

The Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices of Pakistani Postgraduate Physical Therapy Students Regarding Peer Mentorship

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ABSTRACT:

Background: Peer mentorship is the way of teaching in which the senior one member teaches his/her experiences, skills and techniques to the junior member. The senior member is mentor and the junior one is mentee.(1) This is different from the other way of typical teaching styles because senior members have vast experience and juniors have fresh theoretical knowledge, which is exchanged through peer mentorship.

Objective: To describe Pakistani post graduate physical therapy students' knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding peer mentorship.

Methodology: A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted. A questionnaire was given to students. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of Pakistani postgraduate physical therapy students.

Results: Most respondents (58%) did not have any experience in a peer mentorship relationship. A few respondents (14%) reported having received formal training. Respondents showed positive attitudes toward peer mentorship 84% agreed that including peer mentorship is important, and 75% agreed that it can help the transition from student to professional. Most respondents (48 %) did not participate in a peer mentorship relationship during this month.

Conclusion: The response of students towards peer mentorship is positive but most of them had not enough knowledge about it. The research showed the importance of support from the university in this regard to overcome the hurdles in the way of peer mentorship. The results of this study gave a reason to support the peer mentorship for Pakistani post graduate students.

Key Words: Mentors, Physical Therapy, Students.

INTRODUCTION:

In past there is a lot of changes occur in the field of physiotherapy, in which the major change is transformation of physiotherapist from the clinical side to academic side and the urge of employees to learn new skills through academic institutes. Another change is the up gradation of physiotherapy degree from the bachelor's to master's degree.(2) Mentoring is now becoming an important need these days, peer mentorship specially, now a days implemented in many institutions in which a senior colleague or class fellow help the junior one with his experience. (3) In this situation when a new physiotherapist which is in field just after completing his bachelor's degree may face many challenges in academic as well as in clinical field. Peer mentorship is very helpful to deal with these challenges and stress (4-6) Peer mentorship is very effective method for the new physiotherapists to facilitate their clinical approach and also help the development of physical therapy profession.(5-7)

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This method of teaching is commonly used in universities and mostly adults prefer it(6) Because it gives prompt response(8) this methodology supported by many theories as “social learning theory”(9), “concept of reflective practice”(10, 11) and “situated learning and community of practice theory”(9, 12). These theories share the aspects of transfer the knowledge among each other, beliefs and understandings, share experiences and senior members work as role model.(11, 12) Peer mentorship is surprisingly become very famous among physiotherapist in which a new comer or “novice practitioner” have faith on the senior experienced person and use his peer’s expertise and understanding in dealing with the patients. (9, 13) Peer mentorship has a goal of personal development and growth of the profession so the mentor guided the mentee towards goal through his own reflections.(14)

Peer mentorship may be formal or informal as in formal mentorship the institute help the mentor and facilitate him and mentorship has a specific syllabus, time, schedule, evaluation etc. while the informal peer mentorship is just depends upon the mutual understanding of mentor and mentee without a specific schedule.(15) it depends upon the need of mentee and the cooperation of mentor.(16-18)

Klasen and clutterbuck have many studies on the peer mentorship and suggested the effectiveness, need and the responsibility of mentor and mentee.(19) they said that the mentor must have a sufficient knowledge and skill to handle different type of mentees and mentee should really want to learn something and have urge to gain experience.(19, 20). There is gap in literature. First there is very little research in this aspect which addresses the students. Most of the studies address the organizational physiotherapists. Most studies include nurses.(4, 8, 16, 21-25)

Secondly the researches predominantly include the clinicians and peer mentorships among student with student which is in other sense fellows academic help.(1, 8, 22, 24, 25). Another feature is that many studies evaluate the behavioral and psychosocial expectations of clinicians rather than the academic understanding.(21-26)

Allen and colleagues said that peer mentorship is successful teaching methodology and is a large input towards literature.(26)

