



UNIVERSITÀ DI PARMA



EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF EDUCATORS IN NURSING SCIENCE / FÉDÉRATION EUROPÉENNE DES ENSEIGNANTS EN SCIENCES INFIRMIÈRES

Capturing the variability of clinical mentorship: an innovative survey approach to explore nursing students' experiences

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Ariadna Graells-Sans

agraellssans@hmar.cat

On behalf of Eva Padrosa, Aggie Núñez-Doyle, Ikram Allaoui, Raquel Ayuso-Margañón, Biel Palacín-Carbó, Marta Reyes-Vizcarro, Rosa Rifà-Ros, Miriam Rodríguez-Monforte.

Strengthening Nursing Education For A Safer Tomorrow



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BACKGROUND

- Clinical mentorship is crucial for nursing education, linking directly to student satisfaction, confidence, performance, and retention in the profession.
- Standard quality assessments often ask for mentorship quality as a single, uniform experience, despite students engaging with multiple mentors.
- Relying on single mean scores obscures significant variability in mentorship quality, masking both excellent and poor individual mentoring relationships.
- SNA offers a framework to map the full constellation of relationships, capturing the distinct quality of each student-mentor dyad.

Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of **Social Network Analysis (SNA)** in capturing variability in nursing students' perception of mentorship quality across different mentors.



MATERIALS AND METHODS



Design and setting

- Cross-sectional survey from July to September 2025
- Two universities in Catalonia, Spain (private, public-private)



Participants

- 105 undergraduate nursing students
- Completed ≥1 clinical placement in 2024-2025



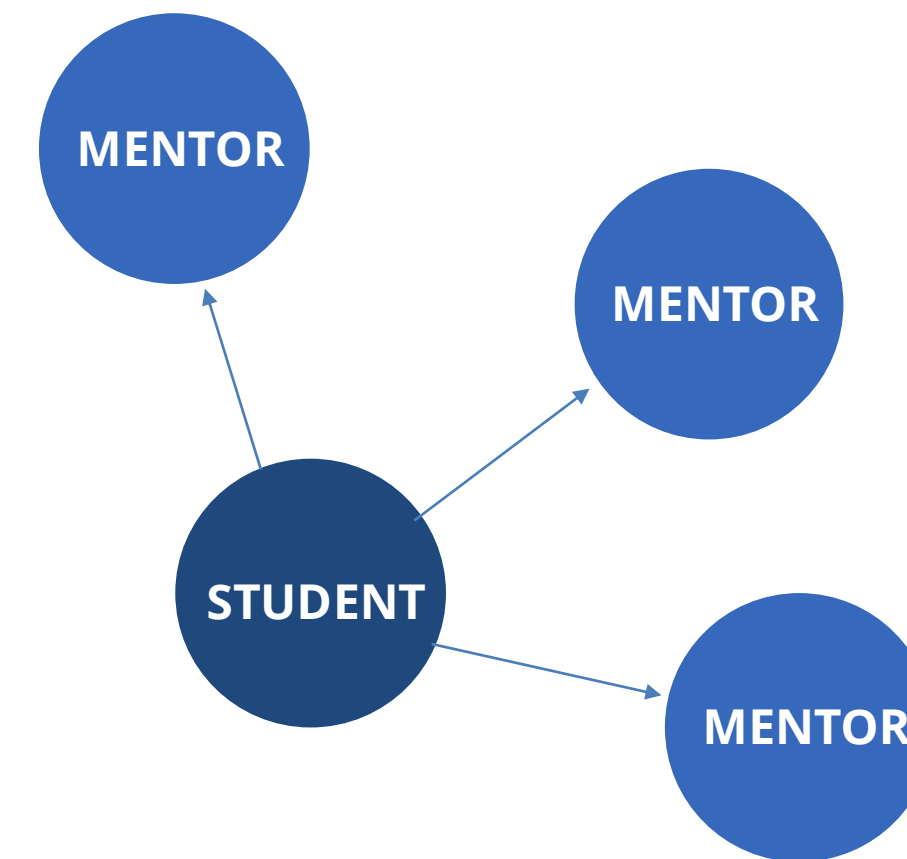
Data collection

- Self-administered survey hosted in REDCap
- Students nominated mentors (no limit, fictional names) and rate them using the Maastricht Clinical Teaching Questionnaire (MCTQ)
- Optional qualitative comments on mentorship experiences



Data analysis

- Comparison of aggregated vs disaggregated data at the student-level
- Kernel density estimations to visualize MCTQ score distributions
- Qualitative comments complemented quantitative findings



Ethics

Approved by a registered Ethical Committee
Participation was voluntary, anonymous, and subject to informed consent



RESULTS



Participants

105 undergraduate nursing students
They nominated 204 mentors (mean 1,94 per student)

