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EXAMINING AFRICAN AMERICAN AND CAUCASIAN FEMALE PROTEGES'
PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP OF THEIR MENTOR'S
PERFORMANCE OF MENTORING FUNCTIONS AND RACE

by

Lisa D. Summerour

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of

Olivet Nazarene University

School of Graduate and Continuing Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Doctor of Education

In

Ethical Leadership

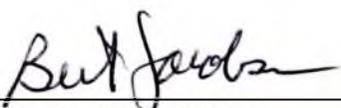
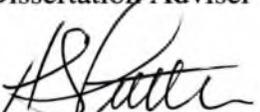
May 2015

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PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR MENTORS' BEHAVIORS AND THE IMPORTANCE
OF THE MENTOR'S RACE

By

Lisa D. Summerour

Dissertation

 _____ Dissertation Adviser	<u>4-18-15</u> Date
 _____ Dissertation Reader	<u>4-18-15</u> Date
 _____ Dissertation Coordinator	<u>4-18-15</u> Date
 _____ Dissertation Director	<u>4-18-15</u> Date
 _____ Vice President for Academic Affairs	<u>4-18-15</u> Date

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I have said from the beginning, this was the most challenging experience I have ever undertaken, and I enjoyed every moment of it. I want to thank the staff and administration at Olivet Nazarene University for providing an environment designed to support students in achieving each benchmark along the way to this final goal. I extend special notes of gratitude to my adviser, Dr. Bert Jacobson, and my reader, Dr. Stanton Tuttle. Your collective efforts encouraged and challenged me to put forth my best effort. To my cousin, Dr. Letetia Coleman and the first woman in our family to earn a doctorate, I watched you navigate this process years ago and having you as my editor provided me with the double value of engaging in stimulating conversation balanced with huge doses of humor and the kind of laughter that would have made Grandmom Perry beam. Dr. Gail Whitaker, I know that God placed you in my life for such a time as this. I can never repay you; just know that my thankfulness goes beyond my ability to express. Wendy Williams, your friendship and love are unconditional, your faith in my abilities is unbelievable, and I thank you for being the reminder of God's ability to bless beyond my ability to understand. Roomie! Gwen Odom, I would have done this without you; I am simply glad that I did not have to. Having you on this journey with me made it all the more special. Finally, thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for this opportunity, and may He bless all of those mentioned and all the friends and family not mentioned for their prayers and words of encouragement throughout this experience. I love you all.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to three family members and a former high school teacher, who inspired me by being life-long learners and encouraged me by being lifetime supporters. To my late grandmother, Margaret *Nana* Magruder, who at the age of 47, married with six children, graduated at the top of the class from Our Lady of Lourdes as the only African American student in her class. To my father and avid reader, Charles F. Perry, a man who worked full-time while providing for his family and earning his bachelor's degree from Rutgers University. To my mother, Jacqueline M. Perry, who returned to school and earned a bachelor's of nursing degree. She graduated at the age of 60, was inducted into Sigma Theta Tau, the Honor Society of Nursing, and spoke at the induction ceremony. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to my Riverside High School African-American history teacher, Mr. Robert Peters, for being a man of grace, a teacher of impeccable character, and a person whose opinion continues to garner my utmost respect and whose respect I continue to work to earn. You were my real-life *to sir, with love*.

ABSTRACT

This researcher examined the perspectives of African American and Caucasian female protégés regarding the five career development mentoring functions of sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposing; and the six psychosocial mentoring functions of role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship, socializing, and parenting to examine African American and Caucasian female protégés' perspectives on their mentors' mentoring behaviors. The researcher also examined the perspectives of African American and Caucasian female protégés regarding the importance of race in their mentoring dyads. The results indicated that no statistically significant differences existed between the African American and Caucasian female protégés within the five career development mentoring functions. Statistically significant differences were identified within the psychosocial mentoring functions of acceptance and parenting. Statistically significant differences also existed between the African American and Caucasian female protégés' overall scores for career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring regarding the importance of the mentor's race. In both cases, the African American female protégés' scores indicated that they rated the importance of the mentor's race significantly higher than the Caucasian female participants rated the importance of the mentor's race for career development and psychosocial support mentoring.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several decades, researchers have consistently asserted that effective mentoring provided benefits to the protégé and the mentor (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1983; Ragins, 2011). Researchers determined that there were two primary functions provided by mentors to protégés: career development and psychosocial support. Career development mentoring was comprised of five mentoring functions that the mentor provided to the protégé. The five mentoring functions associated with career development were sponsorship, coaching, protection, exposure and visibility, and challenging work assignments designed to assist the protégé in learning about the organization and preparing the protégé for career advancement opportunities. Psychosocial support mentoring was comprised of six mentoring functions, which included role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship (Kram), socializing, and parenting (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990).

Researchers identified the types of mentoring as being formal or informal based on how the mentoring relationship was established. Formal mentoring relationships were established with assistance from the organization, which included matching mentors with protégés (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). Informal mentoring relationships occurred when protégés sought out help from other members within the organization where there was a mutual attraction, rapport, and a level of interpersonal comfort between the two individuals (Armstrong, Allinson, & Hayes, 2002).

Previous researchers studied mentoring relationships in connection with a variety of factors including age, gender, job title, education, socio-economic levels, and industry. Blake-Beard, Murrell, and Thomas (2006) determined it was critical that researchers examine the intersection of race and mentoring due to the “changing nature of organizations and the composition of the people within them” (p. 5). Finally, the value of mentoring relationships has been referred to as a two-way payoff, where the protégé benefits from receiving advice from a seasoned, more experienced person, while the mentor reaps the rewards of self-satisfaction from helping a younger talent and contributing to the managerial fortitude of the organization (Brown, 1990).

Statement of the Problem

Previous researchers used samples that lacked diversity, which produced models, theories, and empirical studies that either excluded race as a factor or relegated race to unexplained variance (Blake-Beard et al., 2006). Eby and Allen (2002) conducted research to study negative mentoring outcomes. Their sample for this study was 95% Caucasian. In two other studies designed to operationalize the construct of negative mentoring, Eby, Butts, Lockwood, and Simons (2004) used a sample comprised of 97% Caucasian participants.

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American and Caucasian female protégés regarding mentoring behaviors and the importance of the mentor’s race. The resulting data will contribute to the development of mentoring programs that will provide strategies for African American females to overcome pressures and barriers, while engaging both groups of women in the process.

Background

Ensher, Thomas, and Murphy (2001) identified the fact that traditional conceptualizations about mentoring either omitted or did not fully take into consideration the experiences of women and minorities. Examples of Ensher et al.'s claim include Scandura's (1992) research that investigated the relationship between mentorship functions and protégés' career outcomes. Scandura collected demographic data regarding age and education. Scandura also reported a sample composed of 97% male participants while reporting no data regarding the ethnicity of participants. Noe (1988) investigated what constituted successful assigned mentoring relationships and collected demographic information regarding gender, age, education, and employment position. Noe's demographics did not include data regarding race. Turban and Dougherty (1994) also omitted information regarding ethnicity from the sample group. Turban and Dougherty examined the role a protégé's personality played in the protégé's ability to receive mentoring and career success, and these researchers included data on the age and gender of the sample participants. A fourth example is Kram's (1983) study that highlighted the successive phases of the mentoring relationship. Kram collected data regarding the age, tenure, and gender of the participants but did not document the ethnicity of the participants.

In each of these studies (Kram, 1983; Noe, 1998; Scandura, 1992; Turban & Dougherty, 1994), researchers set out to investigate a specific focus as it related to mentoring. It is neither likely nor insinuated that these researchers intentionally omitted specifics about race or gender. It is more likely that Scandura, Noe, Turban and

Dougherty, and Kram gathered demographic data from individuals and in social networks with which they were familiar and in which they were comfortable navigating at the time.

Some researchers did consider issues of diversity in their demographics, and several researchers made race and gender relevant aspects of their studies. Thomas, Witherspoon, and Speight (2008) examined more than 300 African American women to determine if African American women were subjected to “unique forms of oppression” (p. 307) because they were female and African American. Dreher and Cox (1996) investigated whether Caucasian MBA recipients were more likely to establish mentoring relationships with Caucasian men than African American and Hispanic MBA recipients. Ensher and Murphy (1997) conducted their study to determine what effects race, gender, perceived similarity, and contact would have on mentoring relationships. Tharenou (2005) conducted a comparative study and examined whether mentoring support increased women’s career advancement more than men’s career advancement. Thomas (1989) interviewed African American and Caucasian employees at a large corporation. Thomas’s interviews examined the taboos surrounding race and relationships between African American and Caucasian men and women in the workplace. Many of the employees interviewed expressed the discomfort surrounding the irrational perceptions held by themselves and co-workers relating to mentoring relationships. A survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management and Commerce Clearing House (1993) examined organizational diversity programs designed to benefit participants they referred to as people of color. The survey revealed that while 21.8% of the private and public organizations surveyed offered mentoring for people of color, only 38% of their population perceived the mentoring program to be effective.

In a study more aligned with this study, Levesque, O'Neill, Nelson, and Dumas (2005) suggested that individuals' perceptions of the importance of various mentoring behaviors were relevant. Levesque et al. identified themselves as the first researchers to consider the differences between men's and women's perceptions of the mentoring factors men and women found most important. Levesque et al. expected that defining a clearer understanding between men and women, and what each gender deemed important in mentoring behaviors, could improve cross-gender mentor relationships and increase the effectiveness of cross-gender mentoring. Levesque et al. concluded that there were few differences between men and women when it came to what each gender deemed important in mentoring behaviors.

Research Questions

1. What were the differences in perceptions of career development mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
2. What were the differences in perceptions of psychosocial support mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
3. What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
4. What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
5. What was the correlation between African American and Caucasian female protégés for Career Development scores and Psychosocial Support scores?

6. What were the differences between the perceptions of the overall satisfaction with the mentors between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

Description of Terms

Bicultural. The phenomenon by which African American women are required to shape their careers in a world dominated by Caucasians, while they simultaneously maintain other aspects of their lives in the African American community (Bell, 1990).

Career Function Mentoring. The process within the mentoring relationship that prepares the protégé for career advancement (Noe, 1988).

Career Insight. The ability to be realistic about one's career, which entails establishing clear, feasible career goals and realizing one's strengths and weaknesses (Day & Allen, 2004).

Career Identify. The extent to which one defines oneself by one's work (Day & Allen, 2004).

Career Resilience. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances, even when circumstances are discouraging or disruptive (Day & Allen, 2004).

Extra-firm Relationships. Relationships developed outside of the organization, used most often by women and minorities, to receive psychosocial support not available to them in the workplace (Thomas & Higgins, 1996).

Formal Mentoring. Relationships often entered into to meet organizational expectations or to be seen as good organizational citizens. These relationships are usually structured and have shorter duration than informal mentoring relationships (Ragins et al., 2000).

Formsite. An online service that allows individuals and organizations to build professional HTML forms and web surveys (Formsite, 2014).

Gendered Racism. The unique form of oppression African American women are subjected to because of their simultaneous *Blackness* and *femaleness* (Thomas et al., 2008).

Homophily. A principle that asserts a contact between similar people—that is, people who share a culture, behavior, genetic, or material information—occurs at a higher rate than between dissimilar people (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001).

Human Equity. Focusing on the unique and intangible assets that each employee brings to the work environment (Wilson, 2013).

Informal Mentoring. Relationships often developed out of mutual identification. These relationships are often unstructured and tend to last longer than formal mentoring relationships (Ragins et al., 2000).

Intra-firm Relationships. Relationships developed within the organization for the purpose of career support (Thomas & Higgins, 1996).

Mentoring Constellations. The combination of mentoring relationships and developmental networking relationships a protégé may have available (van Emmerik, 2004).

Mentoring Schemas. Fluid cognitive maps established from previous experiences and relationships that guide the perceptions, expectations, and behaviors mentors and protégés in mentoring dyads (Ragins & Verbos, 2007).

