


Chapter 10

Nurturing Adult Socio-Emotional Skills and Engagement: The Transformative Power of Mentoring Program

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ABSTRACT

There has been a growing interest in understanding the ways education could integrate socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills in their curriculum. This chapter explores by considering mentoring approach as a channel to foster SEL skills that would be beneficial to both adult learners and educators alike. The chapter emphasizes on the key SEL skills and also focuses on the need for higher institutions to promote adult SEL, not only for faculties but also for adult learners. Two main types of mentoring have been addressed, viz the traditional mentoring versus alternative mentoring approach. The chapter also discusses about incorporating the train-the-trainer model for mentoring. In essence, this SEL-based adult mentoring ensures that both

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mentees and mentors benefit. The mentees have gained self-awareness, responsible decision-making skills, relationship skills and emotional intelligence through this mentoring approach, while the mentors have acquired a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment that promotes their emotional intelligence and decision-making skills.

INTRODUCTION

The social-emotional health of both the educators and learners play a crucial role in determining their academic success and growth. In addition, the social complexity continues to rise, and academic standards also keep increasing (Green et al., 2021). To serve the social-emotional needs of both teachers and students, this chapter examines a mentoring model in higher educational settings, thus improving adult SEL. With an emphasis on humanistic psychology and modern mentoring approaches, the chapter explores the relevance of mentoring as a means to nurture emotional intelligence, resilience, and reciprocal development. The chapter includes case studies, program designs, and practical examples to help ensure that educators, administrators, and legislators can execute action.

Formal education has been shown to have numerous advantages and benefits. These advantages include the positive influence education has on the adult's social, economic and mental health spheres. For instance, Hout (2012) and Courtney & Hook (2017) emphasized the strong associations between education and family status as well as interpersonal relationships. They stated that educated individuals are at least four times likely to acquire a good job as compared to the less educated individuals. Additionally, research has repeatedly shown how education fosters social interaction and personal growth. For instance, Xu, S. (2024) has emphasized that institutions encouraging a positive educational environment seem to develop positive interpersonal relationships among the students. When institutions facilitate collaboration and peer group learning, it enhances social relationships and fosters interpersonal growth (Hargreaves, 2017). Beyond these advantages, educational environments also play a significant role in contributing to psychological stress. For instance, Field (2009) recognized that education occasionally has an undesirable impact on mental health. Studies have emphasized the struggles young as well as older children experience when they lack essential abilities of social and emotional skills, which most often tend to develop into academic, social and behavioral issues later in life (Thayer et al., 2019). Research findings show that academic burden develops as students advance through colleges and universities (Tao et al., 2017; Gao et al., 2022). The academic burden has been most often found to be associated with the educational system's increased emphasis on the college entrance exam, complex curricula, and heightened peer competition (Gao et al., 2022).

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