



Leadership Development in Nursing Students: Crafting Mentoring Relationships

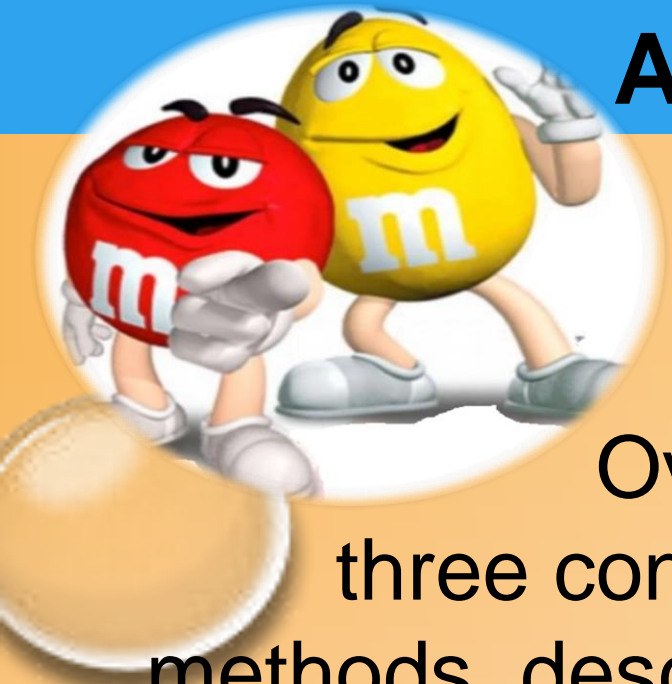


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Abstract



Over the spring terms of three consecutive years, this mixed methods, descriptive project was conducted. This project was designed to analyze mentoring relationships between freshmen mentees and senior mentor nursing students in the Department of Nursing. Specifically, the concept of mentorship was explored and the roles and responsibilities of the mentor in enhancing the learning experience of mentees was analyzed. In this study students participated in structured activities and completed program surveys using Blackboard. The findings revealed the essential leadership attributes of the senior mentor student and that mentees reported emerging technical, interpersonal, and communicative skills essential for practice and persistence in the nursing profession. The results of this study suggest that it is important to facilitate mentor-mentee relationships in nursing schools.



Introduction

Mentoring is important in professional nursing student career development (Mariana, 2012).

Mentoring is a reciprocal, sustained relationship with a commitment between mentor (experienced student) and mentee (novice student) where teaching-learning contributes to professional student growth (Huber, 2012)

Mentoring outcomes: increased student nurse retention & persistence, increased leadership skill acquisition, and decreased academic dissatisfaction (Reh, 2012).

Research Design/Methodology

Purpose: 1) To study mentoring relationships between freshmen and senior level nursing students for teaching-learning attributes; 2) To analyze leadership skills of senior students

Design: Mixed methods, descriptive

Sample: Convenience, **mentors = 31** (male = 1; female = 30) and **mentees = 36**, female.

Ethics: IRB approval renewed yearly

Phases of study:

Initiation
Phase

Working
Phase:
Formal &
Informal
Meetings

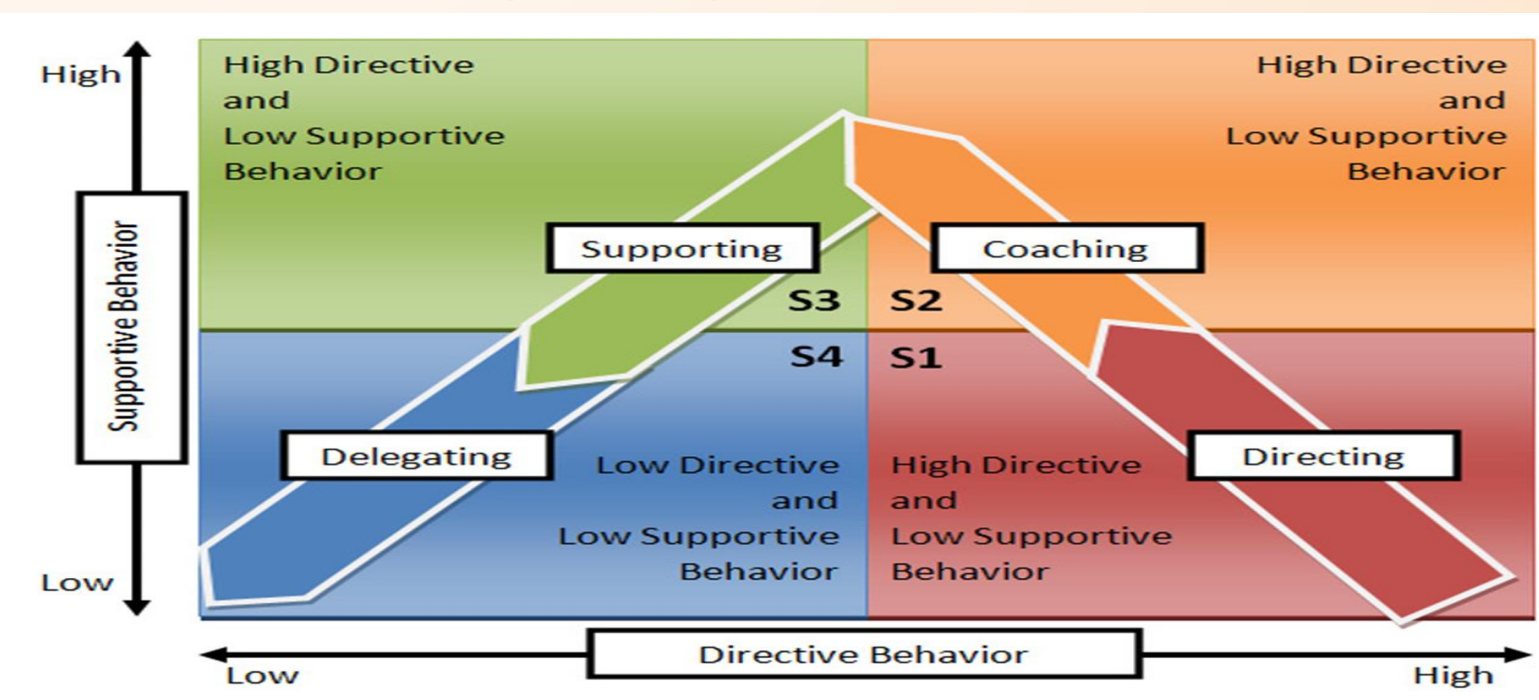
Termination

Findings

Study data were collected using the Student Information Form and Mentoring/Mentee Assessment Forms.

Mentors Attributes: Commitment; Accountability; Creativity; and Leadership

Discovered application of Situational Leadership Model (SLM) of Hersey & Blanchard (1988).



Students reported that successful leaders learn to adjust their leadership style to fit the task, needs, and maturity of follower.

Common Freshmen Student Themes:

"Being with my Mentor makes me feel less home sick..."
"I can communicate more assertively."
"Nursing simulation is not so scary after all... I have gained technical skills."
"I have learned a lot from my senior student advisor..."

Common Senior Student Themes:

"Being a leader makes me feel important & valued . . ."
"It is important to grow as a student nurse leader . . ."
"Listening is hard when you try to hear what is said ..."

Conclusions

This mentorship program appeared to provide an opportunity for student nurses to develop leadership and followership skills necessary to operate in professional careers.



Producing capable 'TEAM' nurses requires education programs which apply collaborations designed to teach & retain dedicated students through graduation

One of the most valuable assets for a students' career is a good mentor.

Further research is needed to validate leadership and followership findings.

References

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