Mistaken Identify: An assumption whereby when having to choose between a minority and a Caucasian, the minority is mistakenly identified as the person in the lower hierarchical position (Enomoto, Gardiner, & Grogan, 2000).

Networking. The process of building and maintaining solid professional relationships with the purpose of acquiring social capital (Misner et al., 2009).

Psychosocial Function Mentoring. The process designed to enhance the protégé's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in the protégé's perspective of his or her job function (Noe, 1988).

Social Capital. The accumulation of resources established through purposeful personal and professional interactions. Resources include ideas, knowledge, information, opportunities, contacts, and referrals. Characteristics of developing social capital include trust, confidence, friendship, good deeds, and goodwill (Misner, Alexander, & Hilliard, 2009).

Sponsors. Advocates in positions of authority who use their influence intentionally for the purpose of helping others advance (Catalyst Organization, 2013).

Secure Sockets Layer (SSL). A digital certificate that authenticates the identity of a website and encrypts information sent to the server using SSL technology (Businessdictionary, 2013).

Taboo. In this study, the term refers to the unconscious fantasies and fears African Americans and Caucasians have historically associated with sexual attraction, tension, and stereotypes between and among the races, as they relate to mentoring opportunities in the workplace (Thomas, 1989).

Significance of the Study

According to Blake-Beard (1999), previous researchers' studies on mentoring either omitted or did not acknowledge the perspectives of African American women regarding race and mentoring. Levesque et al. (2005) had a potential sample of 2,159 MBA graduates for their study that compared the perceptions between men and women regarding mentoring functions. Levesque et al.'s respondents returned 783 surveys, which represented a 36% response rate. The racial demographics of the respondents were 89% Caucasian, 7% Asian, and the remaining 4% were identified as African American, Hispanic, or another ethnicity. Ragins and McFarlin (1990) administered questionnaires to 880 participants for their study that examined cross-gender mentoring relationships. Respondents returned 510 usable surveys, which represented an equal number of male and female respondents and equated to a response rate of 58%. Ragins and McFarlin documented a Caucasian subsample of 93%. The researchers did not identify the racial makeup of the remaining 7% of the survey respondents. In a third study, Burke and McKeen (1997) had 280 women complete and return questionnaires for their research designed to examine the mentor functions among managerial and professional women. Burke and McKeen collected demographic information on age, marital and parental status, salary, skill level, and company size. The researchers did not present any data regarding the race of the female participants.

This researcher has made specific contributions to the current research on mentoring by focusing on the mentoring relationship from the perspectives of African American and Caucasian women in order to provide a more complete collection of information that included African American women as a major part of the intended

population. In doing so, the researcher has provided one of the first studies that collected data on the perceptions of African American and Caucasian women addressing any perceived differences these two groups of protégés had regarding mentoring functions performed by their mentors. This researcher's study provided data that can assist organizations and agencies in establishing more effective mentoring programs because the data collected in this study provided information from the perspectives of the African American and Caucasian protégés. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that without researchers conducting studies addressing the intersection of race and mentoring, organizations will continue to develop schemas using data that focused on one group's experiences (Blake-Beard et al., 2006) to the exclusion of specific data reflecting the perspectives of African American women.

Process to Accomplish

As part of the process to accomplish, the researcher defined the desired population for the study and identified the organizations from which participants were selected. The researcher discussed the tool used to collect the data and the methodology used to analyze the data. Finally, the researcher explained how the data collection survey was made accessible to potential participants.

The participants for the study included African American and Caucasian female professionals. These women self-identified as professionals.

The researcher used the convenience sampling method to solicit participants from members of various national and regional organizations which included the following:

- Black MBA Association,
- Women's MBA Association,

- National Association of Female Executives (NAFE), and
- LinkedIn groups.

Relevant criteria for female protégé eligibility to participate in the study included

- self-identified as African American or Caucasian, and
- has been a protégé in an informal or formal mentoring relationship.

The researcher amended the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument and Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale from 7-point Likert scales to 6-point Likert scales to remove the neutral scale option. The researcher used the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument to answer Research Questions 1, 2, and 5.

Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) Mentor Role Instrument was developed with a separate pretest of 69 protégés who were employed in public and private sector organizations in the East, Midwest, and Southeast regions of the United States. An analysis conducted on the reliability, factorial, and concurrent validity showed strong within-factor inter-item correlations (Pearson Coefficients of 0.57-0.93); strong internal consistency (Cronbach alphas of 0.82-0.97); confirmatory factorial validity, as demonstrated by confirmatory factor analysis of the two mentoring dimensions, career development and psychosocial mentoring, 11 mentoring functions, and the 33 items on the instrument. The analysis also showed concurrent validity, as demonstrated by strong correlations (Pearson Coefficients of 0.56-0.71) between mentoring dimensions, satisfaction, and effectiveness. (Dilmore et al., 2010, p. 104).

Examples of the items are as follows:

- My mentor assigns me tasks that push me into developing new skills.
- My mentor helps me be more visible in the organization.

The Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Satisfaction with Mentor Scale is a 4-item, 7-point Likert scale that this researcher converted to a 6-point Likert scale to remove the neutral option. This researcher used the Satisfaction with Mentor Scale in Items 34-37 to answer Research Question 6.

The researcher added Items 38 and 39 to determine if protégés saw the race of the mentor as being important to their career development and psychosocial support. The researcher used Items 38 and 39 to answer Research Questions 3 and 4. The protégés were able to select from the following Likert scale options: Strongly Agree, Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

The researcher calculated scores for each participant based on the five career development functions of sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposure; and the six psychosocial support functions of role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship, socializing, and parenting (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) based on Likert scale questions associated with each of the 11 mentoring functions. Participants' scores were calculated for the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale, and scores were calculated for the two added Likert scale items numbered 38 and 39. See Appendix A for the amended version of the Ragins and McFarlin Mentoring Role Instrument and the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale. Protégés provided demographic information on their mentors, including the mentor's age, race, education, and gender.

The researcher created a secure website where participants could access the study. The researcher's domain name was www.summerourmentoringstudy.com. The researcher established the website as Secure Socket Layer (SSL) certified to add additional protection by utilizing a Secure Sockets Layer, which was described as a digital

certificate that authenticates a website's identity and scrambles the data so that the information being transmitted is undecipherable. The scrambled data could only be returned to a readable format if the correct decryption key was used. In essence, a certificate serves as an electronic passport that establishes an online entity's credentials when doing business on the Web. When an Internet user attempts to send confidential information to a Web server, the user's browser accesses the server's digital certificate and establishes a secure connection.

The researcher requested that all participants answer questions regarding specific demographics to determine if they represented the desired sample for this study. All participants were permitted to complete the questionnaire. Participants who did not fit the specified sample demographics were filtered out using the filtering mechanism in the data collection form created on Formsite, (2004). Demographic information questions for the introductory page were as follows:

- What is your level of education?
- Have you ever been in a mentoring relationship as the protégé?
- What is your age? *The researcher included a drop-down box for participants to select the appropriate age range.*
- What is your race? *The researcher included a drop-down box for participants to select Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Asian, or Other. Only those participants who self-identified as African American or Caucasian were considered suitable sample participants for the study.*

Participants were directed to the research study information and consent notification page. The researcher provided more detailed information on the purpose of the study and informed participants that completing the survey was considered consent.

The researcher used the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument, and selected the 15 questions relating to the five functions identified with career development mentoring and the 18 questions relating to the six functions identified with psychosocial support mentoring to compare the scores of the African American female participants to the scores of the Caucasian female participants. The researcher then selected the items that represented the four questions on the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Satisfaction Scale to compare the scores of the African American female participants to the scores of the Caucasian female participants. The researcher selected the scores associated with Item 38, which compared the African American female participants' scores to the Caucasian female participants' scores regarding race of the mentor in career development mentoring. Finally, the researcher selected the scores associated with Item 39, which compared the African American female participants' scores to the Caucasian female participants' scores regarding race of the mentor in psychosocial support mentoring. The sets of scores were calculated and analyzed to answer the following research questions:

1. What were the differences in perceptions of career development mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

The researcher used the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument to collect data from Items 1 through 15 that dealt specifically with the five mentoring functions associated with career development mentoring. The five career development mentoring functions examined were sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposure. A

Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on each of the five mentoring functions associated with career development mentoring to determine if any statistically significant differences in perceptions existed between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants in these five mentoring functions.

2. What were the differences in perceptions of psychosocial support mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

The researcher used the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument to collect data from Items 16 through 33, which dealt specifically with the six mentoring functions associated with psychosocial support mentoring. The six psychosocial support mentoring functions examined were role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship, socializing, and parenting. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on each of the six mentoring functions associated with psychosocial support mentoring to determine if any statistically significant differences in perceptions existed between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants in these six mentoring functions.

3. What were the differences in perception of the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

The researcher conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to determine if differences existed between the African American and Caucasian participants' responses to Item 38.

The researcher conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to compare the African American female participants' median scores for Item 38 regarding the importance of the mentor's race to the Caucasian female participants' median scores for Item 38 regarding

the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring. The reason for conducting this test was to determine if African American females and Caucasian females thought differently about the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring.

4. What were the differences in perception of the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

The researcher conducted a Mann-Whitney U test to compare the African American female participants' median scores for Item 39 regarding the importance of the mentor's race to the Caucasian female participants' median scores for Item 39 regarding the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring. The reason for conducting this test was to determine if African American females and Caucasian females thought differently about the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring.

5. What was the correlation between African American and Caucasian female protégés for Career Development scores and Psychosocial Support scores?

The researcher conducted a Pearson correlation test on the scores of the African American female participants and a second Pearson correlation test on the scores of the Caucasian female participants to examine the correlation within each group's scores for career development mentoring functions and psychosocial support mentoring functions. A scatterplot was generated to depict the relationship between the scores of the African American female participants and the scores of the Caucasian female participants.

6. What were the differences in the perceptions of the overall satisfaction with the mentors between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

To answer Research Question 6, which addressed the protégés' satisfaction with their mentor, the researcher calculated the scores for Items 34 through 37 of the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Satisfaction with Mentor Scale of the African American female participants and compared them to the scores for the Caucasian female participants. The total scores for all African American participants and the total scores for all Caucasian participants were compared using a Mann-Whitney U test.

The researcher collected data via a website, www.summerourmentoringstudy.com. The website provided information containing a brief explanation of the study, a definition of mentoring, the purpose of the research, and access for participants to complete the questionnaire. Social and professional networking sites like Facebook and LinkedIn were used to direct potential participants to the website.

The viability of the study was realistic and doable. In addition to the Institutional Review Board approval, the researcher attempted to access members of various organizations by contacting the membership representative at the national and local level. For groups on LinkedIn, the researcher had direct access because she was a member of LinkedIn and a member of targeted groups.

There was minimal risk involved to anyone participating in this survey. Participants who visited the website were provided details on the purpose of the research in advance of taking the survey or filling out the questionnaire. Participants completed a consent form indicating that their identity, and any company, organization, or other such

affiliation information would remain confidential to ensure confidentiality was maintained.

Summary

This chapter introduced the concept of examining race and mentoring with African American and Caucasian female participants. The researcher has provided background information to support the fact that previous research has not adequately addressed this topic. The researcher presented six research questions and the methodologies used to answer the research questions. Chapter II contains a review of relevant literature on mentoring as it relates to race and gender with a focus on specific research examining mentoring relationships between and among African American and Caucasian women.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to examine the perspectives and perceptions held by African American and Caucasian women about mentoring. The research questions focused on how effective the participants perceived their mentor's behavior as their mentors executed the mentoring functions associated with career development and psychosocial support mentoring. The research questions also examined whether the participants considered race a relevant factor in the mentoring process. According to Chandler and Ellis (2011), Ragins, one of the world's preeminent thinkers on diversity and mentoring in the workplace, stated that diversity in research studies had previously been viewed as part of the error variance. Error variance referred to sources of variability in a study that were not the primary focus of the research, as compared to systematic variables, which were the researcher's main focus. Ragins concluded that diversity was not an error variance. In fact, it was her opinion that diversity was a critical identity component that needed to be understood, and researchers needed to examine multiple identities—referring to identities of race and gender—and the interactions among these identities to better understand how race and gender combined to affect the mentoring process (Chandler & Ellis).

