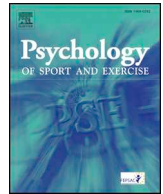




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# A citation network analysis of career mentoring across disciplines: A roadmap for mentoring research in sport



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## ABSTRACT

**Objective:** Given our limited understanding of mentoring in sport, reviewing research from other disciplines has the potential to advance knowledge in this context. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to synthesize and evaluate the mentoring literature across disciplines in order to bridge existing knowledge and to situate the mentoring in sport literature.

**Design:** A citation network analysis.

**Method:** A comprehensive literature search was conducted to locate influential career mentoring articles, books, and book chapters across all disciplines. Subsequently, this body of literature was evaluated using citation network to (a) identify the major career mentoring disciplines, (b) locate the most influential career mentoring texts, (c) evaluate the transfer of knowledge across disciplines, and (d) situate and evaluate the mentoring in sport literature.

**Results:** The literature search resulted in a mentoring network of 1,819 texts and 10,951 citation links. Five major mentoring disciplines emerged: academic medicine, industrial and organizational psychology, education, nursing, and psychology. The industrial and organizational psychology and academic medicine disciplines were the most substantial mentoring disciplines. Further, the findings suggest the literature is relatively disconnected within and across disciplines. In regard to sport, the mentoring research represented 1.47% of the full-network (29 texts and 50 citation relations) and is interwoven into the industrial and organizational psychology literature.

**Conclusion:** Given the limited sport texts uncovered in the citation network analysis, sport scholars can stand to benefit from the wealth of existing career mentoring literature in other disciplines. Accordingly, the identification of seminal career mentoring disciplines and texts serves to provide sport mentoring scholars with a roadmap to further promote the advancement and dissemination of mentoring knowledge and research.

## 1. Introduction

Historically, many notable athletes (e.g., Michael Jordan), sport coaches (e.g., Bill Belichick), scientists (e.g., Carl Jung), and musicians (e.g., Ludwig van Beethoven) reported being guided by mentors who played a key role in shaping their careers (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2007). For instance, basketball hall of famer Michael Jordan reported his former University coach Dean Smith played a significant role in his personal and professional development:

Other than my parents, no one had a bigger influence on my life than Coach Smith. He was more than a coach—he was my mentor, my teacher, my second father. Coach was always there for me whenever I needed him, and I loved him for it. In teaching me the

game of basketball, he taught me about life. (Boren, 2015, para. 2).

Although there is intuitive appeal for mentoring in sport, empirical research is limited and has primarily explored the value and impact of mentoring relationships on the development of sport coaches (e.g., Fairhurst, Bloom, & Harvey, 2017; Koh, Bloom, Fairhurst, Paiement, & Kee, 2014). For instance, evidence indicates that coach mentors have helped coach mentees improve their knowledge, competence, self-efficacy, networks, and interpersonal communication skills (Bloom, Durand-Bush, Schinke, & Salmela, 1998; Fairhurst et al., 2017; Koh et al., 2014). To a lesser extent, sport mentoring research has also found that mentored athletes (by coaches and/or peers) have higher levels of satisfaction, dedication, confidence, individual performance, and willingness to mentor others (Hoffmann & Loughead, 2016; Hoffmann,

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