International Journal of Advance Studies and Growth Evaluation

Role of Peer Group Mentoring in Enhancing Students Academic Success: An Emperical Study

[*1] Febina TA [2]Nahala Noushad [3]Fathima Sahala and [4]Safa Sidhique

[*1] Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resource Management, MES College Marampally, Kerala, India.

[2,3,4] Student S3 MA (HRM), MES College Marampally, Kerala, India.

*Corresponding Author
Febina TA
Assistant Professor, Department of
Human Resource Management, MES
College Marampally, Kerala, India.

Abstract
Peer group mentoring is a learning process that helps the students get more advice from the subject experts. Peer group mentoring is a critical component of academic achievement enhancement because it promotes collaborative learning and offers vital academic and emotional support. In this study, peer mentoring on undergraduate and postgraduate students is examined, which emphasizes the positive effects of relationships between more experienced and less experienced students on retention, motivation, problem solving ability, and the move from traditional educational structure to modern knowledge. As a result of peer group mentoring increasing engagement and participation of students in their student communities, academic performance both improved. Peer group mentoring mentors provide mentees with practical advice and efficient study techniques based on their common experiences, all the while fostering critical thinking and self-efficacy. In order to fully understand the potential benefits of peer mentorship for underprivileged students in particular, this paper calls for additional research on the topic.

Introduction

Achieving academic success is a complex objective that is performed by every institution in a better and different manner. Every institution has its own unique features to achieve better results. Academic success is influenced by a variety of variables; it may include personal motivation, institutional support, interest from mentor and mentee, commitment of students, and social interactions. The potential institutions for shaping the future in a better manner they introduce Peer group mentoring among institutions: there are two parties involved in it: one is the mentor and another is the mentee. Particularly, peer group mentoring has shown to be an effective strategy for improving students' general growth and academic achievement.

This is known to be a mentoring model and in this mentoring model, students can support one another, creating a collaborative and interactive learning environment where knowledge, experiences, and strategies are exchanged. Peer group mentoring, as opposed to traditional teacher-student mentoring, fosters understanding and collaborative problem-solving by drawing on the collective participation of students in a group facing comparable obstacles and objectives. Students can interact in a group by using various methods like conversation, ask questions without worrying about being judged, and get feedback from peers in a safe environment created by this dynamic.

Definitions of Variables
According to Topping and Ehly (1998), peer group mentoring is defined as "the system of providing structured assistance from equals to other equals, where mentors are of the same status as those being mentored, typically in terms of age, experience, or knowledge. "Falchikov (2001) describes peer group mentoring as "a form of collaborative learning where students help each other by sharing knowledge and skills in a structured group setting, often resulting in mutual benefits and development. "York, Gibson, and Rankin (2015) define academic success as "the attainment of learning outcomes that are not only reflected by grades or GPA, but also include the development of skills, personal growth, and the achievement

of educational goals. "Miller, M. (2020): Miller examines the role of peer mentorship in developing critical thinking and self-efficacy. Her findings indicate that students who engage in peer mentoring demonstrate improved problem-solving skills and academic performance. Olt, L. (2012): Holt's research shows that peer mentoring improves retention rates among first-year college students, highlighting its effectiveness in both undergraduate and graduate settings during critical transition periods.

Gonzalez, A. (2016): This study focuses on the impact of peer mentoring on marginalized students at the graduate and undergraduate levels, illustrating how peer relationships enhance support networks and contribute to academic success.
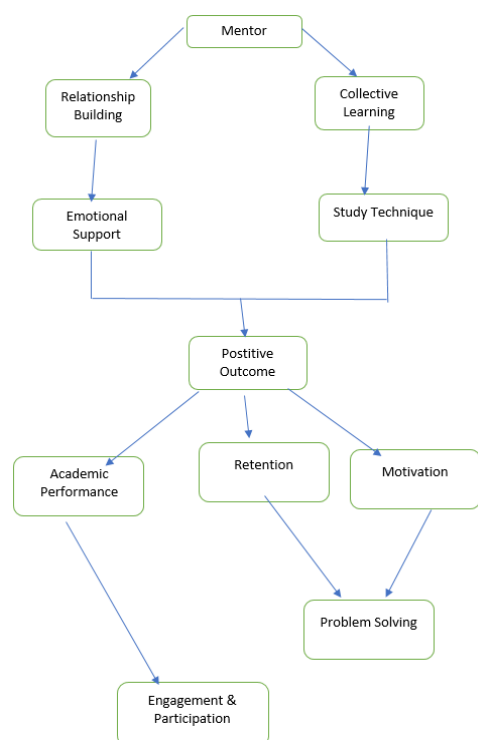
Objectives of the Study
Primary Objective
To study the role of peer group mentoring in enhancing students' academic success.