Finally, the researcher examined the historical progression of mentoring beginning with (a) the documented mythological origins of mentoring and transitioned to

(b) mentoring in the workplace, (c) the functions and types of mentoring, (d) a brief history and documented mentoring experiences of African American and Caucasian women, and (e) the future of mentoring.

The theoretical and empirical data in the studies consulted consistently identified various functions and types of mentoring, making it important for the purposes of this study that this researcher identify which specific mentoring functions and types of mentoring were reviewed. Another goal of this researcher was to examine the professional experiences of African American and Caucasian women in the workplace, which exposed the fact that many of the taboos, stereotypes, perceptions, and misperceptions that existed between African American and Caucasian women decades ago were still prevalent and influenced how African American and Caucasian women interact in the workplace. Without acknowledging the societal ills that permeated the work environment in years past, it would have been virtually impossible for African American and Caucasian women to form the alliances necessary to exact lasting and mutually beneficial progress for both groups of women in the workplace in the future. These issues were apparent in cross-race dyads, as researchers confirmed that establishing intrapersonal comfort and mutual attractions (Armstrong et al., 2002) were vital components in establishing successful informal mentoring partnerships.

The researcher married biographical storytelling and scholarly research that demonstrated how positive and negative perceptions were formed between African American and Caucasian women about African American and Caucasian women, and that also showed how these perceptions were reflected in their ability to establish effective mentoring relationships. The importance of African American and Caucasian

women's abilities to interact in ways that supported and celebrated each other with the intention of making marked improvements in African American women's ability to bridge the promotion gap between them and their Caucasian co-workers is made relevant in the Catalyst Organization's (2006) study. The Catalyst Organization presented these facts: Caucasian women represented 14.2% of corporate officer roles, while African-American women represented 0.9% of corporate officer roles. The Catalyst Organization also noted that both of the percentages of corporate officer representation for African American and Caucasian women were well below the actual representation of African American and Caucasian women in the labor pool.

Historical Overview

The first reference to mentoring has been traced to the mythical tale in Homer's book *The Odyssey*, which chronicled the adventures of King Odysseus. Homer's story told that when Odysseus left for the siege of the great city of Troy, he appointed a guardian to his household (Anderson & Shannon, 1988). This guardian was described as a "wise and faithful" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 3) advisor entrusted to protect Odysseus' son Telemachus, a guardian charged with being teacher, adviser, friend, and surrogate father to Odysseus' son (Murray, 2001). The guardian was also charged with preparing Telemachus for his succession to the throne (Enomoto et al., 2000). The guardian's name was Mentor (Murray, 2001; Patton & Harper, 2003; Ragins & Kram). In what has been dubbed the continuation to the epic tale *The Odyssey*, 15th century French writer Fenelon's *Les Aventures de Telemaque* chronicled the subsequent travels of Telemachus as he embarked on the adventure to find his father, Odysseus. Prior to and during this trek, Mentor, a man, was embodied by the female goddess of wisdom known as Minerva

or Athena. Athena assumed Mentor's form to assist in guiding, teaching, and protecting young Telemachus. During Telemachus' journey, Athena continued imparting her wisdom as she guided Telemachus and eventually assisted him and his father, Odysseus, on their journey (Roberts & Chernopiskaya, 1999). According to Roberts and Chernopiskaya, Fenelon's rich description of Athena in the form of Mentor led to the word *mentor* being cited in the *The Oxford English Dictionary* as a common noun in 1750. Regarding the specific dynamics and function of this mentorship, Ragins and Kram made a profound observation: This prototype to modern-day mentoring relationships transcended time, gender, and culture. For thousands of years since, what was originally part of a myth has become a very real relationship that provides intrinsic value in our social lives and work experiences.

The Business of Mentoring

The importance of mentoring in the development of an adult male's life was the focus of Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee's (1978) book, in which the authors observed that the mentoring relationship often occurred in the workplace. Mentoring relationships assisted young adults in successfully transitioning into adulthood and helped them develop the skills necessary to maneuver in the work environment through career growth and establishing their own identity (Levinson et al.). That same year, a revealing interview highlighted the relationships of three Jewel Company executives: Lundings, Clements, and Perkins. The interview chronicled how these three men effectively used what might now be recognized as some of the core functions of the mentoring relationship—sponsoring, coaching, challenging, exposing, role-modeling, acceptance, and counseling—as a way of developing leaders and as part of their corporate

succession planning (Collins & Scott, 1978). Roche (1979) reported that although not every executive had a mentor, mentoring relationships were fairly common among the elite in the business world, and nearly two-thirds of the participants in his study had mentors. The executives with mentors earned more money at younger ages, were better educated, and were more likely to have followed a career plan than the executives in the study who were not mentored (Roche). Roche also documented that although the mentored and non-mentored executives all admitted to working long hours, the executives who were mentored were identified as being happier with their career progress and reported more job satisfaction than their non-mentored peers.

Mentoring Types

Researchers have traditionally recognized informal and formal mentoring as the two dominant mentoring types (Armstrong et al., 2002; Noe, 1988; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Historically, the concept of mentoring rested in informal systems where mentoring relationships developed when protégés selected mentors, almost by chance, because of the protégé's need for assistance (Armstrong et al.). The content of these relationships could have been work-related, social, or a combination of the two (Ibarra, 1993). The mutual identification process of informal mentoring occurred when the protégés selected individuals they perceived to be role models, and mentors selected protégés they viewed as younger versions of themselves (Ragins et al., 2000). The informal selection process created an environment where trust, respect, and caring might have emerged (Wright & Werther, 1991), as might occur in the development of other relationships established as a result of common bonds associated with such groupings as sports teams and club members. As human resources professionals

witnessed the benefits of informal mentoring to both the organization and the employees, they attempted to recreate these mentoring dyads through a formal mentoring system (Geiger-DuMond & Boyle, 1995; McKeen & Burke, 1989).

Formal mentoring relationships were generally overseen by the corporation where mentors were assigned to designated employee protégés (Ragins et al., 2000). In many pairings, the mentors and protégés did not meet until after they were partnered through a third-party selection process (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Bragg (1989) estimated that one third of the country's major companies had formal mentoring programs, with the expectation that this number would progressively increase (Murray, 2001). In contrast to much of the positive research on the benefits of mentoring, Noe (1988) concluded that organizations should not expect a protégé to receive the same types of benefits from a formal mentoring relationship as the protégé would receive from an informal, primary mentoring relationship. Kizilos' (1990) surmised that formal mentoring programs might be detrimental to the protégé's development and, at the very least, less effective than informal mentoring due to the presumed more impersonal nature of formal mentoring. The fact that formal mentoring relationships were not initiated through a mutually established arrangement predicated on mentor-protégé similarities and interests made the formal mentoring dyads susceptible to forced couplings, which fueled discontent, anger, suspicion, and resentment (Kizilos).

Mentoring Functions

Kram (1988) identified two key categories containing a total of 11 functions that effective mentoring is designed to affect. The two categories are career development and psychosocial support. Kram defined mentoring functions as aspects of a developmental

relationship that enhanced both individuals, which referred to both the mentor's and the protégé's growth and advancement. Ragins and McFarlin (1990) defined career development roles as roles that enhanced the protégé's advancement within the organization. Career development functions focused on helping the protégé learn how to navigate within the organization and facilitated the protégé's advancement within the organization (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). The key functions ascribed to career development were the following: *sponsoring* promotions or lateral moves, providing career *coaching*, *protecting* the protégé from adverse forces, giving *challenging* assignments, and increasing positive *exposure* (Kram; Ragins, 2011). The psychosocial functions addressed the interpersonal aspects of the mentoring relationship (Ragins & McFarlin), and the key functions associated with psychosocial support were role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship (Kram), socializing, and parenting (Ragins & McFarlin).

Ragins and Cotton (1999) distinguished between the mentoring functions by explaining that career development functions were dependent on the mentor's power and position within the organization, and the relationship's focus was on the organization and the protégé's career; whereas psychosocial support functions were dependent on the quality of the interpersonal relationship between mentor and protégé, and the emotional bond that supported their relationship. This relationship affected the protégé on a more personal level that extended to other areas of the protégé's life, including his or her personal development. Psychosocial support was also described as the mentor providing needed affirmation, encouraging the protégé to pursue his or her dreams, and offering

emotional support; it could include the mentor establishing a collegial friendship with the protégé (Johnson & Ridley, 2008).

Kram and Isabella (1985) purported that peer mentoring was different than career development and psychosocial support functions because peer mentoring offered a degree of mutuality whereby the mentor and protégé took turns fulfilling and benefiting from the functions of career development and psychosocial support. Kram and Isabella's findings, as well as Kram's (1988) findings, contradicted Levinson et al. (1978) previous report that assigned the mentor the role of guide and made a clear delineation that supported a hierarchy in the transfer of mentoring functions. In their qualitative study, Enomoto et al. (2000) also dispelled this hierarchical relationship notion where information was transferred in one direction from mentor to protégé; the researchers clearly presented mentoring relationships that were deemed mutually beneficial and reciprocal in nature. Still, Kram and Isabella's investigation into what they viewed as a peer mentoring dyad proved relevant.

Kram and Isabella highlighted peer relationships that often contained many of the characteristics of the informal mentoring relationship. The researchers attributed the similarity in characteristics to the fact that peer relationships usually developed through commonalities and a mutual respect between peers, just as in the informal mentor/protégé dyad. One African American female participant in Crawford and Smith's (2005) study shared how she compensated for not having a mentor by taking advantage of certain peer relationships. She stated that she associated with peers who understood the politics of her situation, and her peers helped her learn how to avoid problems. This example loosely supported the Kram and Isabella perspective on how peer-to-peer relationships had

relevance, as these peers acted as strategizers and colleagues available to assist the participant in reaching her short-term goals. However, these relationships should not be misidentified as a mentorship because, in the traditional sense of the word, these peer relationships neither enhanced her skills nor increased her value or ability to socialize more effectively within the organization (Crawford & Smith). Two researchers summarized the discussion this way: A positive mentoring relationship was reciprocal in nature and proved to be advantageous to both the mentor and the protégé by enhancing career development for both participants (Wright & Wright, 1987).

Positive Aspects of Mentoring

The mutual benefits of the mentoring relationship were addressed by Enomoto et al. (2000) who identified several benefits to cross-race mentoring relationships. Enomoto et al. saw that mentors and protégés in cross-race mentoring relationships benefited from each other's varied perspectives. For example, African American protégés provided a community perspective to Caucasian mentors that Caucasian mentors would never have been privy to because they did not have access to the African American community. The importance of embracing the cultural variety of the workforce was supported in Ensher et al.'s (2001) study that determined by providing a supportive environment and maximizing the diverse human potential of their employees, organizations could reap positive rewards.

Protégés experienced an increase in career motivation which was comprised of three components: career resilience, career insight, and career identity (Day & Allen, 2004). This increased career motivation showed a connection to Donaldson and Grant-Vallone's (2002) study that examined the effects of high quality mentoring relationships

on non-professional women and minorities and reported increases in both organizational commitment and organizational citizenship. Organizational commitment involved an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Organizational citizenship behaviors included characteristics like helping co-workers with job-related problems, tolerating short-term impositions without complaining, and promoting an overall positive work environment (Bateman & Organ, 1983; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993).

The results of Donaldson and Grant-Vallone's (2002) research implied that extending mentoring programs to diverse and non-professional work environments could be beneficial for the employees and the organization. Clearly, it has been proven that instituting mentoring programs assisted employees across different professional levels and through a wide range of diversity categories, including gender and race. Finally, from a more simplistic perspective, it was shown that regardless of any specific behaviors engaged in by participants in the mentoring relationship, the relationship itself proved sufficient to decrease stress for the protégés. Protégés acknowledged that having a mentor made them feel more secure, which enhanced their ability to cope (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002).

