Peer Mentoring – Academic Review

* Your literature review has a subsection labeled “theoretical background” but since this is the only subsection, I don’t see having a subsection to be very useful. Instead, I think you should start the paper with one paragraph that gives a very brief introduction (increasing number of students with special needs in higher education; various programs exist to help them acclimate; mentoring is one such program but studies rarely examine mentors’ experience and none at all have examined it among special needs individuals; and this study will specifically examine the effects on mentors of one particular peer-mentoring program among students with special needs).
  + Then, you can start your sub-sections. I suggest something like:
    - Students with special needs in higher education
      * This can include the statistics of the number/percentage of students who are enrolling, showing the increase, and the number/percentage of students who fail and/or do not complete their studies relative to non-special needs students and reasons for why
      * I think you should also be clear which special needs you are including and the difference between different kinds of special needs and enrollment/drop-out rates
    - Current support for special needs students
      * Then you can go into the current support that students with special needs receive and the success (or not) of the current support efforts (ideally, citing academic articles or statistics from higher education resources)
      * You can then talk about mentoring as part of the support that students with special needs receive and what elements make-up that mentorship (e.g., who is providing the mentoring, the unique effects of mentoring beyond other types of more traditional support)
    - The facets and effects of peer mentoring
      * Here you can give general information about peer mentoring – what goes into it, research about its success (or not) and the different populations that it has been studied in and then focus in on peer mentoring among students and/or young adults
      * Provide any research that might exist about how mentors benefit from mentoring (in addition to the benefits that mentees receive)
      * Do what you can to tie it into special needs – for example, what literature exists that gives you the idea that students with special needs will benefit from peer mentoring in general, and from being mentors specifically
        + this can also be general – perhaps, theories of self-efficacy - think about what the mechanisms you think are at play for why students with special needs in particular will benefit from being mentors and then add in the relevant literature
        + You bring up Helper Theory, and that can be one theory you touch upon, but I think you should think about more psychological mechanisms (such as self-efficacy, or others) and see what literature exists among the special needs population that you can tie in.

In your results, you talk about self-efficacy, self-esteem, and empowerment – I think these should be included in the literature review here. Additionally, the background literature that you include in your findings/results section, belongs in these literature review sections.

* + \*This will require a decent amount of reorganization and additional literature to be added