

The Benefits of Formal Mentoring for Practitioners in Therapeutic Recreation

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Abstract:

Mentoring has potential for empowering professionals in areas of job satisfaction as well as career advancement. Specifically, mentoring has been shown to have a positive effect on motivation, performance, retention, commitment, reducing stereotypes, and reducing inequities in areas of corporate business as well as health care. Currently, no literature exists that examines the benefits of mentoring for therapeutic recreation practitioners. The purpose of this study was to identify the status of mentoring in therapeutic recreation and to examine the relationship between mentoring and perceptions of workplace attitudes and behaviors of TR practitioners. Using the conceptual framework of the Theory of Social Exchange, a questionnaire was sent to 1000 CTRSs. Results indicated that only 15% of the respondents received any mentorship, however, those who did showed more positive results in areas of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Implications for research as well as practice are identified.

KEY WORDS: Social Exchange, Women, Mentoring, Equity

Article:

Mentorship is a facet of professional development not yet embraced by the field of therapeutic recreation. While we have research that addresses professional issues such as interprofessional perceptions between occupational and recreation therapists (Smith, Perry, Neumayer, Pottoer, & Smeal, 1992), burnout and role conflict (Bedini, Williams, & Thompson, 1995), personality types of therapeutic recreation students (Bongguk & Austin, 2000; Hammersley & Kastrinos, 1993), and perceptions of workplace equity of therapeutic recreation professionals (Anderson & Bedini, 2002), no study exists that examines the existence as well as benefits of mentorship for therapeutic recreation professionals.

With the increase of professional Stressors such as the failing economy, corporate re-engineering, increased caseloads, managed care, and subsequent burnout, therapeutic recreation professionals are likely to feel more overwhelmed and less secure in the workplace. Several strategies have been considered to combat these Stressors such as formal mentor programs that have had particular success in other professions. Additionally, the literature states that women continue to lag behind men in career advancement. The fact that therapeutic recreation is a female dominated profession further warrants examination of possible career development strategies such as mentoring.

Dolan (1993) addressed mentorship within healthcare settings stating, "Mentorship means teaching what textbooks and teachers cannot-how to be successful in the healthcare management profession" (p. 3). Specifically, mentoring has been shown to have a positive effect on employee motivation, performance, retention, commitment, and reducing stereotypes in areas of health care administration, telecommunications, nursing, human resource development, library science, computing systems, and aeronautics (e.g., Brown, 1985; Burke & McKeen, 1989; Burke, McKcen, & McKenna, 1993; Dolan, 1993; Haynor, 1994; Hegstad, 1999; Jossi, 1997; Kuyper-Rushing, 2001; Lewis & Fagenson, 1995; Ragins, 1997; Walsh & Borkowski, 1999). Additionally, researchers have called for more formal mentoring programs to facilitate professional goals of

women and minorities specifically in these fields (e.g., Dolan, 1993; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ibarra, 1993; Ragins, 1989).

Since no identifiable literature exists that examines the benefits of mentoring for therapeutic recreation practitioners, an investigation of this type is warranted. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the status of mentoring in therapeutic recreation and to examine the relationship between mentoring and perceptions of workplace attitudes and behaviors of TR practitioners. Specifically, the study focused on differences between those who were and were not mentored.

Background and Literature

Mentoring clearly demonstrates positive effects on professional performance and commitment of employees in a variety of disciplines (e.g., Borrego, 2000; Burke et al., 1993; Hegstad, 1999; Jossi, 1997; Walsh & Borkowski, 1999). The use of formal mentoring programs may also reap great benefits for professions and related agencies beyond those of job satisfaction and advancement. For example, Pfleeger and Mertz (1995) cited a 1990 study by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) that identified lack of role models as a major problem in attracting, retaining, and advancing women and minorities in the field of computer science and other disciplines. Similarly, the American Hospital Association (AHA) News (Runy, 2001) stated that mentoring is ". . . important to attract minorities to positions in healthcare management" (p. 3).