Secondary Objectives
- To identify the students who face the specific academic difficulties (e.g., subject comprehension, time management, exam preparation) and determine how group mentoring peer can address these challenges.
- To evaluate the emotional and social support needs of students, peer group mentoring helps them to overcome the issues.
- To identify the limitations of existing academic support services (e.g., faculty mentoring, tutoring) and how peer group mentoring can complement or fill these gaps.
- To analyze the areas where students need development beyond academics (e.g., communication, problem-solving, collaboration) and how peer mentoring can support growth in these skills.
- To assess whether students benefit from sustained, long-term peer mentoring relationships and how ongoing peer support can contribute to continued academic success and personal growth

Conceptual Research Model

Literature Review
- In their 1998 review, Topping and Ehly conducted a comprehensive analysis of peer mentoring practices in educational settings. Their research aimed to explore the benefits and effectiveness of peer group mentoring and its role in promoting academic, social, and psychological development among students. Here is a more detailed explanation of their key findings and conclusions: Academic Benefits: Topping and Ehly found that peer group mentoring significantly enhances academic performance. In peer mentoring, students help each other understand course material through collaborative discussions, reinforcing their knowledge. When students explain concepts to their peers, it enhances their own understanding and retention of information. The interactive and supportive environment created by peer group mentoring allows students to address academic difficulties, clarify doubts, and engage in more in-depth learning. Social Benefits: Their review also highlighted the social advantages of peer group mentoring. It fosters a sense of community, belonging, and mutual support among students, which is essential in academic settings where many students can feel isolated or overwhelmed. The peer mentoring relationship provides a safe.
- In 2011, Lois J. Zachary introduced a structured model for peer group mentoring designed to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of mentoring programs in academic and professional settings. Zachary's model outlines key components and best practices that ensure mentoring relationships are both purposeful and productive. By focusing on clear goal-setting, regular meetings, and mentor training, the model addresses common challenges in peer mentoring programs and provides a framework that institutions can adopt to standardize and scale their mentoring efforts. Zachary emphasizes the need for well-defined goals at the outset of any peer mentoring program. Both mentors and mentees must establish what they hope to achieve through the mentoring relationship. These goals could include academic improvement, skill development, personal growth, or gaining specific knowledge. Clearly articulated goals help to provide direction and ensure that mentoring sessions remain focused. For example, if the goal is to improve exam performance, mentors can concentrate on study strategies, time management, and exam techniques. This focus helps mentors and mentees track their progress over time and evaluate the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.
- Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934) – Social Constructivism and the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) Key Idea: Vygotsky emphasized the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. His concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is crucial for understanding peer mentoring. The ZPD refers to the difference between what a learner can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance. Relevance to Peer Mentoring: Peer mentoring operates within the ZPD, as mentors (who are slightly more knowledgeable) assist their peers to reach higher levels of understanding than they could on their own. Literature: Vygotsky's work, particularly in Mind in Society (1978), underscores the value of collaborative learning, which is foundational to the peer mentoring process.
- Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development is pivotal in understanding how children learn, particularly through

peer interaction. His work emphasizes that learning is an active process, where children construct their understanding of the world through exploration and social interaction. Here's a closer look at the key aspects of Piaget's ideas relevant to peer mentoring: Key Idea: Cognitive Development and Peer Interaction Piaget believed that cognitive development occurs in stages, with each stage representing a different way of thinking about the world. He emphasized that active exploration and peer interaction are essential for intellectual growth. According to Piaget, children benefit from working with peers because they can test their ideas and reasoning in a social context. This interaction promotes the development of higher-level thinking skills such as reasoning, problem-solving, and perspective-taking. Relevance to Peer Mentoring One of Piaget's significant contributions to education is his distinction between peer interactions and adult-child interactions. He argued that peer interactions are more egalitarian and reciprocal, creating an environment where open dialogue can flourish. Unlike adult-child relationships, which often involve authority and instruction, peer relationships encourage mutual learning. In a peer mentoring context, this balance of power allows mentees to feel more comfortable expressing themselves, asking questions, and engaging in collaborative problem-solving. Mentors, while having slightly more knowledge or experience, are still close enough in their developmental stage to create a shared understanding, promoting learning in a more relatable way. Piaget's Literature: The Moral Judgment of the Child (1932) in this foundational work, Piaget explores how children develop moral reasoning through social interaction, particularly in peer groups. He discusses the importance of peer cooperation in cognitive and moral development, as children negotiate rules, perspectives, and concepts of fairness. This cooperation leads to the development of autonomy and critical thinking, which is crucial for both academic and personal growth. Although Piaget did not explicitly focus on peer mentoring, his emphasis on the cognitive benefits of peer cooperation provides indirect support for the value of peer mentoring in educational settings. Peer mentoring, by promoting interaction between equals, aligns with Piaget's belief that children learn best when they are actively engaged in a social and collaborative environment.

