

**Understanding the motivation influences in informal mentoring among nurses and
midwives working in acute care hospitals**

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ABSTRACT:

Background: informal mentoring relationship arise spontaneously between nurses/midwives drawing on their shared need for mentoring. Mentoring as a professional development approach can be challenging to initiate and maintain the relationship. Time constraints, increased workloads and understaffing are some of the challenges that have potential to inhibit development of mentoring relationships.

Aim: The study aimed to explore the intrinsic drive to mentor among nurses and midwives working in acute care setting in Uganda.

Design Qualitative descriptive design

Methods: we used thematic analysis to analyse semi-structured interviews with 35 nurses and midwives working in acute care settings in Uganda. Data was analysed in NVivo.

Results: *mentors are born* emerged as the core theme regarding the intrinsic drive to mentor others. Nurses/midwives believed it was in their nature to mentor and therefore mentored by instinct. Other themes focused on mentoring for *the self* in which mentors believed good mentoring benefits the mentor and bad mentoring would come back to haunt the mentor. Mentors also believed in mentoring for *the other*. The other was the mentee, the community

or the patient, and the profession. *The Self* versus *the other* formed the heart of their motivations to mentor.

Conclusion: informal mentoring in acute care setting seemed to rely on communal norms in which mentoring is done for the good of the other (the mentee and the patient). Consistent with mentoring literature, informal mentoring existing in absence of rewards and recognitions relies heavily on individual's intrinsic drive to mentor.

Implications: study adds to the mechanisms of initiating informal mentoring relations.

Internal motivation to mentor provides the foundation to initiate mentoring and is useful in understanding the mechanisms underlying successful informal mentoring relationships.