Currently, the field of therapeutic recreation is 95% white and 80% female. Research also shows that within the field of therapeutic recreation specifically, women and minorities hold few administrative positions, experience few promotions, and in 2000, female practitioners drew an average annual salary that was \$3,300 less than males (e.g., Henderson & Bialeschki, 1995; O'Morrow, 2000). In addition to considering formal mentoring programs to address workplace issues related to recruitment and retention of all workers, innovative approaches are needed to increase the diversity of professionals in the field of therapeutic recreation.

Theoretical Base

The theoretical base for this study was the Social Exchange Theory, generally attributed to Homans (1974). He recognized that social behavior between two people is often based on an exchange of activity that can be rewarding or costly to one or both of the individuals. Typically the two parties engage in the activity in order to increase rewards. Searle (2000) stated that according to this theory:

- (a) individuals enter into relationships seeking some reward; (b) relationships are sustained over time if the rewards are valued and continue to evolve; (c) individuals will continue in the relationship if the other party reciprocates and provides rewards that are deemed fair in relation to others; (d) the costs of the relationship do not exceed the benefits; and (e) the probability of receiving desired rewards is high. (p. 139)

The interaction between parties can be beneficial for both even if the relationship is a supervisor/subordinate relationship, if the dyad is high quality. High quality relationships are friendly, full of trust, and supportive with both parties enjoying the rewards of their relationship. Trust implicitly must be a part of the exchange, however, particularly on the part of the supervisor-the subordinate must be able to trust that the supervisor will not dominate the relationship. Deluga (1994) proposed 11 supervisor traits that promote trust: supervisor availability, competence, consistency, discreteness, fairness, integrity, loyalty, openness, fulfillment of promises, receptivity, and overall trust.

Often agencies increase the number of formal mentor programs because what they generate in terms of staff attributes costs the agency very little. Hegstad (1999) presented a model of mentoring using the Theory of Social Exchange as a conceptual framework describing it as "social transactions generated by perceived costs and benefits between two or more persons . . ." (p. 2). In this case, the costs of establishing and maintaining formal mentor programs are worth the benefits generated. She also explained that "power" and "power dependence" are key elements in the social exchange concept. Therefore, a mentor might serve as a power that

can facilitate the function of those who are power dependent (protege). In this scenario, many benefits are generated for the personnel as well as the organization as a whole.

Mentoring

Undoubtedly, the mentoring relationship can be seen as a type of social exchange. Mentoring is more than setting up a "big brother/big sister" program in the workplace. It should be approached as a formal program considering a number of key factors that lead to its success (or failure). Several authors have offered suggestions of factors that should be included in a successful mentoring program. These factors include open communication (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Hegstad, 1999; Kerka, 1998; Pfleeger & Mertz, 1995), experiential learning (Kerka), reward system (Hegstad; Ragins, 1997), mentor as advocate (Pfleeger & Mertz), perceived influence of mentor (Arnold & Johnson, 1997; Dreher & Cox, 1996; Pfleeger & Mertz), gender of mentor (Arnold & Johnson), and selection and matching of mentors and protege pairs (Burke & McKeen, 1989; Hegstad; Tyler, 1998).

Obviously, communication is an essential component. The interaction between mentor and protege form the core of the mentor relationship. Pfleeger and Mertz (1995) conducted interviews with 15 mentor-protege pairs, only three of which were successful. Factors related to communication that led to success in these pairs included meeting regularly as well as protege feeling comfortable calling mentor at home. Similarly, in a study of 129 proteges from two private sector organizations, Arnold and Johnson (1997) found that frequent contact time had a great influence on the success of a mentor program. They found that increased contact per month was more beneficial to the proteges than the length of the mentor/protege relationship itself.

Kerka (1998) noted that the quality of the interpersonal relationship between a mentor and a protege is a significant factor in the process. Alien and colleagues (1997) found that the quality of the mentor-protege relationship is more important to a satisfying mentoring experience than the amount of time invested in the relationship. Similarly, Ensher and Murphy (1997) suggested that frequent communication increases satisfaction and subsequent maintenance of the mentor relationship.