- Tracy Levett-Jones' research on belongingness highlights a crucial element in educational success: the psychological need for students to feel connected and accepted within their learning environments. This concept plays an integral role in understanding how students thrive academically, particularly through social structures such as peer mentoring. Key Idea: Belongingness in Educational Environments Levett-Jones defines belongingness as the feeling of being accepted, valued, and included within a group. In educational settings, students who experience a strong sense of belonging are more likely to be engaged in their learning, participate actively in classroom activities, and ultimately achieve higher academic success. This sense of belonging is particularly vital in contexts where students may feel isolated or overwhelmed, such as in demanding professional programs like nursing. Levett-Jones argues that a lack of belonging can lead to feelings of disconnection, reduced academic motivation, and even withdrawal from academic pursuits. Conversely, a strong sense of belonging enhances students' self-esteem, confidence, and willingness to contribute to their learning environment. Relevance to Peer Mentoring Peer mentoring is a powerful mechanism to foster belongingness within educational communities. By connecting students in mentor-mentee relationships, peer mentoring creates a supportive and inclusive network that helps students feel a sense of community and shared purpose. Mentors, who have navigated similar challenges, can offer guidance and reassurance, while mentees gain the confidence to engage more fully in their academic work.

- Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory is a foundational concept in understanding how learning occurs through social interaction. His theory emphasizes that learning is not just a direct result of personal experience but is also shaped significantly by observation, imitation, and modeling. Bandura's work reveals that much of human learning occurs in a social context, making it highly relevant to peer mentoring. Bandura also introduced the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific situations. Social learning often enhances self-efficacy as individuals observe successful role models and believe that they too can achieve similar outcomes. Peer mentoring aligns directly with Bandura's Social Learning Theory, as it involves learning in a social setting through observation and interaction. In peer mentoring, mentors serve as role models, and their attitudes, behaviors, and academic habits can be observed and imitated by mentees. This modeling process is particularly effective because peer mentors are often close in age or experience to their mentees, making them relatable and approachable role models. Bandura's work highlights the importance of structured environments where learners can observe successful models. In the context of peer mentoring, this means creating opportunities for mentees to closely interact with mentors, observe their strategies for academic success, and receive encouragement to emulate those behaviors. The theory also explains how mentees can learn non-academic skills, such as emotional regulation, resilience, and interpersonal communication, through their mentors' example.

Research Methedology
Research Design
The study employed a emperical research design. This design was appropriate for this research as it aimed to understand the student's perception of the effectiveness of peer group mentoring in college. The descriptive design allowed for the collection of detailed information on student's experiences with the peer group mentoring for wellbeing of the students.

Method of Data Collection
Data was collected entirely through Primary and secondary sources. Primary data was collected through questionnaire via google forms. The survey link was distributed to the participants via online platforms such as email, social media, and academic groups. Participants were able to respond to the survey at their conveniences, and their responses were automatically recorded and stored in a secure google sheets file for analysis.

Result and Interpretations
Demographic Information

The study collected data from participants, including both undergraduate and postgraduate students. The respondents were a mix of genders, with varied academic levels and a range of semesters completed.