Another aspect of the fame of peer mentorship is the continuously evolving physiotherapy profession that is the reason to learn throughout the life to have good results in their field. This thing made the peer mentorship necessary for the success in field.(27). Novice practitioner find it fruitful to become a good professionals.(2)

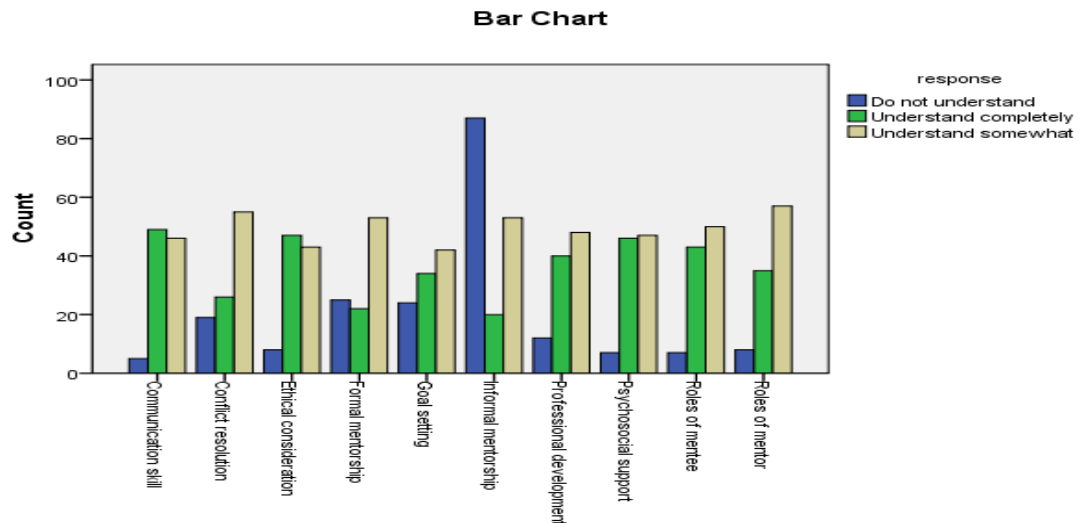
Peer mentorship at university level is unstudied in Pakistan. The hurdles in the application of peer mentorship are also unstudied in Pakistan.

Material and Methods:

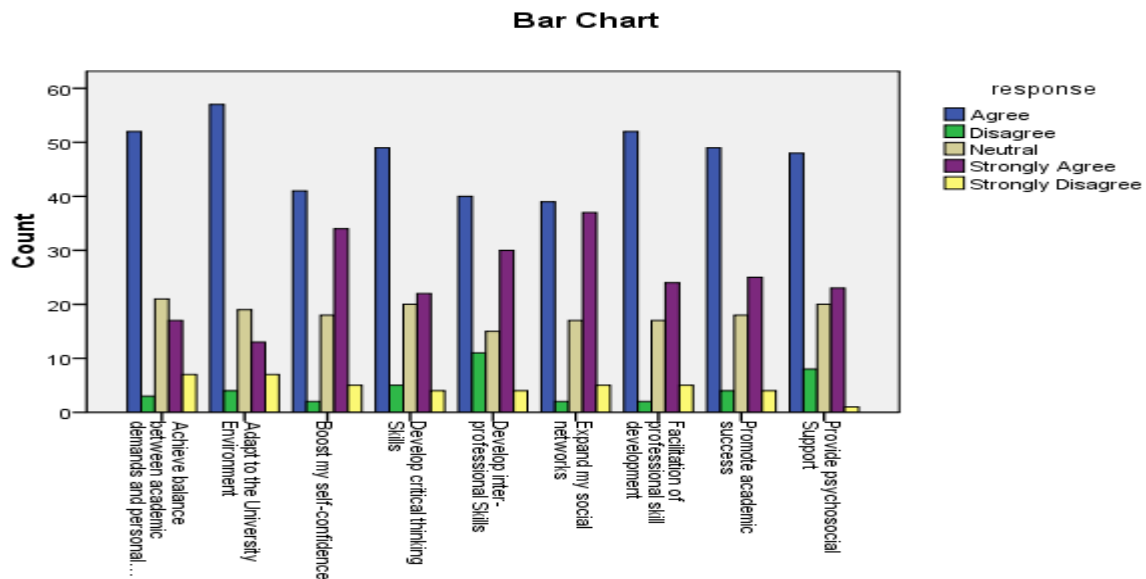
This is quantitative cross-sectional survey study. The target population for this study consisted of PP-DPT students enrolled in a 2-year of Post Professional Doctor of Physical Therapy program at a Pakistani university. The objective was to describe Pakistani post graduate physical therapy students’ knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding peer mentorship. A self formed questionnaire was distributed among the participants and also send through e-mail to collect the data. Data was collected from Riphah International University Lahore Campus, Riphah International University Islamabad Campus, ISRA University, Khyber Medical University, University of Health Sciences Lahore, King