Another component of successful mentor-protege relationships was some sort of reward system whereby both parties find extrinsic value in addition to intrinsic benefits. Ragins (1997), for example, encouraged organizations to include mentorships into performance review criteria.

The commitment of the mentor and how she or he applies the role of advocate was another factor that seemed to affect the success of a mentor program. In a study of successful mentor/protege pairs, Pfleeger and Mertz (1995) found that the mentor's attitude and commitment to the process, mutual respect within the pair, opportunities to experience and build on successes of the protégé, and the mentor serving as an advocate for the protege were key components. Unsuccessful pairs did not share the same perspective of the goals of the relationship, proteges were not encouraged by mentors, there was lack of communication, little rapport, and less commitment to help protege get ahead, rather than only "fitting in." The authors concluded that organizations should not "push" employees to become mentors; individuals must truly want to participate and feel comfortable in this role.

Pfleeger and Mertz (1995) also suggested that mentors should have influence within the organization and proteges should have potential for upward mobility. Arnold and Johnson (1997) also found that in the private sector, the perceived influence of the mentor was more beneficial to the protege than the seniority of mentor. In fact, Dreher and Cox (1996) found that within the area of business administration, those who had a mentor that was a white male were much more likely than those with female and minority male mentors to attain an annual increase in compensation. These results support their hypothesis that white males dominate the power structure and can offer proteges more opportunities in support of their careers than their female and minority peers. However, Hill and Gant (2000) identified that minority same-race mentor relationships had invaluable psychosocial benefits for the proteges.

Selecting and matching mentors and proteges, therefore, becomes an essential component of the process (Burke & McKeen, 1989; Hegstad, 1999; Tyler, 1998). Fagenson-Eland, Marks, and Amendola (1997) found that matching considering seniority and administrative level of the mentor in relationship to the protege could have a significant impact on the perception and effectiveness of the relationship. Similarly, especially for women and minorities within a workplace, the nature and access to network relationships are critical to examine (Ibarra, 1993). Race as well as racial attitudes were addressed by Ragins (1997) who noted that the perceptions of stereotypes and attitudes toward race in one or both of the pairs were important to sort out in order to achieve a successful relationship. Finally, Arnold and Johnson (1997) found that the gender of mentor and protege made no significant difference, however, for an organization in which all of the mentors were male, the female proteges reported less encouragement from their mentors than did the male proteges. Lewis and Fagenson (1995) found, however, that mixed sex mentoring is important to advance women and reduce stereotypes.

Benefits of Mentoring

Burke and colleagues (1993) noted how human resource development programs in public (commercial and government) as well as private organizations are investing in formal mentoring programs as career development and management training tools. Jossi (1997) cited a study by Human Resource Executive magazine stating that because of the positive effects, large corporate businesses doubled their mentor programs between 1995 and 1996 (17% to 36%).

Psycho-social (personal) benefits of mentoring. Psychosocial functions can be generally defined as providing support and encouragement and have been proven to be important benefits of mentorship relationships for both the mentor and the protege. For example, Haynor (1994) identified that individuals who are mentored receive important psychological benefits such as affirmation, encouragement, and acceptance. Similarly, in a study of MBA students, Alien et al., (1997) found a significant relationship between psychosocial functions served and satisfaction with current mentoring by the proteges. The authors concluded that psychosocial functions were very important especially during the protégé's early career. In fact, Arnold and Johnson (1997) found that according to the proteges in private sector businesses, the benefits of mentoring were higher in psychosocial aspects than in career related areas.

Kerka (1998) referred to the value of "relational learning" as a psychosocial function whereby proteges can be "socialized into an organization's culture" (p. 4). She noted that this psychosocial benefit of mentoring is particularly relevant for women and minorities who often feel disenfranchised in predominantly white, male arenas. Finally, according to Kram (1983), these personal/psychosocial benefits have subsequent positive impact on the professional behaviors of both the proteges and mentors.