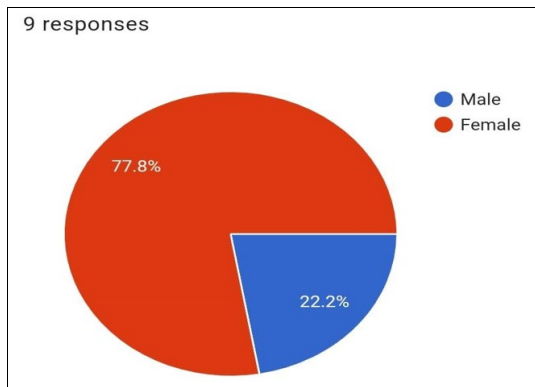**1. Have You Ever Used Peer Group Mentoring At Your College**

Fig 1: Shows that Peer Group Mentoring at College

Interpretation: About 77.8% of the participants attend the peer group mentoring in college.

2. How easy was to Peer Group Mentoring in Enhance Students Accadamic Success?

Fig 2: Shows that Peer Group Mentoring enhance students' academic success.

Interpretation: The significant portion of participants at peer group mentoring in enhance students Academics success at college are not very easily accessible.

3. Can Peer Group Mentoring Increase A Student Confidence in Their Academic Ability?
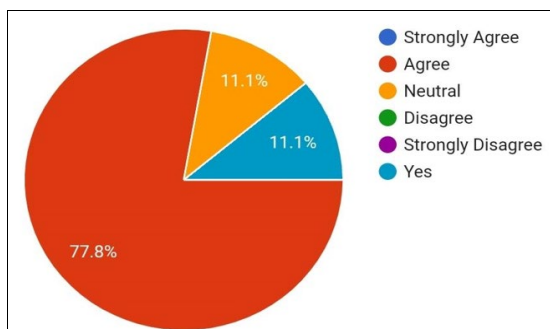

Fig 3: Shows that students confidence in their academic ability

Interpretation: The significant portion of participants at peer group mentoring in enhance students Accadamic success and confidence will be high.

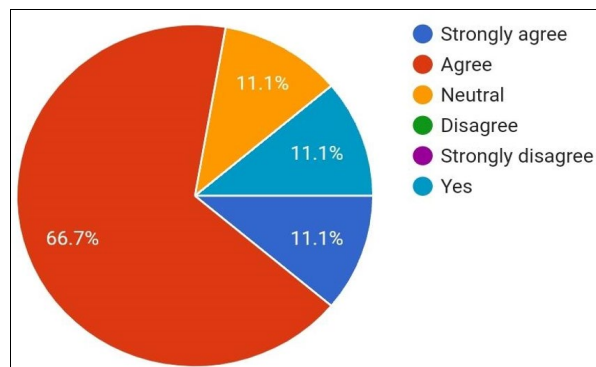**4. Is Emotional Support A Key Benefit of Peer Group Mentoring?**

Fig 4: Shows that influence of emotional support

Interpretation: The significant portion of the participants agreed that peer group mentoring is key benefit of peer group mentoring.

5. Does Peer Mentoring Encourage Students To Ask Questions More Freely Than in Traditional Classroom Setting?
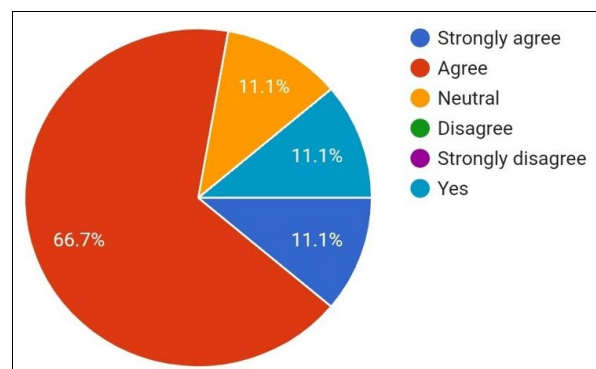

Fig 5: Peer mentoring encourage students to ask questions more freely than in traditional classroom setting

Interpretation: This chart proved that peer mentoring encourage students to ask questions more freely than in traditional classroom setting.

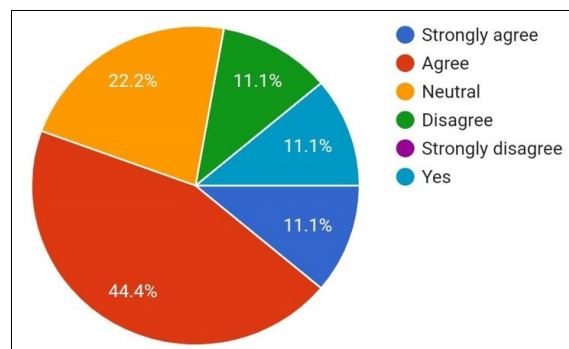**6. Can Peer Group Mentoring Improve Time Management for Student?**

Fig 6: Shows that peer group mentoring improve time management for student

Interpretation: Most of the participants agreed tha peer group mentoring can improve time management for student.

