Bouncing Back: A Collaborative Peer to Peer Mentoring Program to Promote Resilience Among Entry Level Nursing Students

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Introduction

- Transition into a nursing program is considered a difficult and stressful experience for undergraduate students (McDonald et al., 2018)
- Evidence supports anxiety and stress is at peak during the first few months of entering the nursing program (Porteous & Machin, 2017)
    - Requiring resilience to quickly adjust to a new level of academic rigor, higher expectations, and novel experiences (Thomas & Revell, 2016)
- Conceptual definition of nursing student resilience, "individualized process of development that occurs through the use of personal protective factors to successfully navigate perceived stress and adversities. Cumulative successes lead to enhanced coping/adaptive abilities and well-being." (Stephens, 2013, p. 130).
- Resilience has potential to improve overall happiness, decrease student attrition, and enhance future professional nurse experience (Stephens, 2013)
- Higher resiliency is associated with better academic outcomes (Van Hoek et al., 2019)
- Resiliency is an important characteristic of nurses
    - Improving nurses ability to deal with everyday challenges and enhancing professional quality of life (Ang et al., 2018)
- Peer-to-peer coaching is a viable option to enhance resilience among students (Cleary et al., 2018)
- Evidence supports peer mentoring is beneficial to both the mentor and mentee
    - Mentors- Communications skills and self-confidence had improved significantly (Hogan et al., 2017)
    - Mentees- mentoring identified as
        - Instrumental to adjusting to clinical settings and transition to the university system (Hogan et al., 2017)
        - Reducing anxiety and increasing confidence as they used their new skills in the clinical setting (Walker & Verklan, 2016)

Purpose

Evaluate the impact of peer-to-peer mentoring on resiliency among transitioning students into a baccalaureate nursing program

Conceptual Framework

- Undergraduate Initial Transition Framework (UNIT) used to orient and guide mentors (McDonald, M., Brown, J., & Knihnitski, C., 2018)
    1. Adjusting to academic life
        - Support students who are away from family/friends.
    2. Negotiating others 'expectations
        - Tips to "deal" with faculty and family/friends expectations
    3. Negotiating own expectations
        - Help adapt to nursing education/schedule (referrals)
    4. Reframing support
        - Assist in finding new, healthy support
    5. Forming identity
        - Reinforce normalcy of feeling changed by situation/knowledge
        - Understand the importance of work/education
    6. Splitting focus-finding focus
        - Help in prioritizing and focusing
        - Balance academics and social opportunities

Mentoring Program

- Collaboration between West Virginia University (WVU), School of Nursing (SON) Alpha Rho Chapter of Sigma and WVU SON Student Nurses Association (SNA)
- **Mentoring teams-** self-selected senior Alpha Rho members and SNA board appointed junior or senior SNA members with good academic standings and embody professional and ethical standings
    - Mentoring team assigned 3-5 mentees
    - Mentor Orientation/Ongoing Support:
        - Initial one-hour mentor orientation meeting
            - Addressed: campus resources, professional boundaries, conceptual framework, general expectation
        - Ongoing support:
            - Mentors maintained weekly communication with Alpha Rho leaders and other mentors using discussion board capabilities in a learning management system (LMS)
- Commitment for mentors and mentee:
    - Mentoring began week 1 through week 16 of the first sophomore semester
    - One-three face-to-face meetings
    - Weekly contact using social media
        - Group communication stressed to decrease burden on mentor team and promote cohesiveness among the group

Methods

- This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board
- Inclusion Criteria:
    - Mentors: 18 years or older, fluent in English language, good academic standings and embody nursing's professional and ethical values
    - Mentees: 18 years or older, fluent in English language, entering first semester sophomore semester
- Recruitment:
    - Mentors: recruitment letter sent by email to potential students identified by Alpha Rho and SNA leaders
    - Mentees: recruitment letter sent by email to all incoming sophomore students
    - Mentors or mentees contacted PI for a recruitment meeting. Study explained in detail. Consent gained. Mentees assigned a confidential participant number at this time
- Instruments:
    - Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 25 (CD-RISC-25) used to measure resilience (Connor & Davidson, 2003)
    - Demographics
    - Program evaluation
- Data collection:
    - Survey linked to Alpha Rho's learning management system site
    - Only participant numbers used when completing confidential survey
- Data collection points:
    - Week 1
        - Mentees completed demographics and pre- CD-RISC-25
    - Week 15-16
        - Mentors
            - Demographics and program evaluation
        - Mentees
        - Program evaluation and post CD-RISC 25
- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) used to manage and analyze data.