Functional/professional benefits of mentoring. Hegstad (1999) identified two major benefits of formal mentoring programs: career-related and psycho-social. Career related benefits included promotions, as well as increased job satisfaction. Similarly, in a study of health care executives, Walsh and Borkowski (1999) also found that those who had mentors received more promotions within their current organization than those who did not have a mentor. They also found that health care executives with mentors were more active in their professional organization, taking on leadership roles in many cases.

Benefits to the organization. There are several benefits to the organization itself when employing a formal mentor program. Jossi (1997) proposed that mentor programs were, in part, a result of the drastic onslaught of downsizing that resulted in problems in company loyalty and trust issues and suggested that formal mentoring programs "preserve institutional memory and intellectual capital" (p. 1). Similarly, Dolan (1993) endorsed mentorship as something that can have benefits for an organization because it can ". . . lead to more satisfied employees" as well as the "generation of new ideas" (p. 4). Borrego (2000) also noted how mentor programs build loyalty in an organization. She used the example of FitzGerald Communications in Massachusetts which, because of a mentor program, showed only a 32% turnover rate compared to the industry average of 42%.
Relevance of Mentoring to Female Professionals

As noted earlier, the field of therapeutic recreation is comprised mostly of women. Research shows that women typically do not conform to the equity construct, rather, they tend to be more "giving" in the workplace than men. Additionally, women are more likely to be concerned with human relationships and interaction with colleagues rather than rules and policies (Gilligan, 1982). As a result, mentor programs are likely to be attractive to female practitioners in both roles as mentor and protege. Subsequently, participation in mentor programs may better position women to advance to higher levels within administration where they are currently underrepresented.

Results from a study of 540 members of the American College of Health Executives by Walsh and Borkowski (1999) showed that the members who were more likely to have mentors were younger, female (54% compared to 32% males), single and had fewer children (than those without mentors). In reference to the number of women who had mentors in relation to the male members, the authors suggested that mentors may "represent a natural extension of social relationships for many women" (p. 5). Similarly, Alien and colleagues (1997) found a statistically significant relationship suggesting that females were more willing to mentor others than men were. Since the field of therapeutic recreation is predominantly female, the potential for establishing formal mentor programs should be high.

Research Question

Despite the great increase in mentoring programs in the corporate and technological sectors of the country, the growth is slower and less "explosive" in health care arenas (e.g., Burke et al., 1993; Dreher & Cox, 1996; Kerka, 1998). For example, Walsh and Borkowski (1999) noted that 59% of a sample of 540 healthcare managers had not participated in a mentoring relationship in the last five years. Whether this is due to the use of alternative sources for mentorship or because of the lack of appropriate and available mentors is not clear. Regardless, with downsizing, reduced budgets, and other issues related to managed care, innovative and inexpensive methods of facilitating personnel retention, promotion, and job satisfaction and advancement, especially for women and minorities in therapeutic recreation, is essential.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify the status of mentoring in therapeutic recreation and to examine the relationship between mentoring and perceptions of workplace attitudes and behaviors of TR practitioners. Specifically, the study focused on differences between those who were and were not mentored.

Methods

Sample

The sampling frame for the study was chosen from the National Council on Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) membership list. Approximately 16,000 practitioners are members of NCTRC; approximately 18% male and 82% female. A stratified, systematically drawn sample of 200 men and 800 women was selected with a random starting point to serve as a representative sample of NCTRC members; all levels of management were included.

Questionnaires

Therapeutic recreation professionals were mailed a questionnaire designed to measure perceptions of work attitudes and behaviors among men and women. The questionnaire consisted of questions from four existing instruments that addressed organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship, and intent to leave current employment. Additionally, the questionnaire asked for demographic data that were used as background information and to profile the study participants. Questions asked about respondents' race, sex, education level, annual income, marital status, employment setting, and level of employment.