7. Does Participating Peer Mentoring Help Students Stay Accountable To Their Academic Goals?
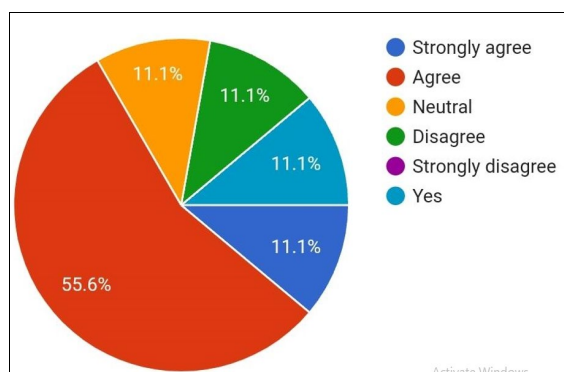

Fig 7: Shows that participating peer mentoring help students stay accountable to their academic goals

Interpretation: The significant portion of participants are stay accountable to their academic goals.

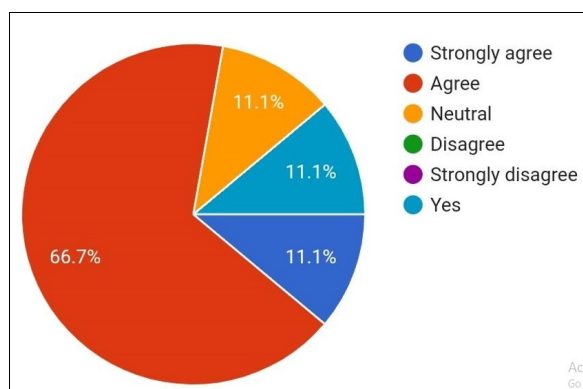**8. Can Peer Group Mentoring Assist Students in Developing Leadership Skills**

Fig 8: Shows that peer group mentoring assist students in developing leadership skills

Interpretation: The significant portion of the participants are developing their leadership skills through peer group mentoring.

9. Is Peer Group Mentoring Effective in Enhancing Students Engagement With Academic Material?
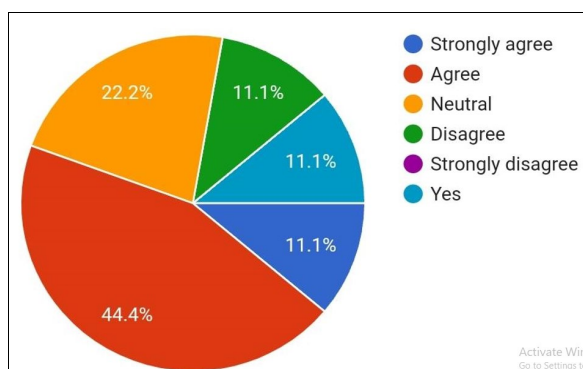

Fig 9: Shows that peer group mentoring effective in enhancing students engagement with academic material

Interpretation: The significant portion of the participants are enhancing student's engagement with academic material.

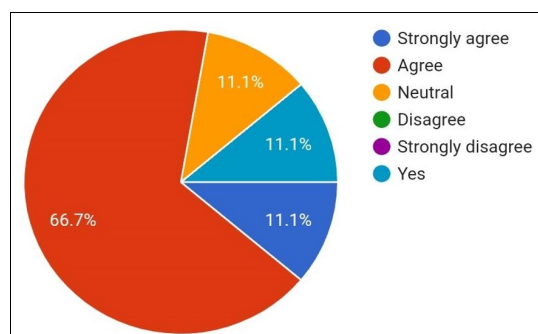**10. Does Peer Mentoring Contribute to A Sence of Belonging Among Students?**

Fig 10: Shows that sense of belonging among students

Interpretation: the significant portion of the participants are contribute to a sence of belonging among students.