Noe et al.'s findings supported Blackwell's (1983) cross-generational study on African Americans in graduate and professional schools. Blackwell's study signified the importance of mentoring in the perceptions of his study participants. Although only 12.7%, or approximately 20, of the 157 respondents in Blackwell's study had mentors, about 90%, or approximately 141, of the respondents perceived that mentors were of *some* or *greatest* importance to African American and other minority students. To further

emphasize the degree to which the respondents felt mentors were important, Blackwell documented comments made by study participants. One participant indicated that mentors were vitally important because minority students often felt isolated and alienated from the mainstream environment, which was dominated by Caucasians. Another participant noted that mentors were important because they helped African American students cope with the negative stereotypes that whites had about African Americans. A third participant reported that while most African American and other culturally diverse students were intellectually capable of completing advanced degrees, few of them had the political savvy necessary to move fluidly through the system. This student continued by stating that, “All but the most Anglo-centric and conforming will encounter political problems and all but the most hardened will suffer emotionally” (Blackwell, p. 108), and a mentor would help students build their own personal power.

Negative Aspects of Mentorships

Amid the broad scope of research touting the benefits of mentoring relationships, researchers documented negative outcomes associated with bad mentoring relationships (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2004; Scandura, 1998). Burke and McKeen (1997) cautioned that the potential benefits of mentoring for professional women in management positions could have been smaller than proponents of mentoring suggested. Unfortunately, Burke and McKeen’s own research noted that their use of a very broad definition of mentoring may have negatively impacted their results because the results were not applicable to the general population. Additional information from Burke and McKeen’s study revealed that the researchers downplayed or ignored the fact that women with mentors reported more optimism surrounding their future career prospects. This is

relevant because it has implications that are comparable to previously cited research that discussed the positive effects of career motivation (Day & Allen, 2004), the characteristics of an employee experiencing increased organizational commitment (Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Mowday et al., 1979). Negative interactions between mentors and protégés could prove detrimental to the mentor, protégé, and the organization because dysfunction in a mentoring relationship could affect performance appraisals, impede succession planning when the protégé did not receive adequate coaching to prepare him or her for the next position, and could negatively impact the performance of both the mentor and the protégé (Scandura).

Several studies have been conducted that examined the relationships between men and women in cross-gender mentoring (Cox & Nkomo, 1991; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). These relationships posed their own unique challenges to the mentoring relationship that included issues like perceived sexual attraction between male mentors and female protégés (Noe, 1988; Ragins & McFarlin), and the belief by some that women lacked managerial skills and were not suited for certain positions (Noe). Noe suggested that it was these very challenges that encouraged women to work harder to make cross-gender mentoring relationships more successful. In a more recent study, Blake-Beard (2001) further dissected the cross-gender mentoring relationship by expounding on the effects of surface-level and deep-level diversity. Surface-level diversity is generally reflected in physical features like age, ethnicity/race, and gender. Deep-level diversity could only be identified through extended and individual interaction. Blake-Beard contended that women in cross-gender mentoring relationships are immediately confronted with the challenges of surface-level diversity and proposed that

the benefits of finding similarities between the members of cross-gender partnerships was critical for effective formal mentoring relationships to develop. This assertion provided contextual relevance for this researcher's investigation regarding the perceptions of African American and Caucasian women regarding mentoring. Theoretically, Blake-Beard's findings established that identifying commonalities, which proved to be successful in cross-gender mentorships overcoming surface-level diversities, should be equally as effective in aiding members of same-gender, cross-race dyads to overcome surface-level diversities and establish effective mentoring alliances and support systems.

McKinsey and Company (2012) reported findings which indicated that while some company leaders advocated on behalf of mentoring programs that supported women's development, other corporate leaders viewed such programs as unnecessary and potentially counterproductive. Some women interviewed by McKinsey and Company expressed fear about being associated with women-specific programs because these programs were viewed as "positive-discrimination measures that undermined meritocracy" (p. 11).

There were several variations on the definition of mentoring in the literature. Mentoring was described as a dyadic relationship where an older individual coached, guided, and helped a protégé (Hunt & Michael, 1983). Kram (1983) described mentoring as a relationship where both individuals' natures were changed over time. Mentoring was seen as a relationship where the ultimate outcome resulted in the development of a mature relationship of equals (Enomoto et al., 2000), and it introduced the protégé to important contacts and assisted the protégé in navigating professionally (McGlowan-Fellows & Thomas, 2005). Current research suggests that mentoring is a process of

establishing multiple relationships with mentors that vary in terms of functions fulfilled; relationship strength, as in weak ties and strong ties; and relationship length (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Whiting & de Janasz, 2004).

In reference to Homer's *The Odyssey*, Anderson and Shannon (1988) concluded that mentoring should be an intentional process, a nurturing process, an insightful process, and a supportive and protective process. Anderson and Shannon based this on the attributes assigned to Athena as she mentored Telemachus. Athena provided a mentoring model, where the mentor was available as a role model and was cognizant of the fact that her modeling could influence the perspective, style, and feeling of empowerment for the protégé (Anderson & Shannon).

For the purposes of this study, the researcher applied the following definition: "A mentor is anyone who provides guidance, support, knowledge, and opportunities for whatever period the mentor and protégé deem this help to be necessary" (Burlew, 1991, p. 241) for the purposes of enhancing and improving the protégé's ability to operate in his or her personal life and career. A mentor's focus could be on any combination of functions related to career development mentoring, psychosocial support mentoring, or both.

Gender and Race

Mentoring worked equally well for women and men, in both high-level and low-level positions, in terms of career outcomes (Fagenson, 1989). However, Ragins and McFarlin (1990) presented findings that proved that participants in same-gender mentoring relationships engaged in more after-work social activities than participants in cross-gender relationships. This information supported Ragins and McFarlin's finding

that protégés in same-gender mentoring relationships were more likely than protégés in cross-gender relationships to report that their mentors served a role modeling function. Role modeling was important because by observing female mentors, protégés were directly or indirectly exposed to how their mentors coped with family and gender-related barriers to advancement (Nelson & Quick, 1985). In cross-gender relationships, this role modeling function was less likely to be considered relevant to a female protégé, especially if the male mentor had the benefits of a wife who was home taking care of the children (Wright & Wright, 1987). Ragins and McFarlin studied the perceptions of psychosocial mentoring related to cross-gender mentoring and determined that sexual concerns, warranted or not, caused participants in cross-gender relationships to restrict the friendship role, which involved trust, support, and intimacy. The importance of role modeling in the mentoring dyad was supported in Blackwell's (1983) study by an African American student participant who perceived mentoring to be of extreme importance and noted that having a same-race mentor made a difference. The student reasoned that having an African American mentor was the best thing that could happen to an African American student because it was an ever-present reminder to the student that if his or her mentor could do it, so could the student (Blackwell).

Another influential aspect of mentoring relationships involved interpersonal comfort, which was reported to have mediated the relationship between gender similarity and mentoring in Allen, Day, and Lentz's (2005) study. Allen et al. reported that protégés in same-gender mentoring dyads experienced greater interpersonal comfort than protégés in cross-gender mentorship dyads, and this was consistent for both informal and formal mentoring types.

Regarding career development and psychosocial support for women, Tharenou (2005) determined that for women protégés with women mentors, there were consistently positive links to career development and consistently negative links to psychosocial support in connection with women's career advancement. The positive correlation between career development and career advancement was attributed to the role model characteristics associated with the same-gender mentoring dyad; whereas it was suggested that the negative correlation between psychosocial support and career advancement could have been because it translated as inappropriate role modeling to the women protégés (Tharenou). Tharenou noted that one limitation to the study was in the emphasis communicated to respondents that a mentor was someone who played a committed role in their careers. Tharenou admitted that this specific connection to the protégé's career may have caused the psychosocial aspects of mentoring to have been minimalized, hence negatively affecting the contribution of psychosocial support to the study. In fact, the protégés' satisfaction regarding psychosocial support was not assessed.

In the fifth research project from their Women Matter series, McKinsey and Company (2012) provided evidence that the best way to support gender diversity within corporate ecosystems was when these three components were present:

- A management team and CEO that were committed to being champions of gender diversity by setting targets for the number of senior women in the organization;
- Instituting a women's development program designed to equip women with the skills and access to networks necessary to traverse the corporate ladder and master corporate codes; and

- Enablers, which were designed to ease women’s progress within the organization. This included identifying inequalities, tracking improvements, reviewing current human resource processes and policies, and providing supportive systems like assistance with childcare.

In their study of 235 European organizations, McKinsey and Company noted that more than 90%, or 212, of the companies studied had gender diversity programs in place. Of that 90%, McKinsey and Company reported that approximately 40%, or 85, of the companies had what they referred to as “particularly strong, well-balanced ecosystems” (p. 9) because approximately 40%, or 85, companies had incorporated at least half of the measures identified in the listed measures into their corporate ecosystem to support gender diversity.

The Catalyst Organization (2006b) reported that in 2005 women occupied 14.7%, or 827, of the board seats in Fortune 500 companies. Women of color occupied 3.4%, or 121 out of 3521, board seats from the 348 fortune 500 companies where race and ethnicity data was provided. The U. S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2007) reported the 2006 annual percentages of women in “management, professional, and related occupations” (p. 35). The report revealed that women were represented as follows: Caucasians 38.9%, or 20,986 of 53,950; African Americans 31.1%, or 2,612 of 8,410; Asians 45.7%, or 1,371 of 3,011; and Latinas 22.1%, or 1,707 of 7,725. These statistics were consistent with a report that revealed women of color felt “marginalized or excluded” (p. 5), and because of their lack of networking and social capital, these woman found advancement within their organizations particularly challenging (Ahmad, 2014).

In the studies reviewed, race continued to be one of the biggest dividing factors in social networks (McPherson et al., 2001), and social networks included the workplace. Race was considered to be one of the most obvious features of similarity, and the desire to be with those who are similar was deemed to be universal (Brutus & Livers, 2000). Prior to 1990, researchers conducting studies on mentoring focused exclusively on Caucasian populations (Bell, 1990; Thomas, 1990), and where the term *minorities* was used to describe the racial demographics of study populations, little attention was given to how race influenced the dynamics of these developmental relationships (Thomas).

There is empirical evidence that individuals are more likely to associate with other individuals who share similarities based on two types of homophily: status and value. Status homophily includes socio-demographic dimensions ascribed by society like race, ethnicity, sex, or age, and acquired characteristics like religion, education, occupation, or behaviors. Value homophily is characterized by a wider array of internal states that influence our orientation toward future behavior (McPherson et al., 2001). The findings of McPherson et al. supported a previous study conducted by Kalbfleisch and Davies (1991) in which African American mentors and protégés each indicated a preference to work in same-race mentoring relationships over working in cross-race mentoring relationships with Caucasian participants. African-Americans perceived same-race mentoring relationships as providing more psychosocial support than cross-race mentoring relationships (Crawford & Smith, 2005; Thomas, 1990). Because of the socio-demographic aspect of status homophily, race was the reason that much of the stratification between African American and Caucasian women existed. At the same time, the potential for African American and Caucasian women to find commonalities

that strengthened their relationships and created bonds of trust might have been established via the acquired characteristics of status-based homophily, which included education, religion, occupation, and behavior, as well as through value homophily. Overall, this universal desire toward homophily presented a problem for minorities who preferred same-race mentoring relationships because there were simply fewer minority mentors available within organizations (Smith, Smith, & Markham, 2000).

Based on a theoretical framework which supported the belief that the formation and efficacy of mentoring relationships was influenced by sociocultural identifying factors like race and gender, Dreher and Cox (1996) investigated whether Caucasian men had an advantage over women of all races and men of other races because of Caucasian men's ability to identify with the Caucasian men in leadership positions within the corporate environment. Dreher and Cox provided data that showed that despite the fact that having Caucasian male mentors produced increased compensation benefits for the protégés, both African American women and Caucasian women were not as likely as men to form mentoring relationships with Caucasian men. Dreher and Cox went on to note that access to same-race and same-gender mentors could be important for effective measures of career success. It should also be noted that Dreher and Cox's study did not examine the psychosocial function of mentoring.

