Reviewer's report

Title: The quantity, nature and quality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australian mentoring literature: A systematic review

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Reviewer: Elizabeth Comino

Reviewer's report:

This systematic review explores the available black and grey literature on mentoring for Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Introduction.

(major) A definition of mentoring for the purposes of this paper would have been useful. Mentoring can be a very broad concept, have many different purposes, and as many applications. The introduction would be strengthened by a clearer description of the sort of mentoring that the authors are seeking information on. For example is it mentoring Aboriginal people in professional positions or is the target for the general community? The methods suggest the latter. What is the aim of the mentoring to be reviewed? This could be general support role or more specifically targeting decision making. Some a priori information about the who, what, where, and why would be informative.

(major) The methods section (page 5 – page 6) and figure 1 are repetitive and could be deleted as the information is repeated in the explanation of the stepwise approach below.

(minor) Page 8, para 2, line 6-7 – this statement and the explanation that follows would be more appropriate in the introduction where it would also be more useful to differentiate different sorts of mentoring such as mentoring, decision support, coaching, etc..

Results.

The range of 15 papers and their contents is probably what one would expect, given the research question and search terms used.

Inclusion of the tables within the main body of the paper is an issue as these tables are integral to the text and not additional information for clarification.

The four strategies identified are feasible and would align with current knowledge of appropriate cultural practices.

Discussion

Given the broad definitions and scope of this review and the limited literature within the field, the discussion seems to be both over-analysed and yet non-specific. Surely there was some scope to include information on what is known about mentoring programs for the non-Aboriginal community (this also a limited field of research) and discuss the components that are the same and different.
Conclusions

The focus on research methods is not needed here. This is a methodological issue that should be secondary to the primary aims of the paper. In terms of methods a plea for strong evaluation strategies would have held more traction with this reviewer than a call for experiment. Other than the lack of evidence, what were some of the key messages for anyone trying to establish a mentoring program within an Aboriginal community?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

The reviewer has no conflicts of interest.