The questionnaire had been pilot tested in a similar study of public recreation personnel to assess its overall face validity and clarity. Additionally, construct validity was established by the original designers of the individual instruments (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979; Pond, Nacoste, Mohr, & Rodriguez, 1997). No changes were made to the questionnaire based on results from the pilot test.

Intent to leave was measured using a one-item scale measurement. Respondents were asked to "indicate how likely you are to leave your current position in the next 12 months." The respondent was asked to respond to a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "very likely" to "not likely at all."

To address mentoring status, respondents were first given a definition of "mentoring." Mentoring was defined as (a) promoting the understanding, growth, and development of the TR profession, (b) nurturing and advising those people who have been placed in or have the desire to gain positions of greater responsibility through promotion, and/or (c) promoting the profession, its networking, volunteer, and professional opportunities. Based on this definition, respondents were asked to answer the question, "Are you currently being mentored?" Respondents were also asked if their mentoring relationships were developed formally or informally. Additionally, respondents were also asked to indicate if their mentors were male or female.

As stated earlier, previously validated instruments were used to measure the work related constructs of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship. Brayfield and Rothe's (1951) Job Satisfaction Scale was used in this study. This 19-item scale is a global measure of job satisfaction that assesses the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with a series of evaluative statements including "I enjoy my work more than my leisure time," "I am disappointed that I ever took this job," "There are some conditions concerning my job that could be improved," and "My job is like a hobby to me." A 5-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" was used for the evaluation of each statement. Reliability coefficients for this scale have ranged from .78-.99 (Brayfield & Rothe; Price & Mueller, 1986). This study had a reliability coefficient of .90.

Organizational commitment was measured through the use of Mowday and colleague's (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ). The OCQ is comprised of 15 statements regarding feelings the respondent has about his or her organization. Statements included "I feel little loyalty to this organization," "I really care about the fate of this organization," and "I am willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond what is normally expected in order to help this organization be successful." Responses were based on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Mowday et al. found the instrument to have a Cronbach's alpha of .90, the same found for this study.

Organizational citizenship behaviors were measured using an instrument developed by Smith, Organ, and Near (1983) and modified by Pond et al. (1997). The scale has 16 items that describe OCB behaviors. The items included "volunteer for things that are not required," "give advance notice if unable to come to work," and "assist your supervisor with his or her work." For each item the respondent was asked how often they engage in the behavior ranging from "always" to "never" on a 5-point Likert scale. The instrument measures both aspects of organizational citizenship-altruism and generalized compliance; the coefficient alpha reliabilities are .91 and .81 for each aspect. The overall alpha for this application of the instrument was .77.

Procedures

One thousand questionnaires, cover letters, and self-addressed, stamped return envelopes were sent to each randomly selected NCTRC member. Addresses were purchased from the NCTRC. Follow-up reminder postcards were sent ten days after the initial questionnaire mailing.

Data Analysis

Four types of statistical analyses were used to examine the data. Multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were used to determine if professionals with and without mentors differed on measurements of workplace behaviors and attitudes. Following significant multivariate effects, univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were used to determine the items that differed significantly in analyses of the workplace behavior and attitude scales. An independent t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference regarding intent to leave between those with and without a mentor. Chi-square analyses were used for the questions that had a dichotomous nominal response format.

Results

Profile

Four hundred and forty-five of the 1000 mailed surveys were returned; however, 28 were returned as undeliverable resulting in a usable response rate of 46% for this study, 82 men and 363 women. Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the sample. The respondents were largely white (non-Hispanic) (90.5%). The second largest racial group was African-American (4.7%). Personal income ranged from less than \$9,999 to greater than \$70,000 with almost 34% of all respondents indicating a personal income of \$30,000-\$39,999 followed closely by \$20,000-\$29,999 (26.5%).

