Original Article

Workshop on Learning Approach

Impact of Faculty Development Workshop on Faculty Performance - A Problem Based Learning Approach

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To evaluate the impact of faculty development workshop on faculty performance - a problem based learning approach

Study Design: Interventional study

Place and Duration of Study: This study was conducted at Foundation University Medical College for a period of 08 months during the year 2013-2014.

Materials and Methods: Total number of participants was thirty. The participants were faculty members selected on the basis of their previous experience of mentoring .The intervention was a faculty development workshop having pre and post tests, interactive sessions and small group discussion. It was followed by 03 and 06 months feedback from the faculty. Approval from ethical committee was received.

Results: There was significant difference between pre and post tests results. Discussion forums generated themes and proposals regarding challenges faced in mentoring, improvement in existing mentoring program, design of mentoring program as per institution requirement and evaluation of mentoring program. Feedback regarding the implementation of revised program was very positive.

Conclusion: The study has evaluated the impact of intervention on mentoring program and faculty performance. The proposal forwarded by faculty was more successfully implemented as it had the ownership of faculty. Hence it is concluded that blend of faculty training, motivation and ownership on part of faculty can make any program a success.

Key Words: Mentoring, Faculty Development, Motivation, Feedback

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INTRODUCTION

"Be the one to make a difference in someone's life." The statement given in the beginning of mentoring manual highlights the importance of having "Mentor" in one'slife[1].Effective mentorship is among one of the most important factors of success in academic medicine and research[2].Lot of research has been done to establish the effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth[3].

Mentoring is a well established entity as many organization have taken up the task of guiding the individuals who are interested in this program , guidelines have given on how get most out of your mentee ,how to communicate with them ,how to give them feedback[4]. It is established in literature that mentorship for undergraduate medical students enhances personal and professional development[5].

The barriers to mentoring include lack of organizational support, false expectation of mentee regarding their performance assessment, mismatch mentors and mentee. There is also possibility of bias or perception of nepotism for those involved in mentoring, dependency on mentors, difficulty in maintaining professional boundaries and gender issues[6].

A formal mentoring program was introduced at Foundation University Medical College after the implementation new integrated modular teaching program. There was lot of apprehension and stress among students regarding the new system of teaching which made the need of a mentoring program more essential for students' support[7]. Mentoring program was implemented in the year 2013.Faculty was briefed about the running of the mentoring program through lectures and discussion but had no previous hands on experience of such program. The feedback regarding the effectiveness of mentoring program from the students and faculty was not that encouraging. A need for quality improvement of the program was felt by the organization and certain steps were taken for it. One of the first steps was faculty development workshops and then changes made in the program keeping in view the suggestions and feedback from the faculty .Regular feedback and monitoring system was also implemented. The objective of the study was to evaluate the impact of

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these interventions on mentoring program and faculty performance .

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It was an Interventional Study with mixed method approach .The study was conducted at Foundation university medical College in year 2013-2014. The study was of 08 months duration. Total numbers of participants were thirty. The participants were senior faculty members and were selected on the basis of their previous involvement in mentoring program. Approval from ethical committee was received.

As an initial step, a workshop on mentoring skills was planned and conducted by department of medical education (DME). It consisted of pre-post tests, two interactive sessions by DME faculty which were regarding important concepts of mentoring. The interactive sessions were followed by small group discussion. The participants divided in four groups and were asked to present their plans/proposals on various mentoring related issues in the light of their past experience, after discussion and mutual agreement.

In the next step, at an interval of three months and six months feedback was collected from faculty to evaluate the impact of workshop on mentoring activities at FUMC.

Data was generated from pre-post test of workshop, themes/proposals generated from small group discussions and from feedback Performa's collected from faculty at the interval of 03 months and 06 months.

RESULTS

The data was analyzed for descriptive and inferential statistics .SPSS 17 was used for data analysis. The demographic characteristics of mentors were analyzed for gender and age. Gender analysis showed that 80% were females and 20 % were male. The mean ± S.D of mentor's age was 42.5 ± 2.7(years) with range (36-49). There was no difference in the results on the basis of gender and age. The pre and post test of the workshop were analyzed and significant difference was found between pre (40%) and post (90%) test results ($p < 0.05$).

The discussion in small groups focused on the issues faced by the faculty during mentoring sessions. Themes and proposals generated during discussion included challenges faced in mentoring, improvement in existing mentoring program, design of mentoring program as per institution requirement and evaluation of mentoring program.

The next step of the study was faculty feedback at an interval of three and six months regarding the impact of workshop on their mentoring responsibilities. It was revealed in feedback that 58 % of mentors felt motivated to continue mentoring as their mentees had shown much improvement in academics. Mentors (62%) showed self satisfaction regarding mentoring activities as they were able to guide their mentees better . After workshop, increased level of confidence was reported by 75% of mentors in their feedback as they were well aware of the scope of their responsibilities and their limitations. Eighty percent (80%) of the faculty members appreciated the continuous support provided by administration as well as senior faculty in carrying out the responsibility of mentoring (shown in figure 1).

