used Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) methodological framework for conducting scoping reviews to guide the study protocol. Literature search for articles involved PubMed, Embase, PsycINFO, ERIC, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, Google Scholar, Scopus, GreyLit, OpenGrey, and Web of Science databases. Braun and Clarke's approach to thematic analysis was adopted to analyze the included articles.

Results

18568 abstracts were identified, and 38 full-text articles were thematically analyzed to reveal 2 themes including strategies to instill structure, and strategies to instill flexibility in the mentoring process.

structure

Clearly articulate goals and values, roles and responsibilities, codes of conduct

- Retain mentors
- Promote a mentoring culture
- Be part of the formal curriculum
- Train and recruit mentors and mentees
- Provide administrative and financial support

flexibility

Organize pre-mentoring meetings to discuss individual expectations and goals
Accommodate individuals' goals, interests, personalities, preferences, backgrounds

- Respond and adapt to feedback
- Employ adaptable and longitudinal evaluations

Discussion and Conclusion

- A structured approach to mentoring includes rendering administrative and financial support to mentors and mentees, providing training to mentees and mentors, and ensuring compliance to codes of conduct.
- Flexibility within the mentoring process involves accommodation of mentors and mentees' preferences, goals, abilities and contextual factors and acknowledging that the mentoring process will evolve over the course of the mentoring journey.
- Balancing the mentoring structure with a flexible approach that can meet the individual and evolving needs of the mentees, the mentor and their mentoring relationship helps to guide design of effective mentoring programs.
- Development of mentoring programs in the future should encompass design of holistic and longitudinal evaluation tools for host organizations to assess mentoring programs. This will allow host organizations to steer mentoring programs effectively and continuously appraise mentoring programs.