The respondents appeared to be a well-educated group. While it was expected that CTRSs would have at least a bachelor's degree (59%), an additional 14% had completed some graduate work and 26.5% had completed either a master's degree or their doctoral degree. Sixty-five percent of all respondents indicated that they were married compared to the 25.3% who stated that they were single. The largest percentage of respondents worked in hospital settings (26.5%) followed by extended/longterm care facilities (22.4%) and "other" (18%) including residential treatment and drug rehabilitation facilities. Finally, regarding the level of management that respondents had attained, the entry level positions accounted for 24.9% of the sample, middle management for 64.2% of the sample, and executive level management accounted for 10.9% of the sample.

Status of Mentoring in Therapeutic Recreation

Regarding mentoring, 68 (15.28%) of the respondents reported having a mentor compared to the 377 (84.72%) who did not. In a comparison of sexes, 15.98% of the women had mentors while 12.20% of the men had mentors. At the different levels of management, 13.08% of entry-level workers had mentors, 15.52% of middle managers had mentors, and 21.74% of executive level administrators reported having a mentor. Because there were no significant differences in the findings based on types of mentoring (formal or informal) or based on sex of mentor, and the overall number of proteges was quite small, all of those who indicated being mentored were put into one category.

Mentoring and Workplace Attitudes and Behaviors

Significant differences were found between those who were mentored and those who were not on all four areas of workplace attitudes and behaviors-intent to leave, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Due to unequal sample sizes in the two groups, the more stringent Pillai's Trace MANOVA was conducted. To reduce the chance for Type 1 error rate in the subsequent ANOVA analyses, a Bonferroni-type adjustment was made to the alpha level of significance.

Intent to leave. When asked whether the respondent intended to leave his or her current position, those who were not mentored showed a statistically significantly higher intent to leave than those who had been mentored ($t = 2.81, p = .006$).

Job satisfaction. MANOVA was statistically significant ($F = 2.196, p = .003$) with those who were mentored scoring significantly higher on 2 of 19 items related to job satisfaction with the Bonferroni adjusted alpha of .003. While those who were mentored consistently scored higher on all items of job satisfaction, they significantly found more satisfaction with their current jobs and were more likely to find real enjoyment in their work. See Table 2.

Organizational commitment. MANOVA showed that there was a significant difference in whether one had been mentored and level of organizational commitment ($F = 3.026, p = .000$). Specifically, those who had been mentored scored higher than those who had not on 2 out of 15 items. Again, those who had been mentored scored higher on each item measuring organizational commitment.

Organizational citizenship behaviors. Overall, MANOVA showed that those who were mentored were statistically significantly different in organizational citizenship behaviors ($F = 1.698, p = .044$).

Discussion

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations inherent in this study. First, survey research limits the depth of analysis that can be conducted. Second, while an important group to study, certified therapeutic recreation professionals make up less than 50% of TR professionals. Third, the response by fewer than 100 male CTRSs may limit the generalizability of the results. Fourth, data were limited to perceptions; we did not actually enter the workplace to gather objective data that may be pertinent to the issues of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors. Fifth, unequal sample sizes limited the power of the statistical analyses. Finally, because this was only a preliminary study on mentoring, data on specific mentoring programs were not gathered within the context of this study.

The purpose of this study was to identify the status of mentoring in therapeutic recreation as well as compare workplace attitudes and behaviors between those who were and were not mentored. Several implications exist for therapeutic recreation education and practice as a result of this study.

The results of this study indicate support for Hegstad's (1999) model of mentoring using the Theory of Social Exchange. Although the issue of so few CTRSs actually being mentored exists, the costs of providing formal mentor programs seem worth the benefits generated in professional job constructs. Specifically, the subjects of this study who were mentored reported greater job satisfaction, less intent to leave their job, stronger organizational commitment, and selected "good" organizational citizenship behaviors that were not evident in the subjects who were not mentored. Conversely, those who were not mentored did not feel that much was to be gained by "sticking with this organization indefinitely." These results support previous research that suggested that mentoring contributes to both personal and professional growth and well-being of not only individual CTRSs, but also provides security and benefits to the organization.

