Perceptions on Mentoring Concept and Mentoring Practices among Medical Mentors: A Mixed-Methods Study

Cheah Whye Lian, Helmy Hazmi, Kiu Ling Hui, Lee Sze Ee, Ling Wei Nii, Veronica Wong Huey Shin

1Department of Community Medicine and Public Health, 2Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO
Received : 23/01/2015
Accepted : 13/04/2015
Published : 10/06/2015

KEYWORD
Mentor
Mentoring
Mentee
Mentor’s perception
Mentoring practices

ABSTRACT
Introduction: Mentoring medical students is one of the essential responsibilities or missions of a medical school faculty. Objective: This study aimed to determine the perceptions of mentorship and mentoring practices among mentors using a convergent parallel method. Method: Quantitative data was collected by using an adopted validated self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS version 20. Qualitative data was done using one-to-one interview based on semi structured interview guide and analyzed using thematic analysis. Result: A total of 61 respondents participated in the quantitative survey. Approximately 75% of the respondents had 5 to 10 mentees, with majority rated themselves as satisfactory mentor. More than 60% of them met their mentees at least once every six months. Most respondents were friendly (86.9%) and frank to their mentees (68.9%) and were interested in their mentees’ professional development (95.1%). Phone calling (93.4%) and E-mail (95.1%) were preferred as modes of contact. Mentees were allowed to call their mentors anytime of the day (74.1%). Respondents preferred to counsel their mentees (80.3%) and would refer them for professional help whenever necessary (70.5%). For qualitative data, a total of 5 participants participated with themes emerged: concepts of mentoring, factors contributing to ineffective mentoring and ways to improve mentoring practices. Conclusion: The respondents had positive perceptions regarding their mentorship and practices. A more structured approach with clear mentoring guideline and proper training should be in place.

Introduction
Mentoring was introduced and developed in many sectors with the aims to support and guide another experience-lacking individual. In medical profession, formal mentoring was only developed at the late 1900s and it has become one of the essential responsibilities of a medical school. Studies had showed that depression due to stress among medical students rated higher than other graduates in general public [1]. The burdened study load, frequent examinations, poor learning environment, and financial affairs are the common stressors among medical students that subsequently bring negative influences on their academic performance and