Variable	Category	n	%	MCTQ Mean disaggregated	MCTQ Mean aggregated at the student-level	p-value
University	FCS Blanquerna	16	15.4	3.67	3.66	0.0977
	ESIHMar	87	83.7	4.1	4.06	
Gender	Man	11	10.6	3.72	3.87	0.2749
	Woman	92	88.5	4.08	4.02	
Age	<=25	78	75	4.18	4.12	0.0172
	>25	22	21.2	3.54	3.62	
Course	1st	14	13.5	3.91	3.85	0.496
	2nd	18	17.3	4.17	4.13	
	3rd	54	51.9	4.12	4.12	
	4th	18	17.3	3.8	3.71	
Place of birth	Spain	89	85.6	4.03	4.01	0.747
	Abroad	14	13.5	4.09	3.94	
Professional experience	No	62	59.6	4.14	4.11	0.2725
	Currently working healthcare sector	33	31.7	3.84	3.82	
	Yes, not in the healthcare sector	9	8.7	4.16	3.97	



RESULTS



Comparison between aggregated and disaggregated data

- Disaggregated MCTQ mean score 4.12 (SD=1.08)
- Aggregated at the student-level 4.05 (SD=0.90)

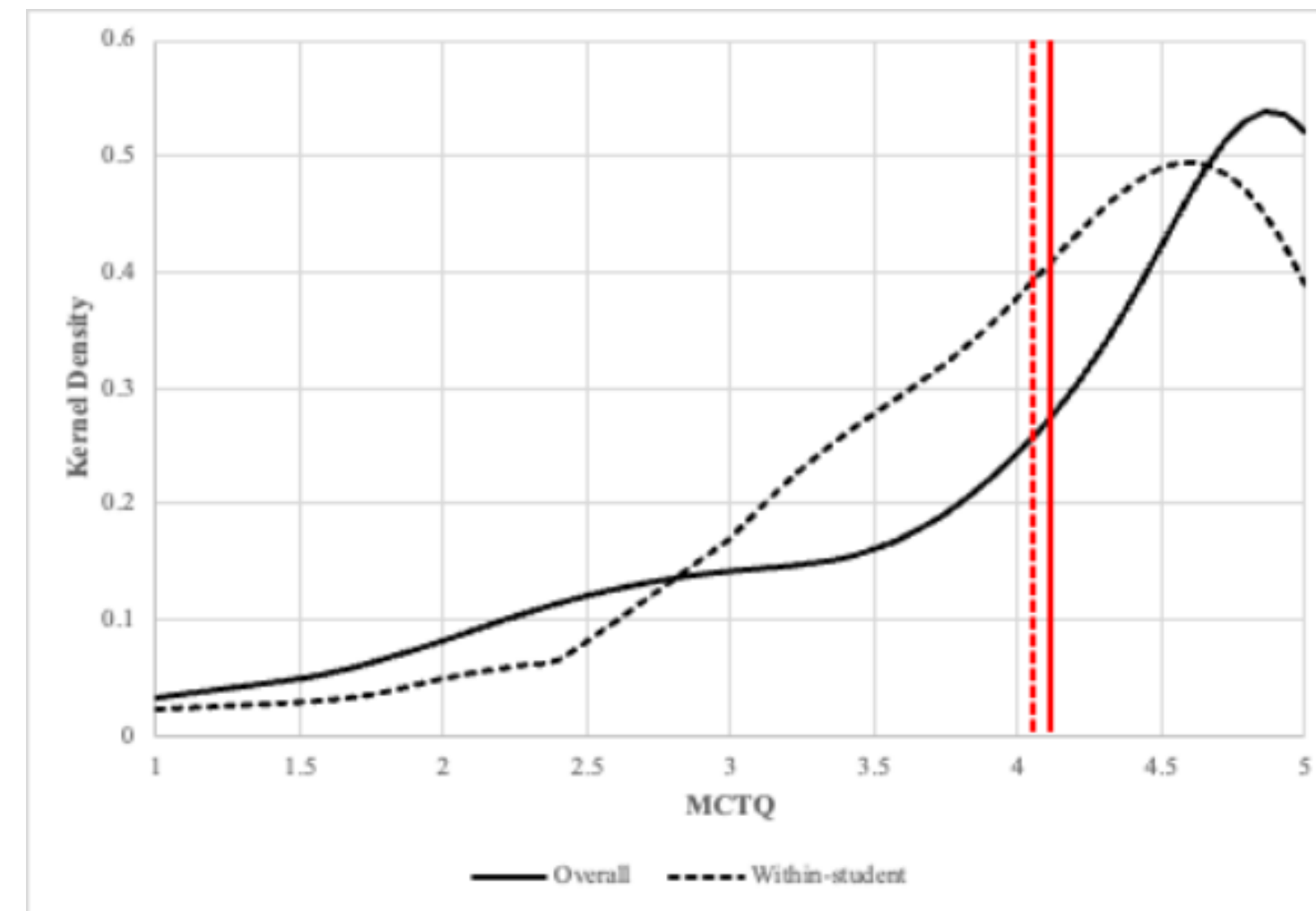


Qualitative comments

"Sometimes there are mentors with whom you feel that you are a burden."
 MCTQ mentor A = 3.21, MCTQ mentor B = 4.71

"It's complicated because it [mentoring] can be tiring or not liked, but it's valued when they show you that they count on you"
 MCTQ mentor A = 2.64, MCTQ mentor B = 4.93, MCTQ mentor C = 5.00

"I had an unpleasant experience in the second term of last year. A nurse did not treat me well at all"
 MCTQ mentor A = 5.00, MCTQ mentor B = 5.00



Kernel density distributions

Red vertical lines indicate overall (solid) and within-student (dashed) mean MCTQ scores.



