



Nurse Mentoring Study Demonstrates a Magnetic Work Environment: Predictors of Mentoring Benefits Among Pediatric Nurses

Louise D. Jakubik PhD, RN-BC*, Aris B. Eliades PhD, RN, CNS,
Carrie L. Gavriloff MSN, RN, Meghan M. Weese MSN, RN, CPN

Akron Children's Hospital

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This descriptive, correlational research study applied a business mentoring model, the Mutual Benefits Model (M. G. Zey, 1991), to explore relationships among mentoring quality, mentoring quantity, mentoring type, length of employment, and mentoring benefits among pediatric staff nurse protégés in a single Midwestern, Magnet-designated, freestanding children's hospital. Results support the hypothesis that the linear combination of quality of mentoring and length of employment explained 40% of the variance in mentoring benefits, more than any one factor alone ($R = .63, p = .01$). Nurse mentoring, conceptually and experientially, demonstrates the Magnet model components and provides implications for the Magnet Journey.

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MENTORING HAS EMERGED as an important aspect of the Magnet Journey (Albert & Siedlecki, 2008; Grossman, 2007; Karkos & Peters, 2006; Kirkpatrick McLaughlin & Bulla, 2009; Robinson, 2001; Turkel, Reidinger, Ferket, & Reno, 2005; Ulrich, Buerhaus, Donelan, Norman, & Dittus, 2009; Walker, Urden, & Moody, 2009). As mentoring programs gain popularity, a need exists to expand research exploring benefits experienced by nurse protégés engaged in mentoring relationships (Hurst & Koplin-Baucum, 2003; Latham, Hogan, & Ringl, 2008; O'Keefe & Forrester, 2009; Wilson, Lerner, Fenton, & Connor, 2005). The characteristics of nurse mentors promote satisfaction and are valuable to nurse protégés (Smith, McAllister, & Snype Crawford, 2001). The identification of specific benefits for individual nurses and the organizations within which they work is needed (Jakubik, 2008). This article presents the results of a nurse mentoring study, discusses how the conduct of a nurse mentoring study demonstrates the Magnet model compo-

nents outlined by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition Program and provides implications for the Magnet Journey (ANCC, 2008).

Background

Jakubik's 2007 study of 214 experienced pediatric staff nurse protégés from 26 states and multiple health care organizations demonstrated that a protégé's perception of quality was the single best predictor of mentoring benefits (Jakubik, 2007). One additional finding in Jakubik's research was that there was no relationship between intent to stay and mentoring benefits, calling into question the commonly held assumption that mentoring is a predictor of retention among experienced nurses. This study at a freestanding Midwestern children's hospital was a replication study intended to confirm Jakubik's study findings with regard to predictors of mentoring benefits and to further explore the relationship between length of employment and mentoring benefits within a single pediatric health care organization.

* Corresponding author: Louise D. Jakubik, PhD, RN-BC.
E-mail address: louise@nursebuilders.net (L.D. Jakubik).

The researchers wanted to gain an understanding of the experiences of pediatric staff nurse protégés in mentoring relationships during their employment in the organization. The researchers believed that this replication study would be particularly useful as informal nurse mentoring relationships were occurring, but the full extent and impact of those mentoring relationships were unknown. In 2005, prior to designation as a Magnet-recognized organization, the Nursing Shared Governance Professional Development Council began to formalize the mentoring process. A 4-hour continuing education program on mentoring was held and included presentations on effective communication, providing feedback, conflict, coaching, and counseling.

Literature Review

Mentoring Perspectives

Mentoring can be viewed from two different perspectives: dyad and triad. The dyad perspective, which views mentoring as a relationship between the mentor and the protégé only, is the perspective from which nursing and other social sciences, such as social work and education, have historically viewed mentoring (Andrews & Wallis, 1999; Feeg, 1999; Vance & Olson, 1998; Vance, 1977, 1982, 2000; Yoder, 1990). Used in business, the triad perspective views mentoring as an organizational phenomenon among the protégé, the mentor, and the organization within which they work (Scandura, 1992; Zey, 1991).

This study builds on Jakubik's previous study (2007, 2008) that applied the business triad perspective to nursing and, therefore, viewed mentoring from the triad perspective and as both an organizational and a relational phenomenon. Viewing mentoring from a triad perspective in the context of this study provided a perspective from which mentoring in nursing could be viewed and measured beyond the individual protégé benefits in the first two levels of Zey's framework. The organizational view of mentoring in this study posits that contributors and beneficiaries of the mentoring relationship include the mentor, the protégé, and the organization. The triad approach is consistent with a positive, mentoring work environment and reflects the Magnet components of transformational leadership, structural empowerment, exemplary professional practice, new knowledge, innovations and improvements, and empirical quality outcomes.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was Zey's Mutual Benefits Model (1991). Zey's model is a business model of mentoring which posits that there are three members of the mentoring relationship (the mentor, the

protégé, and the organization), all of whom make specific contributions to and receive specific benefits from the mentoring relationship. According to Zey, there are four levels of mentoring activities, each of which are associated with a specific mentoring benefit. These mentoring activities and benefits listed from lowest to highest include teaching (mentoring benefit = knowledge), supporting (mentoring benefit = personal growth), providing organizational intervention (mentoring benefit = protection), and sponsoring (mentoring benefit = career advancement). Zey's model aligns with the structure, process, and outcome approach of the Magnet Recognition Program (ANCC, 2008). The triad is the structure, mentoring activities are the processes, and mentoring benefits are the outcomes that form the base upon which the Magnet environment is built.

Application of Zey's Model to Nursing Research

Application of Zey's model to nursing research was first published in Jakubik's 2008 study, in which predictors of mentoring benefits were explored among 214 pediatric staff nurse protégés (Jakubik, 2008). The study was the first of its kind to adopt a triad view of mentoring and to test all four levels of mentoring benefits as described by Zey (knowledge, personal growth, protection, and career advancement). Prior to this, mentoring among practicing nurses had been conceptualized almost exclusively as a dyad relationship used to provide support, competency, and retention and thus only testing Zey's first two levels of the mentoring relationship (teaching and supporting). The career development component of mentoring so prevalent in business is almost invisible in the mentoring literature among staff nurses. Empirical research among nurses has traditionally been limited to self-report and retention studies (Beecroft, Kunzman, & Krozek, 2001; Greene & Puetzer, 2002; Hurst & Koplin-Baucum, 2003; Oermann & Garvin, 2001; Pinkerton, 2003; Walsh & Clements, 1995). This study attempted to further explore the triad view of mentoring in nursing.

Organizational Overview

Established in 1890, this freestanding Midwestern children's hospital is the largest pediatric health care provider in northeast Ohio, operating two freestanding pediatric hospitals and offering services at more than 70 locations across the region. There are more than 30 specialties that see more than half a million patients each year, which include children, teens, and adults from all 50 states and around the world. In addition, the organization provides advocacy, education, outreach, and research programs to children and their families throughout the region. This organization has earned the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission and the Magnet Recognition Status from the ANCC and is a four-time

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