

An Integrative Synthesis of Mentoring Functions to Support Tertiary Student Success

Michael Khian Jui Kho

Supervisors: Associate Prof. Allen Bartley & Dr Kelsey Deane

School of Counselling, Human Services and Social Work



Comprehensive Undergraduate Mentoring Model



Nora & Crisp's framework is useful to support diverse students' self-efficacy for tertiary study and their integration.

Weiston-Serdan's Critical Mentoring acts as a driver to bridge the gap between minority students' and institutional cultures (i.e. institutional adaptation).

Two complimentary concepts between **student integration(1)** & **institutional adaptation(2)**.

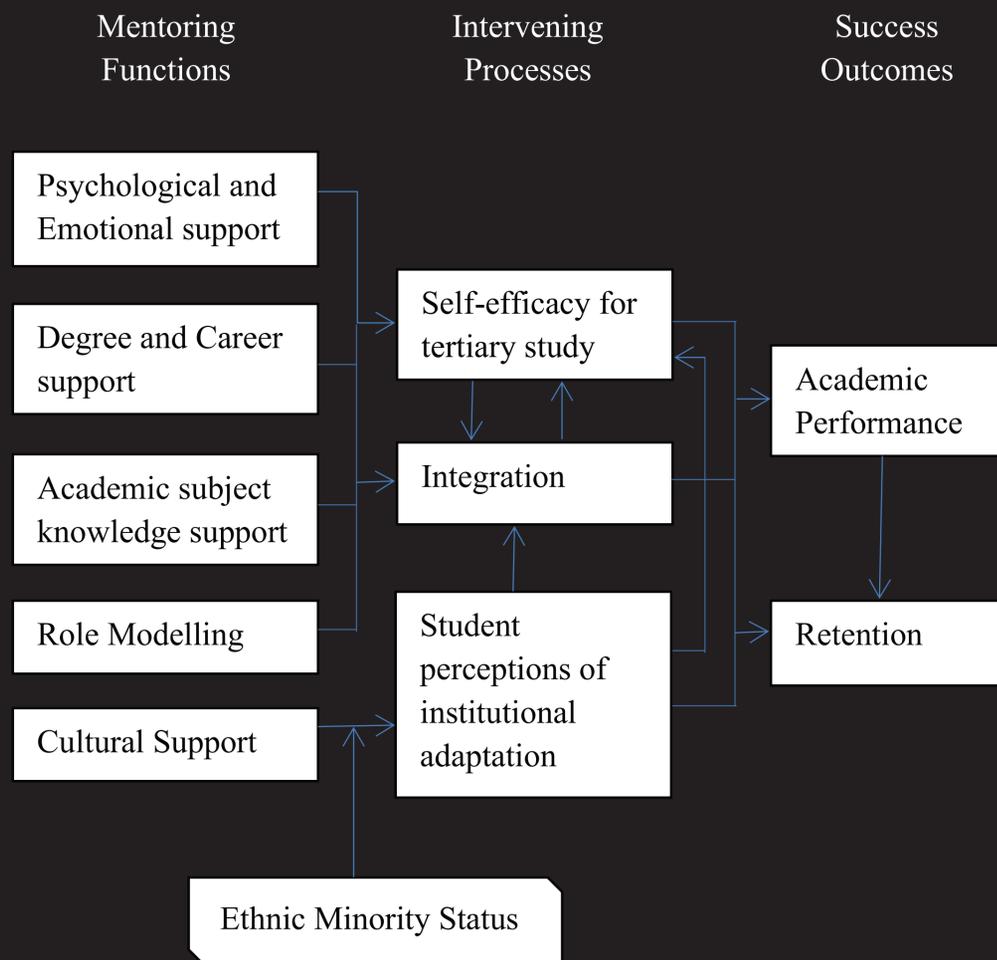
- (1) Integrate student academically & socially into institutional culture.
- (2) Adapt their processes to fulfil diverse students' needs & expectations by accepting, recognising & valuing students' cultural capital.

Problem: Difficult to differentiate when viewed from a **traditional mentoring lens** because of the nature of the power dynamic.

(1)≠(2), Two Different Constructs

Critical mentoring helps to illustrate the difference by restructuring the existing mentoring programmes to a focus of culturally aware mentorship that creates greater cultural and social awareness among young adults- to have their own voice, power, and choice

In particular, the process of assimilating minoritised students into predominant institutional culture is likened to "mentors help[ing] young people adapt to toxic water and polluted air, rather than help[ing] them to purify the water and clear the air" (Weiston-Serdan, 2017, p. 9)



The integrative model explicates how different mentoring functions should, theoretically, support student self-efficacy beliefs for tertiary study (Bandura's theory), student social and academic integration at university (Tinto's theory), and their perception of their institution's adaptation efforts in accommodating them (Bourdieu's theory); and how, consequently, these should predict academic performance and retention.

The Effects of Different Mentoring Functions on Student Success

As noted by Nora and Crisp (2007), different mentoring functions tend to affect student outcomes differently.

- Instrumental support can help students to enrich their practical experiences, while informational support that provides students with the resources, advice, and feedback can strengthen their vicarious experiences.
- Mentors' abilities to practice persuasive communication, provide evaluative feedback and emotional support to their students may help students to address the obstacles they face and thus build their confidence.
- Psychological and emotional support may help students to develop interpersonal relationships among students and university staff, while informational support is useful to enhance their academic experiences.

A critical mentoring approach is particularly important for ethnic minority students and can influence perceptions of institutional adaptation.

- Shifting focus from simply integrating minority students into the institutional culture to prioritising students' thoughts, valuing their cultural differences, and collaborating with them to address the equity issues they face (i.e., cultural support).

This model thus postulates a moderating effect of ethnic minority status on the relationships between cultural support and student perceptions of institutional adaptation.

In terms of the intervening processes, the three theoretical constructs are related and each of these intervening variables should enhance academic performance and retention directly and/or impact on tertiary retention via student performance.