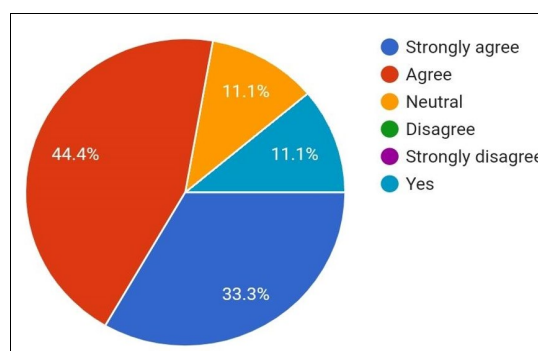**11. Can Peer Mentoring Reduce Accadamic Stress For Student**

Fig 11: Shows that peer mentoring reduce academic stress for student

Interpretation: The significant portion of the participants are reduce their academic stress through better peer group mentoring.

Discussion
The findings of this study provide valuable insights that the peer group mentoring at colleges are helps the participants to improve their mental health and academic performance, particularly within the context of Kerala's educational system.

Findings and Suggestion
- According to the study, the majority of students believe that college peer group mentoring are somewhat to extremely beneficial, especially when it comes to assisting them in managing their personal and academic confusions.
- Some students are still unaware of these programs or are reluctant to use them, those who have reported favourable experiences include group discussions and sharing information's.
- Key factors affecting service usage include understanding, collaborations, discussions and team work.
- Students are more inclined to refer and reuse peer group mentoring if they had a great experience in the past.

- Perceptions of peer group mentoring are influenced by demographic factors, including age, gender, and academic year.
- Students are generally satisfied with the quality of services but recommend improvements in availability, awareness, and specialized offerings.
- Some students expressed concerns about the limited availability of peer group memebers, long waiting times for appointments, and the limited number of sessions available. A few students also suggested that more specialized peer group mentoring should be offered to address specific needs such as individual development, collaboration, debates, decision making skill, and team building.
- These findings suggest that while peer group mentoring are well-regarded by those who use them, increasing accessibility and awareness could enhance overall student engagement and satisfaction.
  These findings suggest that while peer group mentoring are well-regarded by those who use them, increasing accessibility and awareness could enhance overall student engagement and satisfaction.

Conclusion

Peer group mentoring plays a crucial role in student development by providing a platform for collaborative learning and emotional support. Through shared experiences and peer interaction, students can gain new perspectives, improve communication skills, and build stronger relationships. This dynamic form of mentoring fosters a sense of belonging, boosts self-esteem, and encourages academic and personal growth. It also helps students develop problem-solving skills and resilience by learning from one another, creating a more engaging and supportive educational environment.

Peer group mentoring for students fosters a supportive environment where they can share experiences, develop social skills, and enhance academic performance. It promotes mutual learning, builds confidence, and creates a sense of community. By encouraging collaboration and peer support, group mentoring helps students navigate challenges, boosts motivation, and contributes to personal and academic growth.

References

1. Topping KJ, Ehly S. Peer-assisted learning. Routledge. This book provides a comprehensive overview of peer-assisted learning, including the role of peer mentoring in educational settings, 1998.
2. Goodlad S. Mentoring and tutoring by students. Kogan Page. A detailed exploration of how students can effectively tutor and mentor their peers, drawing from various case studies and research findings, 1999.
3. Crisp G, Cruz I. Mentoring college students: A critical review of the literature between 1990 and 2007. Research in Higher Education. This article reviews mentoring programs for college students, including peer mentoring, with a focus on its effectiveness in supporting student development. 2009; 50(6):525-545.
4. Pope JM, Van Dyke CJ. Mentoring: Creating connected, empowered leaders. Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice, Discusses how peer mentoring can be used to develop leadership skills and retain students in higher education. 1999; 1(2):123-140.
5. Dennison S. Peer mentoring: Untapped potential. The Journal of Nursing Education, Focuses on peer mentoring in nursing education but offers valuable insights into the broader use of peer mentoring in higher education. 2010; 49(6):340-342.
6. Google Scholar
   scholar.google.com
   A free search engine for scholarly articles and papers across various disciplines, including peer mentoring.
7. ERIC (Education Resources Information Center)
   eric.ed.gov
   A comprehensive online digital library of education research and information. Free access to many peer-reviewed journal articles.
8. Springer Link
   link.springer.com
   Provides access to millions of scientific documents such as books, articles, and journals.
9. Research Gate
   www.researchgate.net
   A professional network where researchers share papers, ask and answer questions, and find collaborators. Many authors share free access to their research here.
10. Academia.edu
    www.academia.edu
    A platform for academics to share research papers. Many peer-reviewed papers and thesis documents on mentoring are available here.