Blake-Beard (1999) conducted one of the first studies that investigated the differential mentoring experiences between women of different races. Blake-Beard set out to determine the effects race had on mentoring and career success in comparisons of African-American and Caucasian women. A limitation of Blake-Beard's study was the potential inability to generalize the study results because all study respondents were

MBA graduates, which excluded representation of professional women who had not earned an advanced degree. Another limitation cited by Blake-Beard regarding the research was the exclusion of peer relationships from the definition of mentoring. Because Blake-Beard recognized that some peer relationships provided psychosocial support, Blake-Beard recommended that future researchers include relationships from a variety of networks in their studies.

Taking Blake-Beard's (1999) limitations into account, this researcher broadened the scope of the educational backgrounds of the study participants, with the goal of drawing participants from a larger population size. This researcher also investigated the mentoring functions of career development and psychosocial support while allowing for the possibility that a peer could also provide mentoring, which is in line with this researcher's definition of mentoring.

Hu, Thomas, and Lance (2008) examined race similarity (RS) as an influence on intentions to initiate informal mentorships by studying the intentions of both mentor and protégé before the mentoring relationship began. By studying the influence of RS prior to the mentorship relationship starting, Hu et al. were able to remove variables that resulted from previously developed positive or negative experiences between the mentors and protégés. Hu et al. reported that study participants' preference for initiating same-race mentoring over initiating cross-race mentoring was only statistically significant at the high proactive level, $t(125) = 4.50, p < .017$; not at the moderate, $t(125) = 1.17, p = .25$; or low proactive levels, $t(125) = .39, p = .70$. Hu et al. suggested that protégés were more sensitive to the effects of RS than were mentors, and they determined that this finding had two implications for diversified mentoring. The first implication was that protégés

might have perceived a higher susceptibility to access barriers than did mentors, while mentors did not prefer non-diversified mentoring relationships. A second finding of Hu et al.'s study was that Caucasian protégés preferred Caucasian mentors over African-American mentors. Caucasian mentors did not demonstrate a similar preference for same-race protégés. A limitation to Hu et al.'s study was the fact that all study participants were students with limited interaction that could be related to corporate scenarios. As a result, the participants' decisions regarding RS in mentoring dyads is absent the power issues that might accompany more mature and professional seasoned study participants (Ragins, 1997).

There were challenges involved in pursuing intentional cross-race mentoring dyads. Contending with the low engagement associated with cross-race mentoring relationships posed potential detriment to the individuals in the mentoring relationship and their employing organization. Additionally, although same-race dyads had higher levels of engagement and intent to remain with the organization was higher than that of cross-race mentoring dyads, it was not realistic, ethically sound, and probably not legally sound for organizations to seriously consider establishing purely same-race mentoring dyads in an attempt to create more socially comfortable mentoring experiences (Jones & Harter, 2005).

African American and Caucasian Women

For some time, African American women have had to contend with the myth that their dual status of gender and race afforded them advantages in the workplace (Sanchez-Hucles, 1997; Thomas, 1989). Consider an interview with an African American male manager identified as Harris. In expressing his perception regarding African American

women's positioning in the workplace, Harris believed that African American women chose to align themselves with Caucasian men *against* African American men in order to benefit from their dual status of being female and African American. Harris proposed that Caucasian men supported and promoted African American women because as African American women, they could be counted twice on the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) reports. Harris continued and suggested that if the African American woman in question was not involved in a relationship with an African American man, it was likely she would be accused of sleeping with one of the Caucasian men to further solidify her position (Davis & Watson, 1982) in the department or within the organization.

In spite of the negative misperceptions surrounding African American women, the reality was they were confronted with the double jeopardy of gender and racial bias as a result of being both female and African American (Enomoto et al., 2000). African American women continued to be challenged by gendered racism (Thomas et al., 2008). African American women also still navigated other unique experiences specific to their bicultural identity in order to operate effectively in their personal and professional lives (Bell, 1990). Bell defined this bicultural phenomenon as an experience specific to African American women who were faced with traversing between two worlds: one being the corporate environment dominated by Caucasians, and the other being the African American community they lived in. Combs (2003) saw this bicultural phenomenon as involving gender, with African American women exposed to (a) the combined views of men as those views related to gender, and (b) to racial bias in the workplace. The ascribed misconceptions associated with gender and race sometimes created a degree of confusion for African American women. African American women often could not determine

whether their lack of opportunity was due to misconceptions about their ability that were attributed to their race or gender, or due to entrenched discrimination practices (Evans & Cokley, 2008). Ibarra (1993) focused on the commonalities of women and minorities, and the researcher agreed with Bell that African American women had a bicultural existence in that they navigated between two distinctly different groups. However, Ibarra saw these two groups as circles that in many cases overlapped with common members. Because of this overlap, the women and minorities in Ibarra's findings were able to glean developmental support from members of both groups.

Enomoto et al. (2000) documented that even in a work environment where African American women were the majority and Caucasian men were no longer in leadership positions, African American women were still viewed as minorities. Furthermore, even in leadership positions, they were relegated to working in minority settings. Enomoto et al. referenced a school district where African American women were in key leadership positions, but only in work environments and programs that were all or predominantly minority. Another example of how African American women were challenged and frustrated in the workplace was identified as mistaken identity; this is when the subtleties of racism cause someone to misidentify the minority as the subordinate employee. Examples given included when an African American school superintendent was thought to be the secretary, and when the Caucasian secretary was assumed to be the principal while it was thought that the African American female principal standing with her was the secretary (Enomoto et al.).

African American women reportedly recognized that there were benefits to having a mentor (Bova, 2000; Crawford & Smith, 2005) and voiced one of their concerns

when confronted with working with Caucasian mentors as having to discern if the Caucasian mentor's motivation was grounded in a desire to be supportive or a propensity to be patronizing. This concept of maintaining support without turning into a caregiver was identified as vital in establishing a mature mentoring relationship (Enomoto et al., 2000) based on mutual respect between mentor and protégé. As has been demonstrated through the sociological characteristics of homophily (McPherson et al., 2001), African American women, like other groups desiring homogenous mentoring dyads, preferred same-race, same-gendered mentors. For African American women, the assumption was that another African American woman would understand the complex intersection of race and gender (Patton & Harper, 2003). Participants in Patton and Harper's study found this ability to understand the complexities of race and gender to be rare or unavailable in mentoring relationships where the mentor was male or from another racial or ethnic background.

Several studies indicated cross-race mentoring dyads provided less psychosocial support than same-race mentorships (Bova, 2000; Jones & Harter, 2005; Patton & Harper, 2003; Ragins, 1997). Bova recorded that several of the African American women participants in her study received psychosocial support from their churches, with one stating that her church encouraged her throughout her doctoral program and continued to be there for support as she transitioned into her administrative position at a university. It was not determined whether these relationships would qualify as informal or formal mentoring relationships. What is important is the degree to which these study participants identified the relevance of having this psychosocial support in their lives as they transitioned into their professional careers. Six other women in Bova's study reported

receiving psychosocial support from their sorority members at Delta Sigma Theta—an African American sorority founded in 1913 at Howard University—through a program designed to promote career development.

At the root of the lack of psychosocial support African American women reported in cross-race mentorships with Caucasian women were issues of trust, prevailing stereotypes, and cultural ignorance (Bell, 1990; Enomoto et al., 2000; Patton, 2009; Thomas, 1989). One study participant indicated that she did not share too much beyond what was going on academically and professionally with *them*, meaning Caucasians, to avoid letting them in all the way. One graduate student indicated that although she was comfortable crying on the phone with her African American mentor, she would have never allowed herself to display such emotion with someone else who was not like her, as in a person of a different race, for fear that her crying would be perceived as a sign of weakness (Patton & Harper, 2003). Another African American woman explained that a mentor was someone you could confide in personally and talk with one-on-one about things that were on your mind. For her, mentorship required trustworthiness (Patton). In fact, all eight participants in Patton's study mentioned the issue of trust, and they admitted that it was difficult for them to establish a sense of trust in their mentoring relationships with Caucasian mentors.

Amid the researchers cited who have documented the challenges African American women experience because of persisting stereotypes and misperceptions when confronted with cross-race mentoring is an account from an airline industry employee. She shared her perception of the perspective of Caucasian leadership who, according to her account, projected the attitude that African Americans were not serious about wanting

to advance in their careers, and that African Americans should be satisfied that they are working in a large corporation that provides them with good benefits (Bova, 2000). Another participant in Bova's study complimented her mentor on having done a great job of protecting her from the racism that existed within the organization. This African American woman became acutely aware of how she had been shielded from racist sentiments after her supervisor and mentor left the organization. She was called in by her new Caucasian male supervisor who promptly told her to look for another job because he could not figure out how she got her position or why she was even at the company. This more direct form of racism contradicted the reports from most of the African American women interviewed in Bova's study; the interviewees used the word *subtle* to describe the type of racism they experienced. One woman gave an example of the subtle racism she experienced by pointing out that her colleagues excluded her from informational networking events by simply never inviting her.

Caucasian women had different experiences than African-American women when it came to mentoring relationships and their ability to promote up the corporate ladder. Davis and Watson (1982) asserted that Caucasian women benefited from receiving minority status because of their lack of power, not their few numbers; the discrimination resulting from their powerlessness was cause for them to be protected. In addition, Caucasian women were fortunate not to have to address issues of racism (Sanchez-Hucles, 1997) that women of color had to endure under that same minority status. Caucasian women also benefited from their social relationships with Caucasian men as mothers, daughters, sisters, and wives (Davis & Watson), which allowed them to leverage their racial identification with Caucasian men (Combs, 2003). According to Davis and

Watson, this familiarity afforded them access to mainstream corporate America much sooner than African-American women.

Mentoring Constellations

Mentoring constellations, also known as mentoring networks, should not be confused or used interchangeably with networking. Networking is the process of building and maintaining solid professional relationships with the purpose of acquiring social capital (Misner et al., 2009). While mentors assisted protégés with networking opportunities by making their contacts available to their protégés and at the same time taught protégés networking skills, mentoring networks or mentoring constellations were groups of individuals the protégé accessed who formally or informally provided career development or psychosocial support (van Emmerik, 2004).

Several researchers supported the theory that protégés benefited from having more than one mentor (Crawford & Smith, 2005; Enomoto et al., 2000; Ragins, 1997; Roche, 1979). Roche reported that although women made up less than 1% of the total number of executives at the time, all of the women in his study had mentors, and each woman averaged three mentors to the male protégé's average of two mentors. Enomoto et al.'s study supported the benefits of protégés securing more than one mentor. The protégé participants in Enomoto et al.'s study suggested that one mentor should be a person with whom they shared a similarity regarding race, gender, or both; and the second mentor should be someone whose experience was focused in the area the protégé was interested in moving toward. The concept of mentoring constellations was reviewed as researchers examined relationships with peers and supervisors (de Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Ensher et al., 2001; Kram, 1988; Thomas & Higgins, 1996) and differentiated between intra-firm

and extra-firm developmental relationships (Thomas & Higgins). Intra-firm relationships were relationships developed within the organization for the purpose of career support, and extra-firm relationships were defined as relationships developed outside of the organization, used most often by women and minorities, to receive psychosocial support not available to them in the workplace (Thomas & Higgins). In their comprehensive study, Seibert, Kraimer, and Liden (2001) provided empirical data that proved protégés with more than one mentor reaped greater career benefits than protégés who had only one mentor. Ragins concluded that it might benefit minority protégés to have more than one mentor so that they could receive career development functions from diversified relationships and role modeling from homogeneous mentoring relationships. Smith, Smith, and Markham's (2000) study challenged Ragins' conclusions with findings that showed no statistically significant differences in the levels of career development or psychosocial support between cross-race and same-race mentoring dyads. It should be noted that Smith et al.'s study targeted two mentoring functions: career development and psychosocial support; the study omitted role modeling from the psychosocial support function characteristics. This omission could have been a relevant factor in their contradictory results because role modeling has proven to be a relevant component of the psychosocial function, particularly for women (Nelson & Quick, 1985, Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Wright & Wright, 1987).

