

The Evolving Landscape of Postgraduate Mentorship for Adult Learners: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

The relationship between adult learners and their mentors is critical to the development of learners' research and writing skills in postgraduate programmes. However, there is a lack of research on how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on adult learners' expectations and experiences of postgraduate mentoring. This paper presents a systematic literature review following the PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses) to address this gap. Using established databases, including Scopus, Wiley Online Library, Emerald, Web of Science and Google Scholar, we selected 22 relevant studies. The results of the review provide valuable insights into the types of mentor feedback and roles adopted during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Key themes that emerged from the literature include mentoring styles, relationships, social networks, traits/characteristics, the role of the mentor as a colleague, cross-cultural feedback and perceptions of constructive feedback. The findings highlight the importance of considering the particular needs and experiences of adult learners in postgraduate mentorship, particularly in the context of the pandemic and the shift to online learning. We highlight the need for further research to explore the impact of online mentoring on adult learners in postgraduate programmes, as this understanding can contribute to the development of more effective and supportive mentoring practises tailored to the needs of adult learners.

Keywords: Postgraduate, Mentoring, Students' experiences, Students' expectation, Mentoring feedback, Mentoring roles, Covid-19, post Covid-19