**Educator and Preceptor Roles in Athletic Training Student Development**

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**Introduction**

Health care professions education programs use a unique learning pattern in which students are educated both didactically and clinically. Previous research has focused on preceptor selection and training to promote quality clinical education experiences for students, but there has been limited emphasis on perceived roles of didactic and clinical educators. Therefore, we investigated the stakeholders’ perceptions on athletic training student development.

**Purpose**

To explore didactic educators’ and preceptors’ perceptions regarding their respective roles in athletic training student development.

**Methods**

**PARTICIPANTS**

- 22 participants (9 Male, 13 Female) representing CAATE-accredited professional athletic training programs
- 8 faculty, 7 preceptors, and 7 dual role educator/preceptor
- Focus group sample size guided by data saturation

**PROCEDURES**

- Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted and transcribed verbatim
- A third-party transcription service was used to transcribe the interviews and assign pseudonyms

**DATA ANALYSIS**

- The QSR approach was chosen for this investigation to minimize bias using two researchers in the 1st phase, three researchers in the 2nd phase, and four researchers in the final phase of data analysis to ensure triangulation
- Two researchers created a preliminary codebook, three researchers finalized themes and categories for coding, then the entire four-person research team independently coded the transcripts and met to establish consensus
- Themes and subgroups were identified, and credibility was established by use of an external auditor

**Results**

![Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Educator and Preceptor Roles Themes and Associated Categories](https://example.com/figure1)

- **Contributors to Role Achievement**
  - Positive Relationship
  - Effective Communication
  - Role Development
  - Student Development
  - Socialization

- **Challenges in Role Development**
  - Preparation for Role
  - Student Commitment
  - Role Stress
  - Ineffective Communication
  - Authenticity of Learning
  - Preceptor Willingness

- **Perceived Improvements**
  - Concept Integration and Application
  - Programmatic Leadership
  - Culture

**References**