Mentoring Moving Forward

A diversified workforce that fully utilizes the intelligence and talent of the most educated and gifted individuals is vital to the success of organizations today. Some organizations have already begun making intentional strides at tapping into the available

resources and what Wilson (2013) referred to as human equity. Wilson coined the phrase and defined it as “the unique and intangible assets each employee brings to the workplace” (p. 298). Wilson described Ontario Public Service’s (OPS) Diversity Mentoring Partnership Program (DPMM), which capitalizes on the unique and diverse assets of its workforce through a mentorship program. This program paired 29 OPS executives with 85 OPS employees who represented five groups identified as being underrepresented in senior management. The program was based on a reciprocal mentorship model where there were no clearly defined mentor or mentee roles and in which learning was “deliberately two-way” (p. 77). Between 2008 and 2012, the program fostered more than 1500 diversity partnerships. More profound was the fact that a vast majority of participants surveyed in 2011-2012 indicated that participating in the DMPP affected how they thought, behaved, and made decisions; and they posited that the mentoring program would affect the organizational culture at OPS.

Proctor & Gamble (P&G) established a Global Diversity and Human Resources Center to leverage the uniqueness of each member of its diverse workforce and the contribution each member made to helping the organization live out its values and goals, and support the company’s vision. P&G believes there is power in diversity and that accessing this power gives the company a competitive advantage because it promotes a culture of inclusion where employees feel valued, included, and are able to perform at their peak. P&G views mentoring as everyone’s job and boasts that 60% of its employees have someone in the trusted position of mentor, advisor, or counselor. P&G’s mentoring dyads have been referred to as robust because they span several areas including cross-race, cross-generational, cross-discipline, across time zones, and reverse mentoring.

Reverse mentoring is a unique mentoring program designed to build core multicultural strengths into the organization's DNA, according to its annual report on diversity and inclusion (Proctor & Gamble, 2011/2012). Through this mentoring program, multicultural ambassadors are dispatched throughout P&G to work with executives and senior leaders, providing guidance and supporting the organization's goal to enable an inclusive environment that values diversity.

In the future, protégés may need to hold themselves accountable for initiating mentoring dyads, as it may be the protégés' responsibility to know which mentoring functions they are in need of receiving. As Thomas and Higgins (1996) acknowledged, the focus on finding a match between what was best for the firm and what was best for the protégé was the protégé's responsibility because the protégé was the person solely in charge of his or her career. Hence, a protégé should be prepared to be actively involved in identifying the mentor most likely to be able to supply the mentoring functions the protégé needs. Furthermore, because a protégé's personality characteristics were relevant determinants to the amount of mentoring the protégé received when the protégé attempted to initiate the mentoring relationship (Turban & Dougherty, 1994), misperceptions between African American and Caucasian women could prove detrimental to establishing effective mentoring dyads. Future mentoring programs will need to focus on improving the interpersonal aspects of mentoring dyad pairings to decrease the aforementioned concerns of trust (Bell, 1990; Enomoto et al., 2000; Patton, 2009; Thomas, 1989), similarity (Ensher & Murphy, 1997), and interpersonal comfort (Allen et al., 2005).

It is worth noting that based on the mythological account from Homer's *The Odyssey*, mentoring did not begin as a developmental relationship focused solely on professional pursuits. Athena and Mentor combined to mentor Telemachus in all aspects of his personal and professional development. Invariably, the mentoring Telemachus received was designed to develop him into the best person he could be, one who operated effectively in all areas of his life. The argument could be made that the future of mentoring has come full circle in that it will no longer relegate mentoring to only those measurable outcomes associated with career advancement.

Since mentoring relationships operated along a continuum of quality that ranged from dysfunctional or poorly coupled relationships (Kizilos, 1990) to successful relational mentoring (Chandler & Ellis, 2011), investigating the nuances of what made highly effective mentoring dyads so successful is imperative. Even more provocative is the concept that what made the mentorships highly successful were factors not readily measurable because they did not fall within the guidelines of the traditionally measured outcomes associated with what Ragins referred to in her interview (Chandler & Ellis) as average relationships. The variables Ragins identified as being present in extraordinary mentoring relationships included inspiration, presenting or discovering the mentor's and protégé's true and best selves, personal learning, growth, and creativity. This researcher contends that many of these characteristics would be associated with the psychosocial support aspects of mentoring, which have been discounted as having insignificant or negative benefits to protégés' career success (Tharenou, 2005) as a result of researchers' focus on the measurement of traditional outcomes such as compensation and promotions. There must be a way to incorporate the effects of gender and race that this researcher

theorizes exist in cross-gender and cross-race mentoring dyads. If an African American woman protégé is dealing with issues at work that she identifies as racist, and her mentor is able to affirm her identity, support her development, and increase her survival skills, the current outcomes of compensation, promotion, and job satisfaction may not be affected; resulting in the positive benefits of this psychosocial support mentoring relationship being dismissed (Chandler & Ellis). Researchers must design mentor assessment and measurement programs that take all mentoring functions into account. This researcher's study sets out to be part of the consortium of new researchers devoted to developing our ability to design mentoring programs and training that promote the high quality mentoring dyads Belle Ragins spoke about (Chandler & Ellis).

Conclusions

This review of literature examined mentoring from an historical perspective through to its almost exclusive use in developing individuals professionally. The influence of race and gender was a major component of the literature as it relates to how African American women and Caucasian women have navigated professionally using the constructs of career development and psychosocial support mentoring as leverage to improve themselves professionally. The realities of racism and gender bias were explored to expose the role that overt and subtle discrimination have played in the professional landscapes of African American and Caucasian women. More importantly, the examination of perspectives using qualitative data was interjected into this review to establish a personalized context of how the misperceptions, cultural ignorance, racial taboos, and other aspects of racism have affected African American women and Caucasian women in their quests for abundant living, both professionally and personally.

Summary

In summary, this review revealed that African American and Caucasian women's perspectives about each other as they related to race, and their perceptions of themselves as women, influenced how they related to each other and how they viewed themselves in the workplace and society in general. There is room for growth and an opportunity for these two groups of women to learn how to become sources of mutual inspiration and support for one another (Chandler & Ellis, 2011).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Through the literature review, the researcher examined various theories and perspectives predicated on the fact that racial and gender diversity in research studies were previously viewed as part of the error variance and had not been the primary focus in research studies. The literature review also contained an historical overview of mentoring, which included how mentoring became synonymous with professional success. One of the results of the absence of racial and gender diversity in research studies was the omission of African American women's perspectives concerning what they perceived necessary to be successful professionally.

In Chapter III, the researcher will detail how the data were collected that addressed the six research questions relating to African American and Caucasian women's perspectives about mentoring and the statistical methods used to analyze the data. The researcher will also review and detail the design of the data collection tools and the procedures used to employ the tools, as well as discuss the population demographics, how the data collection was conducted, and the analytic methods used to examine the research. Finally, the researcher will introduce the limitations presented during the study.

Research Design

The purpose of the study was to explore the perceptions of African American and Caucasian female protégés regarding mentoring behaviors and the importance of the

mentor's race in order to develop mentoring programs that will provide strategies for African American females to overcome pressures and barriers, while engaging both groups of women in the process. To accomplish the purpose of this study, the research design implemented Mann-Whitney U tests and the Pearson correlation test to analyze the data collected in response to the following research questions:

1. What were the differences in perceptions of career development mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
2. What were the differences in perceptions of psychosocial support mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
3. What were the differences in perceptions about the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
4. What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
5. What was the correlation between African American and Caucasian female protégés for career development scores and psychosocial support scores?
6. What were the differences between the perceptions of the overall satisfaction with the mentors between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

In order to answer these questions, the researcher established a multi-stepped process. The first step was to identify a data collection instrument for participants to complete that would address the research questions. The two instruments used were the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument and the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction

with Mentor Scale. The Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument was a 33-item, 7-point Likert scale questionnaire, and the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale was a 4-item, 7-point Likert scale questionnaire (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). The Likert scale is an ordinal scale of measurement, which Salkind (2012) indicated was developed to analyze opinions or feelings that had a clear positive or negative value. A Likert scale describes ordinal data as percentages or frequencies. The data have a rank order where the intervals between values cannot be presumed equal (Jamieson, 2004). The researcher amended the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument and the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale instruments to 6-point Likert scales to eliminate the Neutral option. The researcher created two more questions, Items 38 and 39, using the same 6-point Likert scale to address Research Questions 3 and 4. The 6-point Likert scales were coded and ranged from a value of six (6) for Strongly Agree to a value of one (1) for Strongly Disagree. After identifying and amending the data collection instruments, the researcher used Formsite, an online form building and data collection site, to create a questionnaire participants could access and complete via the Internet. The Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument and the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale can be reviewed in Appendix A.

Population

The sample consisted of 48 participants who completed the questionnaire, that included 54% African American (AA) females ($n = 26$) and 46% Caucasian (C) females ($n = 22$). There were no other ethnic groups represented in this study. The highest educational level attained by the participants in the study showed that 12.5%, one (AA) and five (C), were high school graduates; 10.4%, two (AA) and three (C), had associate's

degrees; approximately 33%, eight (AA) and eight (C), earned bachelor's degrees; approximately 31%, nine (AA) and six (C), had master's degrees; approximately 6%, three (AA), earned doctorate degrees; and approximately 6%, three (AA), had professional certifications. Table 1 illustrates the educational background of the participants. The age range of the sample included one (AA) who was under the age of 24; one (C) between the ages of 25-35; 19%, six (AA) and 3 (C), between the ages of 36-45; nearly 46%, 11 (AA) and 11 (C), between the ages of 46-55; nearly 23%, six (AA) and five (C), between the ages of 56-65; and approximately 8%, two (AA) and two (C), 66 years of age or older. Table 2 illustrates the age range of the participants. Over 85% of the participants, 22 (AA) and 19 (C), had more than five years work experience, while approximately 14.5%, 4 (AA) and 3 (C), had less than five years of work experience. Table 3 illustrates the work experience of the participants.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Information: Highest Educational Level Attained

	African American (<i>n</i> = 26)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 22)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
High School	1	5
Associates	2	3
Bachelor	8	8
Masters	9	6
Doctoral	3	0
Post-Doctoral	3	0

Table 2

Participant Demographic Information: Age Range of Participants

	African American (<i>n</i> = 26)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 22)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
24 years and under	1	0
25 – 35	0	1
36 – 45	6	3
46 – 55	11	11
56 – 65	6	5
66 and older	2	2

Table 3

Participant Demographic Information: Work Experience of Participants

	African American (<i>n</i> = 26)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 22)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Less than 5 years	4	3
5 years or more	22	19

Demographic information was provided by the protégés on their perspective mentors. The demographic information for the mentors showed that approximately 31%, or 15 mentors, were African American, and approximately 69%, or 33 mentors, were Caucasian. Table 4 illustrates the education of the mentors by race. Table 5 illustrates the age range of the mentors by race. Participants reported having nine male mentors, three

African American and six Caucasian men; and 39 female mentors, 12 African American and 27 Caucasian women. Table 6 illustrates the gender demographics of the mentors by race.