Results- Mentor

Table 1: Peer-to-Peer Program Evaluation for Mentor

Questions	Results (n=2)
How would you rate your overall experience of serving as a mentor in the peer-to-peer mentoring program?	Very positive, somewhat positive, neither positive or negative, somewhat negative, very negative
How likely are you to recommend the role of mentor in the peer-to-peer mentoring program to colleagues?	Very likely, somewhat likely, neither likely or unlikely, somewhat unlikely very unlikely
How likely are you to recommend the peer-to-peer mentoring program to future incoming nursing students?	Very likely, somewhat likely, neither likely or unlikely, somewhat unlikely very unlikely
How well do you feel peer-to-peer mentoring promoted/supported resilience in your group of mentees?	Extremely well, Very well, somewhat well, Not so well, not well at all
How would you rate the time commitment involved with being a mentor?	More time than expected, slightly more time than expected, about the right amount of time, slightly less time than expected, much less than expected
Provide additional comments related to your experience as a mentor in the peer-to-peer mentoring program	• I thought for the first time launching this program it went well and we learned a lot. • I believe the experience was positive, but the group did not seem to feel extremely stressed out about transitioning into nursing school.
Please provide suggestions you have that may improve the peer-to-peer mentoring program.	• I think that targeting students that have no hospital experience for this program will have better outcomes. I also think this program might be better received in the fall semester because students entering in the spring have extra semester of college to prepare them for nursing school. • I would suggest starting the peer mentor group after the students start clinical rotations. This seems to be the most stressful time for them.

Results- Mentee

Table 2: Demographics of Mentees (n=4)

Gender	Housing	Athlete	Fraternity /Sorority	Club Involvement	Employment
4	4	4	4	4	4
1 male	1 on campus	1 yes	1 yes	2 yes	3 yes
3 females	3 off campus	3 non	3 no	2 no	1 no

Table 3: Pre-Post CDRS-25 Significant Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Sig.
Q1. I am able to adapt to change.	2	-1.000	.000
Q4. I can deal with whatever comes my way	2	1.000	.000
Q5. Past successes give me confidence in dealing with new challenges and difficulties	2	1.000	.000
Q8. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury, or other hardships	2	-1.000	.000
Q14.Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly	2	-1.000	.000
Q23.I like challenges	2	1.000	.000

Table 4: Peer-to-Peer Program Evaluation for Mentee

Questions	Results (n=2)
How would you rate your overall experience of being a mentee in the peer-to-peer mentoring program?	Very positive, somewhat positive, neither positive or negative, somewhat negative, very negative
How likely are you to recommend the peer-to-peer mentoring program to future students?	Very likely, somewhat likely, neither likely or unlikely, somewhat unlikely very unlikely
How likely are you to become a peer mentor to future students?	Very likely, somewhat likely, neither likely or unlikely, somewhat unlikely very unlikely
How well did peer-to-peer mentoring promote/support your resilience during this semester?	Extremely well, Very well, somewhat well, Not so well, not well at all
How would you rate the time commitment involved with being a mentee in the peer-to-peer mentoring program?	More time than expected, slightly more time than expected, about the right amount of time, slightly less time than expected, much less than expected

Discussion

- Peer-to-peer mentoring is feasible
    - Evaluative feedback from mentee and mentor provided positive comments
- Impact of mentoring on promoting resilience was inconclusive
    - Insufficient power- a larger sample is needed
- Lessons learned:
    - Recruitment issues
        - Convenience sampling may not have represented the true population
            - Students with less resilience may not have chosen to participate
        - Consider making peer-to-peer mentoring a required part of sophomore
        - May also make available throughout the sophomore year
    - Measurement issues
        - Missing important demographic information
            - Include hospital experience
        - Poor post-survey return rate
            - Incentivize
            - Have mentors encourage mentees to complete the post survey
- Future direction
    - More research is needed to improve resiliency among nursing students

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Conclusion

- Resilience is a positive attribute of nursing students and nurses
- Higher resiliency is associated with successful academics, improved wellness, and quality nursing care
- Peer-to-peer mentoring for transitioning students into a baccalaureate nursing program was feasible and recognized as a positive experience
- More research is needed to determine the impact of peer-to-peer mentoring on resiliency among nursing students