EXPLORING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FRAMEWORK FOR INFORMAL E-MENTORING OF ONLINE HEALTH EDUCATION STUDENTS: A FORMATIVE EVALUATION [RESEARCH IN PROGRESS]

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	The purpose of this pilot case study is to provide details on developing a framework for e-mentoring graduate level online health education students as an added component of an online health education course.
Background	E-mentoring gives faculty the opportunity to share professional knowledge with students and impart practical experiences. In addition, faculty can show how the course content is teaching skills applicable to student's personal and professional goals. There is an abundance of research and professional literature that includes mentoring of graduate students, but this literature base has not shown a development in a theory and models used in e-mentoring. As yet, however, literature dealing with e-mentoring the future health educator is scarce or nonexistent even though technology such as mobile apps, email, listservs, chat groups and conferencing could enhance the e-mentoring process.
Methodology	The framework is described in the context of a curriculum development and a program planning model. Following the steps designed in this framework, mentees are guided through a course that begins with setting goals and ends with an evaluation process. The steps are similar to what health educator's use in the program planning process, which is also a component of building a community program. The model uses both psychosocial variables that help build identity and coaching functions as a guide and to obtain measurements.
Contribution	The study ends with a mix of evaluations that include the formative and summative evaluations. A formative evaluation is conducted throughout the process. A summative evaluation will be conducted at the end to gain feedback. For the summative evaluation, constructs from the mentoring scale will be used.

Findings	This case study was prepared to serve as a basis for discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective e-mentoring process for health educators.
Keywords	mentoring, e-mentoring, graduate students, health educators, ADDIE model, HEDTAM

INTRODUCTION

There is an abundance of research and professional literature that includes mentoring of graduate students, but this literature base has not yet come together into a theory for mentoring (Crawford, Randolph, & Yob, 2014). For the graduate student, they use the two domains academic and psycho-social. However, literature dealing with mentoring the health educator is nonexistent

Studies can be found on mentoring dating back to the 1980s (Educause, n.d.) and even further during the days of Moses and Joshua in Deut 25:17–19 (Mullen, 2012). "While there are differences in the way mentoring has been defined in these research studies, the overall findings are fairly consistent over the span of years" (Educause, n.d.).

Mentoring programs are often conducted in the face-to-face environment in academic institutions. Seldom are these programs available for the online student particularly the online health education students. Mentoring should be flexible and based on mentees' training background.

APPROACH

With that in mind, the purpose of this pilot case study is to provide details on developing a framework for e-mentoring graduate level online health education students as an added component of an online health education course. The framework is described in the context of a curriculum development model (ADDIE) and a program planning logic model. Health Education Technology Adoption Model (HEDTAM) is an added component to the evaluation process (Tarver-Grover, 2015). The formative evaluation is generally any evaluation that takes place before or during a project's implementation with the aim of improving the project's design and performance. There are different categories of the formative evaluation according to the authors of the Evaluation Toolbox. For this design, the proactive using the literature review and clarificative using the logic model are the categories used.

> The ADDIE model of Instructional Systems Design (ISD) involves five main stages, including: **analyze** (performing a needs assessment), **design** (developing goals and objectives), **develop** (producing, assessing, and validating the materials to be used), **implement** (putting the program into practice), and **evaluate** (collecting and reviewing data to determine the effectiveness of the program and whether or not changes are necessary) (Seels & Glasgow, 1998 as found in Cole, McArdle, & Clements, 2005).

Following the steps designed in this framework, mentees are guided through a course that begins with setting goals and ends with an evaluation process. The steps are similar to those health educators use in the program planning process, which is also a component of building community program.

Each step is designed to coincide with the program planning model and areas of responsibility for the Health Educator designed by the certifying body for health educators. For example, if students are working on program goal setting, the mentoring session will focus on setting personal goals. While students are building programs, they use similar steps to guide their professional development.

RESULTS

This case study was prepared to serve as a basis for discussion rather than to illustrate either an effective or an ineffective e-mentoring process for health educators. Preliminary results show that using the logic model, ADDIE and HEDTAM can be an effective guide for developing online e-mentoring programs.

CONCLUSION

Online instructors who choose to incorporate mentoring techniques into their practice are acknowledging that students deserve attention and nurturing both within and beyond the content. They show students that they are genuinely interested in their development as savvy online learners as well as professionals in the field.

Mentoring reminds the instructor that students are individuals who are at different learning stages, have differing goals and expectations, and have needs differing from those of their instructors. The kind of personal mentoring relationships described here may seem daunting, even overwhelming, when viewed under the bright light of grading, managing message boards, and leading chat sessions. But as Daloz (1999) argues, "if every teacher made a point of spending at least some real time with at least some students, our colleges and universities might be better places for genuine learning to occur" (p. 239).

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BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Tarver-Grover, PhD, CHES, joined Purdue University Global (formerly Kaplan) in 2009 as part-time online faculty in the school of Health Sciences. Dr. Grover holds a Master's Degree in Business and Health Care Administration from the University of Phoenix and a PhD in Community Health from Texas Woman's University. She has spent the last 23 years working in various business/professional positions in health care in a major hospital. In addition, she has been teaching in the online environment for the past 10 years teaching various bachelors and masters courses in public health, healthcare and health education.

Her volunteer efforts include former CoChair for the American Diabetes Association (ADA) and member of the ADA Leadership Board. More efforts include member of the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), 2018 and Professional Development Committee member. Writing efforts include an archived blog for the US Department of Health and Human Services "Fitness Your Way" blog in October, 2010 and a publication on health strategies in the Health Education and Behavior Journal which was published in December, 2010. A book on the effects of diabetes has been published through Amazon.com. A few journal articles have been published relating to teaching with technology.