Table 4

Mentor Demographic Information: Highest Educational Level Attained

	African American (<i>n</i> = 15)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 33)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
High School	0	2
Associates	1	3
Bachelor	5	13
Masters	4	7
Doctoral	3	4
Post-Doctoral	1	2
Professional Certification	1	2

Table 5

Mentor Demographic Information: Age Range of Mentors

	African American (<i>n</i> = 15)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 33)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
25 - 30	2	1
31 - 40	2	2
41 - 50	3	12
51 - 60	7	12
61 - 70	1	4
71 and older	0	2

Table 6

Mentor Demographic Information: Gender of Mentor

	African American (<i>n</i> = 15)	Caucasian (<i>n</i> = 33)
	<i>n</i>	<i>n</i>
Male	3	6
Female	12	27

Data Collection

The data collected for this study consisted of information provided by participants who indicated that they had been a protégé in a mentoring relationship. The data were collected using the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument. The 39 items consisted of 15 questions related to career development mentoring, which included three

questions associated with each of the following five mentoring functions: sponsoring promotions or lateral moves, providing career coaching, protecting the protégé from adverse forces, giving challenging assignments, and increasing positive exposure (Kram, 1983; Ragins, 2011). These 15 questions related to career development mentoring were used to answer Research Question 1. The Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument also included 18 questions related to psychosocial support mentoring, which equated to three questions associated with each of the following six mentoring functions: role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship (Kram), socializing, and parenting (Ragins & McFarlin). These 18 questions related to psychosocial support mentoring were used to answer Research Question 2. A second instrument, the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale, consisted of four additional questions. The four questions in the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale were used to answer Research Question 6. The researcher added two items to the questionnaire: Item 38, which addressed the importance of the mentor's race in career development, and Item 39, which addressed the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring. These questions were designed to answer Research Questions 3 and 4 respectively. The researcher amended the 7-point Likert scale to a 6-point Likert scale, so that the final instrument used for data collection was a 39-item, 6-point Likert Scale instrument. The Likert scale consisted of the following six options: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

After all the data were collected, the researcher assigned numeric values to each option on the Likert scale and entered the data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The Likert scale options were labeled as follows: Strongly

Disagree received a value of 1, Disagree received a value of 2, Slightly Disagree received a value of 3, Slightly Agree received a value of 4, Agree received a value of 5, and Strongly Agree received a value of 6. Items 35 and 36 of the Ragin and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument were identified by the instrument creators as reverse-scored items. In this case it meant that the questions were posed in the negative. Instead of asking the participant if the mentor did something well, these two questions asked if the mentor did something poorly. In order for these two items to be scored appropriately with the other questionnaire items, the values were reversed; hence, these two items were labeled as follows: Slightly Disagree received a value of 6, Disagree received a value of 5, Slightly Disagree received a value of 4, Slightly Agree received a value of 3, Agree received a value of 2, and Strongly Agree received a value of 1.

The data were collected over a period of six months. The questionnaire, consent form, and optional entry form for a \$50.00 gift card drawing were all accessible for review and completion via the Internet; therefore, there was limited interaction between the researcher and participants who completed the questionnaire. This process provided an effective way for participants to complete the questionnaire and also aided in participants' ability to refer other prospective participants to the study by way of sharing the link to the website address that hosted the questionnaire.

Analytical Methods

Once all of the data were collected and assigned numeric values, they were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The African American and Caucasian participants' scores from the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Tool Items 1 through 15 were used to answer Research Question 1. The

researcher planned a priori to analyze the data on each of the five career development mentoring functions separately. The five career development mentoring functions examined were sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposure. The data were analyzed to determine if any statistically significant differences in perceptions existed between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants in these five mentoring functions. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on each of the five mentoring functions associated with career development mentoring. The Mann-Whitney U test was used because each of the five career development mentoring functions was represented by three ordinal scale questions from the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument. This Likert scale instrument produced ordinal scale data. With only three questions being examined for each career development mentoring function, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the data because it is designed to examine the median scores and is most effective in measuring data that may not be normally distributed.

The African American and Caucasian participants' scores from the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Tool Items 16 through 33 were used to answer Research Question 2. The researcher planned a priori to analyze the data on each of the six psychosocial support mentoring functions. The six psychosocial support mentoring functions examined were role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship, socializing, and parenting. The data were analyzed to determine if any statistically significant differences in perceptions existed between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants in these six mentoring functions. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on each of the six mentoring functions associated with psychosocial

support mentoring. The Mann-Whitney U test was used because each of the six psychosocial support mentoring functions was represented by three ordinal scale questions from the Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument. This Likert scale instrument produced ordinal scale data. With only three questions being examined for each psychosocial support mentoring function, the Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the data because the Mann-Whitney U test examines the median scores and is most effective in measuring data that may not be normally distributed.

To answer Research Question 3, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the African American female participants' median scores on the importance of the mentor's race to the Caucasian female participants' median scores on the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring. Once again, the Mann-Whitney U test was used because it measures the median scores and because there was only one ordinal dependent variable being measured. The reason for conducting this test was to determine if African American females and Caucasian females thought differently about the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring.

To answer Research Question 4, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the African American female participants' median scores on the importance of the mentor's race to the Caucasian female participants' median scores on the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring. The Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the data for Research Question 4 because there was only one ordinal dependent variable being measured. The reason for conducting this test was to determine if African American females and Caucasian females thought differently about the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring.

To answer Research Question 5, two separate Pearson correlation tests were conducted. One test was conducted on the scores of the African American female participants and a second Pearson correlation test was conducted on the scores of the Caucasian female participants to examine the correlation within each group's scores for career development mentoring functions and psychosocial support mentoring functions. A scatterplot was generated to depict the relationship between the scores of the African American female participants and the scores of the Caucasian female participants. A significance test was run to determine if any significant difference existed between the combined career development and psychosocial support scores of the African American female participants and the combined career development and psychosocial support scores of the Caucasian female participants.

Finally, to answer Research Question 6, which addressed the protégés' satisfaction with their mentor, the scores of the African American female participants were totaled for Items 34 through 37 of the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Satisfaction with Mentor Scale, and the scores for the Caucasian female participants were totaled for Items 34 through 37 of the Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale. The total scores for all African American participants and the total scores for all Caucasian participants were compared using a Mann-Whitney U test. The Mann-Whitney U test examines the median scores and is most effective in measuring data that may not be normally distributed. Because there were only four items being compared between the two groups, the Mann-Whitney U test is most appropriate because it compares the median scores, which avoids potential family-wise errors due to potential outlier scores.

Limitations

The researcher identified the number of participants in the study as a limitation. Even with access to specific organizations that targeted women within the desired demographics and with making the tool readily accessible via the Internet, it was a challenge getting individuals to complete the questionnaire. A larger sample size would have been preferred.

Another limitation was the researcher's decision to use only quantitative data. The researcher felt that obtaining qualitative data from participants may have provided more in-depth information on the perceptions of both African American female participants and Caucasian female participants. Qualitative data could have been particularly beneficial with Research Question 2 where obtaining additional information could have provided more in-depth analysis concerning the statistically significant differences revealed between the African American and Caucasian participant's scores in the parenting and accepting psychosocial support mentoring functions. Research Questions 3 and 4 could have benefited from qualitative data that further explained the African American and Caucasian female protégés perception's concerning the importance of the mentor's race in the career development and psychosocial support functions.

Qualitative data could have also provided more information regarding the African American and Caucasian female protégés thought processes concerning Research Question 6, which was designed to examine potential differences between the African American and Caucasian female protégés perceptions of the overall satisfaction of their mentors.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide a detailed description and explanation of the methodologies used in collecting and analyzing the data for this research study. A comprehensive explanation of the analyses employed for each research question was provided. In Chapter IV the researcher will describe the findings from the study, interpret the data analysis, and review implications of the current study. Additionally, the researcher will offer recommendations for future research in the area of mentoring African American and Caucasian females.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

In Chapter I, the researcher highlighted the lack of research previously conducted that focused on the perceptions of African American women protégés regarding their mentoring experiences. The researcher noted that the samples of previous research conducted on mentoring lacked racial diversity. The lack of racial diversity produced models, theories, and empirical studies that either excluded race or relegated it to unexplained variance (Blake-Beard, Murrell, & Thomas, 2006). Finally, the researcher used Chapter I to define the purpose of the study, which was to explore the perceptions of African American and Caucasian women protégés regarding mentoring behaviors and the African American and Caucasian females' perceptions about the importance of the mentor's race. The ultimate aim was to use the findings to develop mentoring programs that provided strategies for African American females to overcome pressures and barriers, while engaging both groups of women in the process. Chapter II provided an historical overview of mentoring, along with an in-depth review of the research literature on mentoring, with particular focus on mentoring types and functions, race and gender, positive and negative attributes ascribed to mentoring, and finally a discussion on how mentoring is positioned to progress in the future. Chapter III explained how the data were collected and the methodologies used to analyze the data associated with each of the research questions. Chapter IV will present the results of the data analysis and a summary

of the results. In Chapter IV the researcher will also cite implications of the analyzed data and suggest recommendations for future research.

Findings

Forty-eight participants comprised of 26 African American females and 22 Caucasian females completed the 39 questions listed on the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Role Instrument and Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Satisfaction Scale. The questionnaire scores were compiled and a scale created to analyze the data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics Standard Grad Pack, Version 21.0. The data were collected to answer the following research questions:

1. What were the differences in perceptions of career development mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
2. What were the differences in perceptions towards psychosocial support mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
3. What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
4. What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?
5. What was the correlation between African American and Caucasian female protégés for career development scores and psychosocial support scores?
6. What were the differences between the perceptions of the overall satisfaction with the mentors between African American and Caucasian female protégés?

Research Findings Question 1

Research Question 1 asked: “What were the differences in perceptions of career development mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?” The median scores from Items 1 through 15 on the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Mentor Role Instrument were totaled for each of the five mentoring functions of sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposing. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the median scores of the African American female participants’ perceptions to the median scores of the Caucasian female participants’ perceptions for the five career development mentoring functions. The Mann-Whitney U test results for sponsor mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants’ perceptions and the Caucasian female participants’ perceptions concerning sponsor mentoring functions ($U = 246, p = .404$). The data indicated that the perceptions of African American female protégés and the perceptions of Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor’s sponsor mentoring function behaviors.

Table 7

Ranks for Career Development Sponsor Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	26.04	677.00
	C	22	22.68	499.00
Total		48		

Table 8

Test Statistics for Career Development Sponsor Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	246.000
Wilcoxon W	499.000
Z	-.835
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.404

The Mann-Whitney U test results for coach functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning coach mentoring functions ($U = 259.5, p = .580$). The data indicated that the perceptions of African American female protégés and the perceptions of Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's coach mentoring function behaviors.

Table 9

Ranks for Career Development Coach Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	25.52	663.50
	C	22	23.30	512.50
Total		48		

Table 10

Test Statistics for Career Development Coach Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	259.500
Wilcoxon W	512.500
Z	-.553
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.580

The Mann-Whitney U test results for protect mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning protect mentoring functions ($U = 250.5, p = .460$). The data indicated that the perceptions of African American female protégés and the perceptions of Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's protect mentoring function behaviors.

Table 11

Ranks for Career Development Protect Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	25.87	672.50
	C	22	22.89	503.50
Total		48		

Table 12

Test Statistics for Career Development Protect Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	250.500
Wilcoxon W	503.500
Z	-.738
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.460

The Mann-Whitney U test results for the challenge mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning challenge mentoring functions ($U = 245, p = .389$). The data indicated that the perceptions of African American female protégés and the perceptions of Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's challenge function mentoring behaviors.

Table 13

Ranks for Career Development Challenge Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	22.92	596.00
	C	22	26.36	580.00
Total		48		

Table 14

Test Statistics for Career Development Challenge Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	245.000
Wilcoxon W	596.000
Z	-.862
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.389

The Mann-Whitney U test results for exposure mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning the exposure mentoring functions ($U = 258.5, p = .566$). These data indicated that the perceptions of African American female protégés and the perceptions of Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's exposure function behaviors.

Table 15

Ranks for Career Development Exposure Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	25.56	664.50
	C	22	23.25	511.50
Total		48		

Table 16

Test Statistics for Career Development Exposure Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	258.500
Wilcoxon W	511.500
Z	-.573
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.566

Research Findings Question 2

Research Question 2 asked: “What were the differences in perceptions of psychosocial support mentoring functions between African American and Caucasian female protégés?” A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to compare the median scores of the African American female participants’ perceptions to the median scores of the Caucasian female participants’ perceptions in the six psychosocial support mentoring functions of friendship, socializing, role modeling, counseling, parenting, and accepting. The Mann-Whitney U test results for the friendship mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants’ perceptions and the Caucasian female participants’ perceptions concerning friendship mentoring functions ($U = 284, p = .966$). The data indicated that the perceptions of the African American female protégés and the perceptions of the Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor’s friend mentoring function behaviors.

