

LEAP UP – Macquarie Mentoring (Refugee Mentoring) Program: Peer to Peer Mentoring for High School Students from Refugee Backgrounds

Dr Sonal Singh
Macquarie University, Widening Participation Unit, Sydney, NSW 2109
sonal.singh@mq.edu.au

INTRODUCTION

“Repeat business or behaviour can be bribed; Loyalty has to be earned”
Janet Robinson

Mentoring is often defined as a one-to-one interaction between peers, or an academic to peer interaction, to develop areas of self-esteem, connectedness, identity, and academic attitudes.

The retention of students is now considered equally as important as the attraction of them (Helgesen, 2008; Hemsley-Brown & Oplatka, 2006). To provide value and satisfaction to students, it is vital that universities understand first year students’ needs and provide opportunities to optimize their learning experience (Ledden, Kalafatis & Samouel, 2007).



Mentoring Context

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|------------------------|---|
| MQ Mentors | • Approximately 50 MQ Volunteer |
| School Partners | • 6-8 Schools |
| Mentees | • Approximately 100 High School students from refugee backgrounds |

The 11 week mentoring program provided by Macquarie University, in partnership with Department of Education High Schools offers:

- Visits to the University Campus for activities
- Peer to peer mentoring
- Community involvement through parent and care-giver engagement

Research Questions

1. What are the key benefits derived by university mentors from the outreach mentoring program?
2. How the above identified benefits build on to the mentors individual needs and goals?
3. What is the outcome of the above identified benefits and attainment of individual goals and fulfilment of individual needs?

Method and Data Analysis

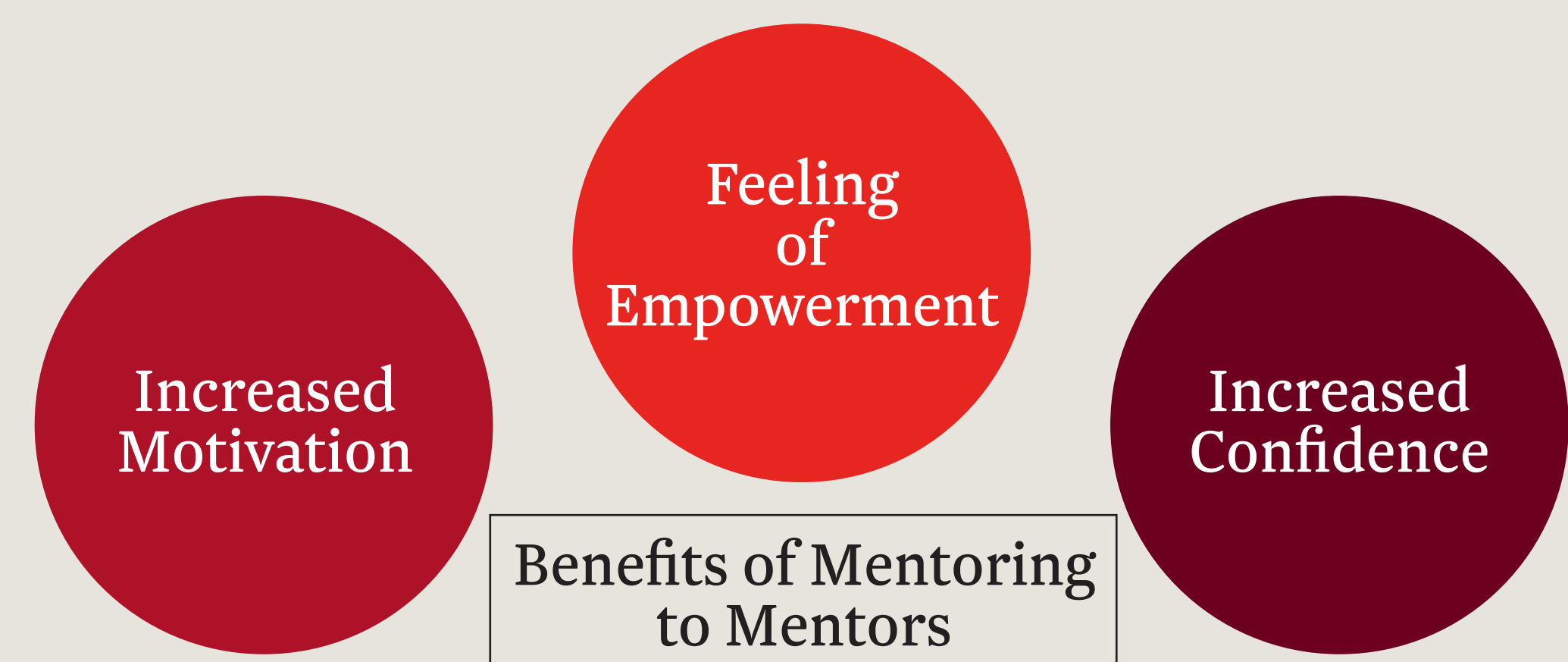
Three focus groups with 21 outreach mentees, 33 mentors through online survey and written survey with 365 mentees were carried out.

References

- Goodlad, S. (1998) Students as tutors and mentors, in: S. Goodlad (Ed.) Mentoring and tutoring by students (London, Kogan Page), 1–17.
- Helgesen, O. (2008). Marketing for Higher Education: A Relationship Marketing Approach. Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 8(1), 50- 78
- Hemsley-Brown, J. and Oplatka, I. (2006). Universities in a Competitive Global Marketplace: A Systematic Review of the Literature on Higher Education Marketing. International Journal of Public Sector Management, 19(4)
- Ledden, L. Kalafatis, S. and Samouel, P. (2007). The relationship between personal values and perceived value of education. Journal of Business Research, 60, 965-974.

RESULTS

Benefits of Mentoring to Mentors



“Seeing mentees more confident about what they are doing and their future career goals”

“Has given me a broader understanding of students with a refugee background and has provided me with the ability to help those who truly deserve it”

Fulfilment of Needs and Goal-Attainment

First year mentors also indicated that having shared values and interacted with faculty staff members made them aware of their purpose in life and university. It increased their academic skills, their positive perception about the value of higher education and overall provided them with a sense of satisfaction.

“Seeing the value the mentee gets from their participation, formal recognition of participation in the program useful for job applications, testing my own communication and planning skills”

Outcomes

Students felt accepted, respected, and valued (Goodlad,1998). Student development of a sense of belonging is key to their success in higher education as illustrated by Figure 1 below:



Keeps me grounded, and provides great experience out of my own comfort zone, makes me so grateful for the blessings I have been given.”

“Its a great chance to help others at a critical point in their lives where they are thinking about what they want to do when they leave school”

Recommendation

We suggest universities focus on the development of higher education services that meet and potentially exceed students’ expectations, and which also provide students with an enriching educational experience. A community spirit with the university is critical in shaping a student’s journey at university.