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Qualitative comments

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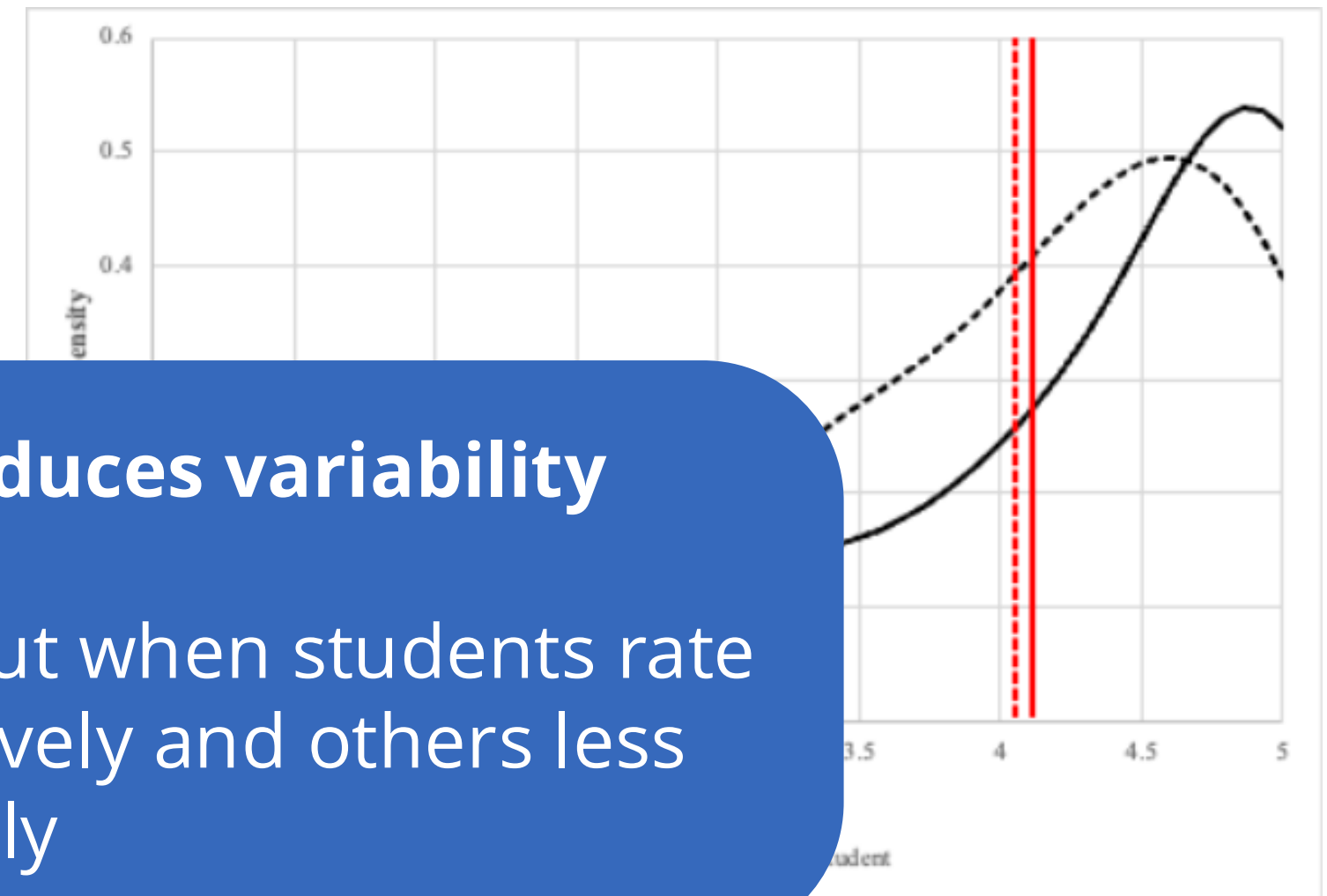
MCTQ mentor

"I had an unpleasant experience in the second term of last year. A nurse did not treat me well at all"

MCTQ mentor A = 5.00, MCTQ mentor B = 5.00

Aggregating scores reduces variability

Averaging scores balance out when students rate some mentors very positively and others less favorably



Kernel density distributions

Red vertical lines indicate overall (solid) and within-student (dashed) mean MCTQ scores.





CONCLUSIONS

Main conclusion

Social Network Analysis (SNA) effectively captures variability in students' perceptions of mentorship quality across mentors

- 💡 SNA-based surveys can help monitor mentorship quality without the need of longitudinal designs
- 🕒 Further research should explore the relationship between mentorship experiences and academic performance indicators
- 👍 Improvements of this method include circumventing survey fatigue, since students potentially had more than 2 mentors



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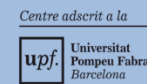


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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

Ariadna Graells-Sans
agraellssans@hmar.cat

We thank all participants who took part in this study



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