Edward Medical University Lahore, and DOW Medical University. For the analysis of data SPSS v.16 used and data is presented in form of charts and appropriate graphs as well as standard deviation and mean is also used.

RESULTS:

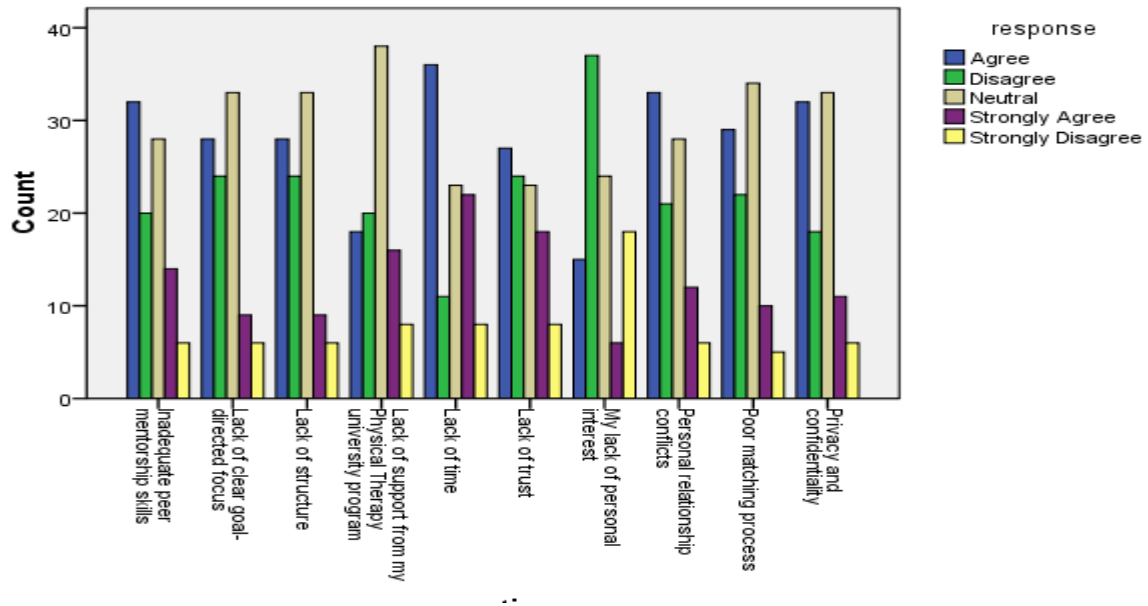


Self-reported Understanding of Terms Associated with Peer Mentorship



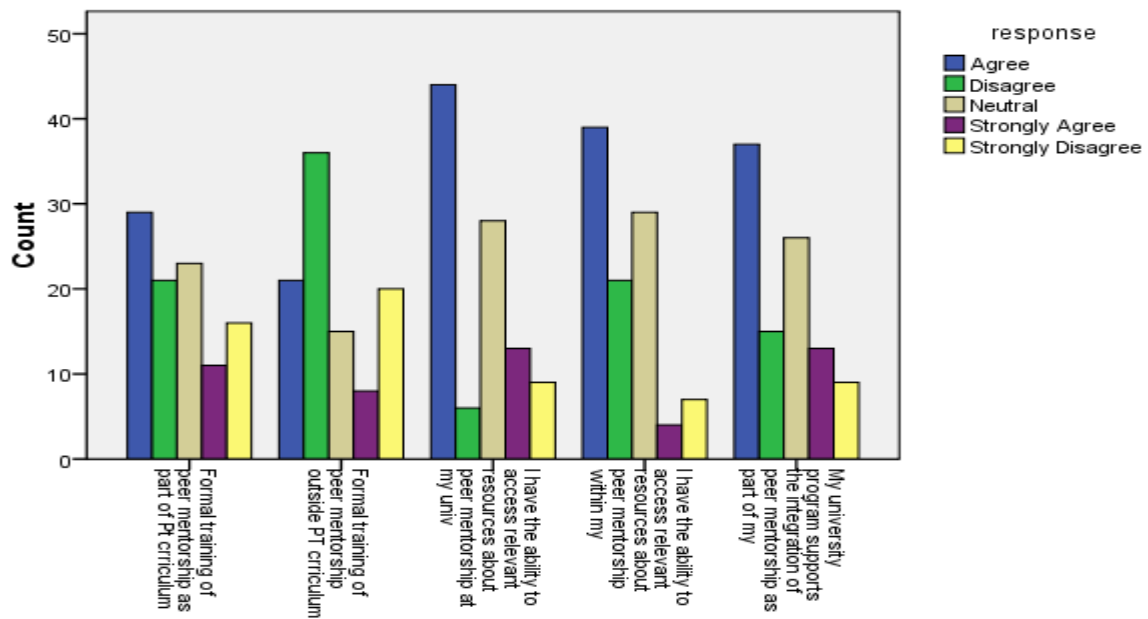
Self-reported attitudes toward peer mentorship

Bar Chart



Perceived barriers to peer mentorship

Bar Chart



Self-Reported Perceptions of Knowledge Items Regarding Peer Mentorship

DISCUSSION:

Knowledge, attitude and practice are different factors. Knowledge is to know about something , attitude is the understanding towards it and practice is the action (28, 29). These factors are very important in field of physiotherapy to do evidence based practice(30, 31) but unfortunately these factors are not discussed in researches in Pakistan. This study describes the all aspects including behavioral and psychosocial aspects of physiotherapists. The study shows the lack of understanding about the terms mentor and mentee etc. other fields such as nurses and occupational therapists have enough knowledge about these terms because they need and use peer mentorship in their practice.(1)

There is no significance study in Pakistan which includes the post graduate students and their understanding towards peer mentorship. This study not only tells about the future interests of the physiotherapist but also the views of implementation of peer mentorship. Some institutes help to do peer mentorship but majority of the organizations not facilitate this type of methodology.

This study also showed the importance and willingness of students to have this mentorship. This study also revealed this fact that students really want to take part in peer mentorship and some of the participants also doing it already.

This study also shows the results about the implementation of peer mentorship as a part of curriculum in universities and finds it very helpful in their success. Researchers find it key to have success in the field.(32) a study of occupational therapy students showed the results that peer mentorship is very effective tool to excel in professional field.(1) students can teach one another more effectively as they know each other's problems and also can cope up with each other mind level. This help in finding the solution of their problem.(33) A participant commented on one question that peer mentorship is helpful in making a clinical decision by less apprehension as the senior one can guide him to avoid that methods which can cause pain.

Previous study said that the success of mentorship depends upon the interest of participants and the time (33) but this study shows that the institutional help is also very important to implement it. Peer mentorship can be successful if a specific goal is there to achieve, interest and determination of both mentee and mentor and organizational help is present.(34)

CONCLUSIONS:

Peer mentorship is necessary and very effective to excel in the field of physiotherapy. Study showed the interest of participants in peer mentorship.

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