The results of this study also indicated, however, that only 15% of the CTRSs who participated in this study had been mentored, either formally or informally. This result is relatively consistent with results from the study by Walsh and Borowski (1999) in which the majority of the professionals in health care arenas surveyed noted that they had not participated in a mentor program in the last five years. The extremely low percentage of CTRSs who reported participating in a mentoring relationship is indicative of the need for further study of this topic. Additionally, since the results of this study indicated that being mentored was positively related to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intent to leave, formal mentor programs in therapeutic recreation have the potential to address recruitment and retention issues of people with disabilities, men, and people of color in the field. Similarly, considering the volatility of the health care arena at present, therapeutic recreation programs that support mentoring would be contributing to the possible reduction of attrition in a time of uncertainty.

Recommendations

The results of this study generate several recommendations for both researchers and practitioners.

Recommendations for Researchers

First of all, the sample of the respondents for this study was very homogenous. Although the vast majority of CTRSs are women, more men were needed to examine this issue in depth. Additionally, the very low number of people of color precluded any comparisons based on race. Further research should make sure to include significant ratios of populations underrepresented in therapeutic recreation. It would also be helpful to distinguish between those who were in formalized mentor programs versus those who were in informal mentor relationships.

Another recommendation for researchers is to examine the differences and benefits of mentorship in therapeutic recreation using different research methods. For example, a pre/post experimental with control design testing the effects of formal mentor programs in therapeutic recreation would be very useful to determine which

structure would work best in our field. Additionally, qualitative interviews can glean information that surveys cannot.

Research exploring the benefits and consequences of within and between discipline mentoring could prove useful as well. Much could be learned by examining mentor programs not only within the field of therapeutic recreation, but also between therapeutic recreation and fields such as occupational therapy, nursing, and physical therapy.

It would be interesting to examine if there is a cause and effect relationship between work satisfaction and participation in a mentor program. Within this examination it would be important to distinguish the cart from the horse. That is, does a more satisfied worker seek out mentoring, or does a mentored employee become more satisfied.

Finally, a specific result of particular interest was that those who were mentored enjoyed their work more than their leisure. Considering Gilligan's (1982) proposal that women are more oriented to relationships in the workplace, further research could examine the cause of this result to determine if this is gender based, or a direct result of the mentor program.

Recommendations for Practitioners and Educators

It is clear from the indications in the literature (e.g., Pfleeger & Mertz, 1995) that being a good mentor does not necessarily come automatically. Agencies must consider not only "setting up" opportunities for mentorship between senior and junior staff, but might consider "training" individuals on how to be a good mentor. The literature suggests several models as well as elements of good mentorship that include characteristics such as appropriate matching, informal mentoring, and methods of communication. These models and techniques should be examined by agencies to determine appropriateness to the agency's own "culture" and apply them as appropriate in the interested agency.

Another recommendation for practitioners in therapeutic recreation is to include methods of formative and summative evaluation of mentor goals, benefits, and failures. Throughout this process, it would also be important to survey these elements from both perspectives of the mentor as well as the protege.

Professionals already established in therapeutic recreation can contribute to the development and growth of recruiting underrepresented individuals in the field. Therapeutic recreation professionals can work through professional therapeutic recreation organizations, colleges and universities, high school counselors, and historically black institutions to expose students of color as well as students with disabilities to the benefits of the field. These professionals can serve as professional mentors "on the outside" and facilitate the development of programs "on the inside" of agencies.

As a final note to practitioners, it would be essential to incorporate several important factors for successful mentor programs. These factors include open communication with the emphasis on frequency of contacts as well as quality of interaction, relationship reward system, level of mentor commitment, and shared goals between mentor and protege. Additionally, attention to goodness of fit between mentors and proteges is vital to the success of the relationship.

Educators, specifically, can also teach the importance of mentor programs within their therapeutic recreation curriculum. Instruction addressing administration and management of therapeutic recreation organizations and programs can include mentoring literature, designs, and models.

Finally, professional organizations in therapeutic recreation can address specific needs such as mentoring of individuals who are in single person departments. Local and regional mentoring programs for these individuals can be set up through list serves, workshops, and conferences.

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