Figure No.1: Feedback Faculty

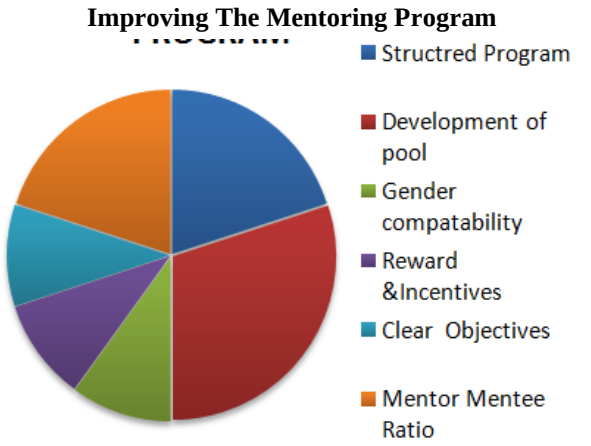

Figure No.2: Proposal for improving the existing program

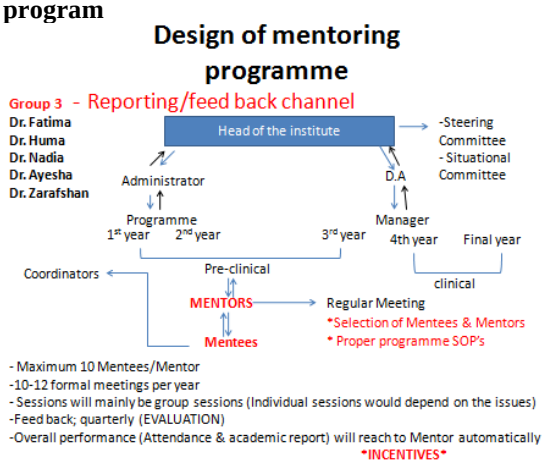

Figure No.3: Monitoring program

DISCUSSION

In this study a holistic revision of the existing mentoring program was done by getting valuable input

from the faculty who was actually involved in this process and a revised mentoring program was implemented keeping in view the proposals generated by the faculty during the workshop . The feedback of the revised program was collected at certain predefined interval.

The distribution of gender and age was also considered among the participants. The statistics analysis showed that gender and age of mentors did not affect the results of pre and post tests .The consideration of age and gender is important as there were more females in the group .There are evidence that gender incompatibility does affect the success of mentoring[8].Similarly the age also affects the personal motivation of mentors and compliance from mentee. There was no difference in results among the two groups in this study[9]. Pre and post test questionnaire was on the items , definition of mentoring, understanding of different models of mentoring, scope of mentoring, dos and don'ts of mentoring. The results of pre and post test of mentoring workshop showed significant difference between pre (40%) and post (90%) test .This difference signifies that there was indeed a requirement of faculty training regarding mentoring. There are various models of mentoring and their understanding is important for getting more benefits from the program. The concept of secrecy regarding mentee's personal issues, level of engagement by the mentor and gender issues were also sensitized in pre and post tests.

The small group discussion was the most informative session during the workshop which gave the insight about previous faculty experience and also proposed a remarkable plan for reframing the mentoring program.

One of the small group of faculty identified challenges faced in mentoring which included lack of structured mentoring program, mentor mentee ratio, gender issues, and continuity of mentorship for longer duration, space and time availability and unrealistic expectations from mentors. All these challenges are very valid and are also supported by literature [10, 11].

The next group worked on the improvement of existing mentoring program. Twenty percent of the participants proposed to have a structured program while the rest of the suggestions were , development of mentor pool by 30% of participants , gender compatibility by 10% of the participants, having clear objective of mentoring by 10% of the participants ,reducing the ratio of mentor and mentee by 20% of the participants , and reward/incentives to mentors by 10% participant[12] as shown in figure 2.

The third small group proposed the design of mentoring program as per institution requirement as shown in fig 3. According to their proposal, program is required to have a well defined hierarchy. They identified that the responsibilities can divided to administrative and academic areas. Head of the program , program managers for each class and then the pool of mentors was proposed .Administrative support identified for the program included recognition of formal mentoring program ,availability of SOP of program ,availability of students academic record to respective mentors ,coordination of mentoring time slots , certification and appraisal to mentor [13].

The last group worked on the evaluation of a mentoring program. Input received included evaluation of each and every aspect of mentoring program comprising mentor mentee ratio , resources allocated ,frequency of meeting , observation of corrective measures taken ,indirect assessment of improvement in mentee performance , discipline and attendance record , monthly and annual report generation[14,15] .

The proposal generated in the small group discussions were forwarded to administration and after minimal adjustment these proposals were implemented. The response of the feedback from the faculty was hundred percent even after 03 and 06 months which reflected value of workshop to the faculty. The feedback revealed increased motivation, confidence and self satisfaction among the mentors. The reason for this feedback could be attributed to the fact that faculty after going through training workshop was well aware of the various aspects of mentoring and hence developed motivation and self confidence . Motivation led to improved performance which in turn was apparent in students performance .A formal mentoring program with administrative support is also documented as important factor of success of mentoring program.

CONCLUSION

The study has evaluated the impact of intervention on faculty performance. It can be can identified as problem based faculty development approach where faculty development workshop provided a platform to the faculty who were facing problems with mentoring program and they were more responsive towards the development of effective program. The proposal forwarded by faculty was more successfully implemented as it had the ownership of faculty. Hence it was concluded that blend of faculty training, motivation and ownership on part of faculty can make any program a success**.**

Conflict of Interest: The study has no conflict of interest to declare by any author.

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