Table 17

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Friendship Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	24.58	639.00
	C	22	24.41	537.00
Total		48		

Table 18

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Friendship Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	284.000
Wilcoxon W	537.000
Z	-.043
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.966

The Mann-Whitney U test results for social functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions regarding social mentoring functions ($U = 260.5, p = .597$). These data indicated that the perceptions of the African American female protégés and the perceptions of the Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's social mentoring function behaviors.

Table 19

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Social Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	25.48	662.50
	C	22	23.34	513.50
Total		48		

Table 20

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Social Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	260.500
Wilcoxon W	513.500
Z	-.529
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.597

The Mann-Whitney U test results for the role model functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning role model mentoring functions ($U = 285.5, p = .992$). These data indicated that the perceptions of the African American female protégés and the perceptions of the Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's role model mentoring function behaviors.

Table 21

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Role Model Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	24.48	636.50
	C	22	24.52	539.50
Total		48		

Table 22

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Role Model Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	285.500
Wilcoxon W	636.500
Z	-.010
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.992

The Mann-Whitney U test results for counseling mentoring functions indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning their mentor's scores for counseling mentoring functions ($U = 277, p = .851$). The data indicated that the perceptions of the African American female protégés and the perceptions of the Caucasian female protégés were similar concerning scoring their mentor's counseling mentoring function behaviors.

Table 23

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Counseling Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	24.15	628.00
	C	22	24.91	548.00
Total		48		

Table 24

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Counseling Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	277.000
Wilcoxon W	628.000
Z	-.188
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.851

The Mann-Whitney U test results for parent functions indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions regarding the parent mentoring functions ($U = 163.5, p = .011$). The data indicated that the Caucasian female participants' parent mentoring function scores for their mentors were higher than the African American female participants' scores for their mentors.

Table 25

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Parent Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	19.79	514.50
	C	22	30.07	661.50
Total		48		

Table 26

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Parent Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	163.500
Wilcoxon W	514.500
Z	-2.545
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.011

The Mann-Whitney U test results for acceptance mentoring functions also indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' perceptions and the Caucasian female participants' perceptions regarding acceptance mentoring functions ($U = 151, p = .004$). The data indicated that the African American female participants' acceptance mentoring function scores for their mentors were higher than the Caucasian female participants' acceptance mentoring function scores were for their mentors.

Table 27

Ranks for Psychosocial Support Acceptance Mentoring Function

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	29.69	772.00
	C	22	18.36	404.00
Total		48		

Table 28

Test Statistics for Psychosocial Support Acceptance Mentoring Function

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	151.000
Wilcoxon W	404.000
Z	-2.899
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.004

Because the results for parent and acceptance mentoring functions resulted in statistically significant differences, this researcher conducted a Bonferroni correction to account for family-wise error. The researcher divided the alpha value of .05 by the number of mentoring functions, which was 11. The calculation resulted in a new alpha value of .0045; hence, the results of the Bonferroni correction indicated that no statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' scores and the Caucasian female participants' scores for parenting mentoring functions, while the results of the Bonferroni correction confirmed that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American female

participants' scores and the Caucasian female participants' scores for acceptance mentoring functions.

Research Findings Question 3

Research Question 3 asked: "What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?" A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on the African American female participants' and Caucasian female participants' responses to Item 38 of the questionnaire. The data indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between African American female participants' scores and the Caucasian female participants' scores on their perceptions of how important race was in career development mentoring (Mann-Whitney U, $z = -3.938$, $p = <.001$). The African American female participants' scores indicated that they rated the importance of the mentor's race for career development mentoring higher than the Caucasian female participants rated the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring at a statistically significant level.

Research Findings Question 4

Research Question 4 asked: "What were the differences in perceptions of the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring between African American and Caucasian female protégés?" A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on the African American female participants' and the Caucasian female participants' responses to Item 39 of the questionnaire. The data indicated that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American female participants' scores and the Caucasian female participants' scores concerning their perceptions of how

important race was in psychosocial support mentoring (Mann-Whitney U, $z = -3.732$, $p = <.001$). The African American female participants' scores indicated that they rated the importance of the mentor's race for psychosocial support mentoring statistically significantly higher than the Caucasian female participants rated the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring.

Because a statistically significant difference was found between the responses of African American female participants and Caucasian female participants for Research Question 3 concerning the race of the mentor when providing career development mentoring functions and Research Question 4 concerning the race of the mentor when providing psychosocial support mentoring functions, the researcher conducted a Chi-square test to compare the racial demographics of the mentors between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants. The data analysis revealed that the 26 African American female participants had 14 African American mentors, or 53.8%, compared to an expected count of approximately 8.1, or 32%, African American mentors. These same female participants had 17.9 Caucasian mentors, or 46.2%, compared to an expected count of 12, or 54.5%, Caucasian mentors. The Caucasian female participants had 1 African American mentor, or 4.5%, compared to an expected count of approximately 7, or 32%, African American mentors. And these same Caucasian female participants had 21 Caucasian mentors, or 95.5%, compared to an expected count of approximately 15, or 68.1%, Caucasian mentors. These results provide proof that both the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants had same-race mentors at percentages that exceeded their respective expected rates.

Research Findings Question 5

Research Question 5 asked: “What was the correlation between African American and Caucasian female protégés for career development scores and psychosocial support scores?” To answer Research Question 5, this researcher conducted two separate Pearson correlation tests. One test was conducted with the scores of the African American female participants and a second Pearson correlation test was conducted with the scores of the Caucasian female participants in order to examine the correlation within each group’s scores for career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring. The data indicated that a statistically significant positive relationship existed between the African American female participants’ scores in career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring, $r(26) = .628, p = .001$. The data also indicated that a statistically significant positive relationship existed between the Caucasian female participants’ scores in career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring, $r(22) = .675, p = .001$. Figure 1 shows the positive relationship between the African American female participants’ career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring scores, and Figure 2 shows the positive relationship between the Caucasian female participants’ career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring scores.

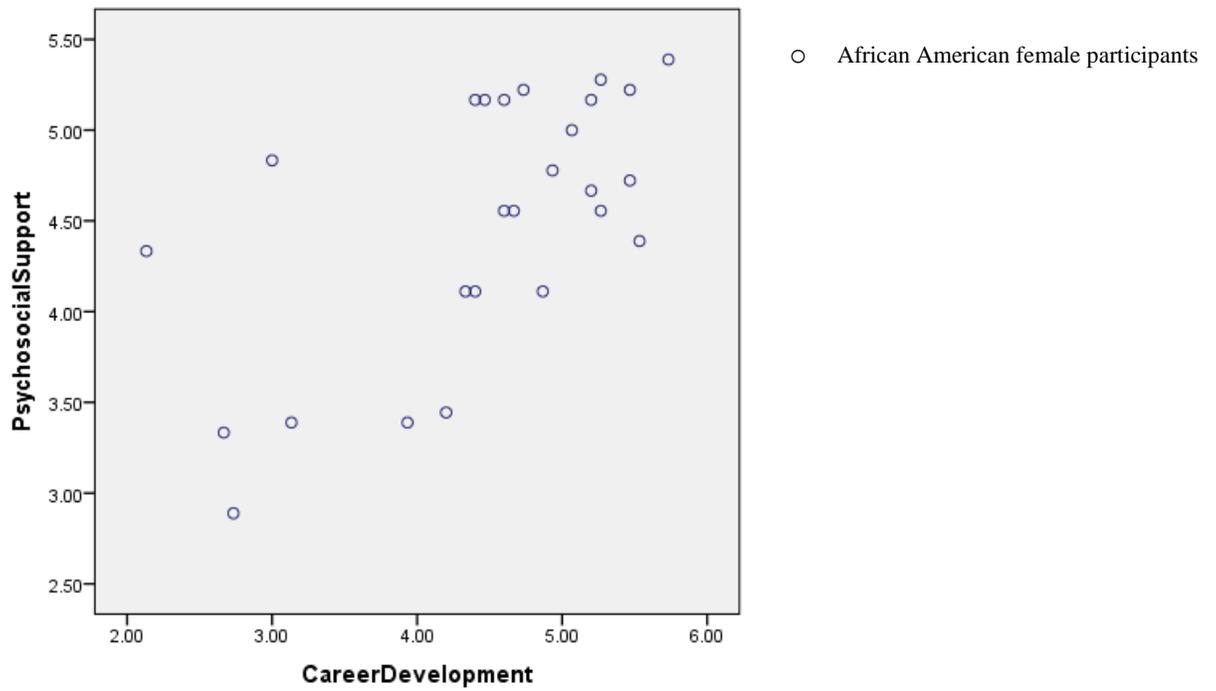


Figure 1. The relationship between the career development and psychosocial support scores of African American female participants.

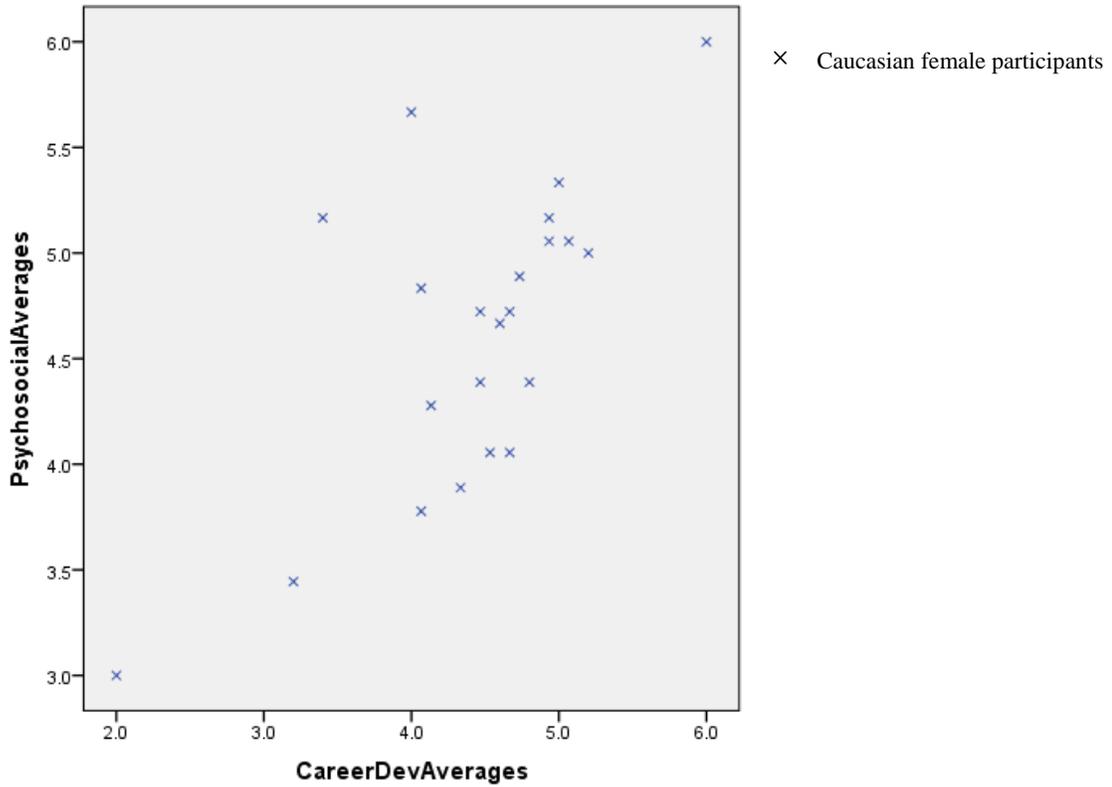


Figure 2. The relationship between the career development and psychosocial support scores of Caucasian female participants.

Figure 3 shows the combined psychosocial support and career development mentoring scores for the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants.

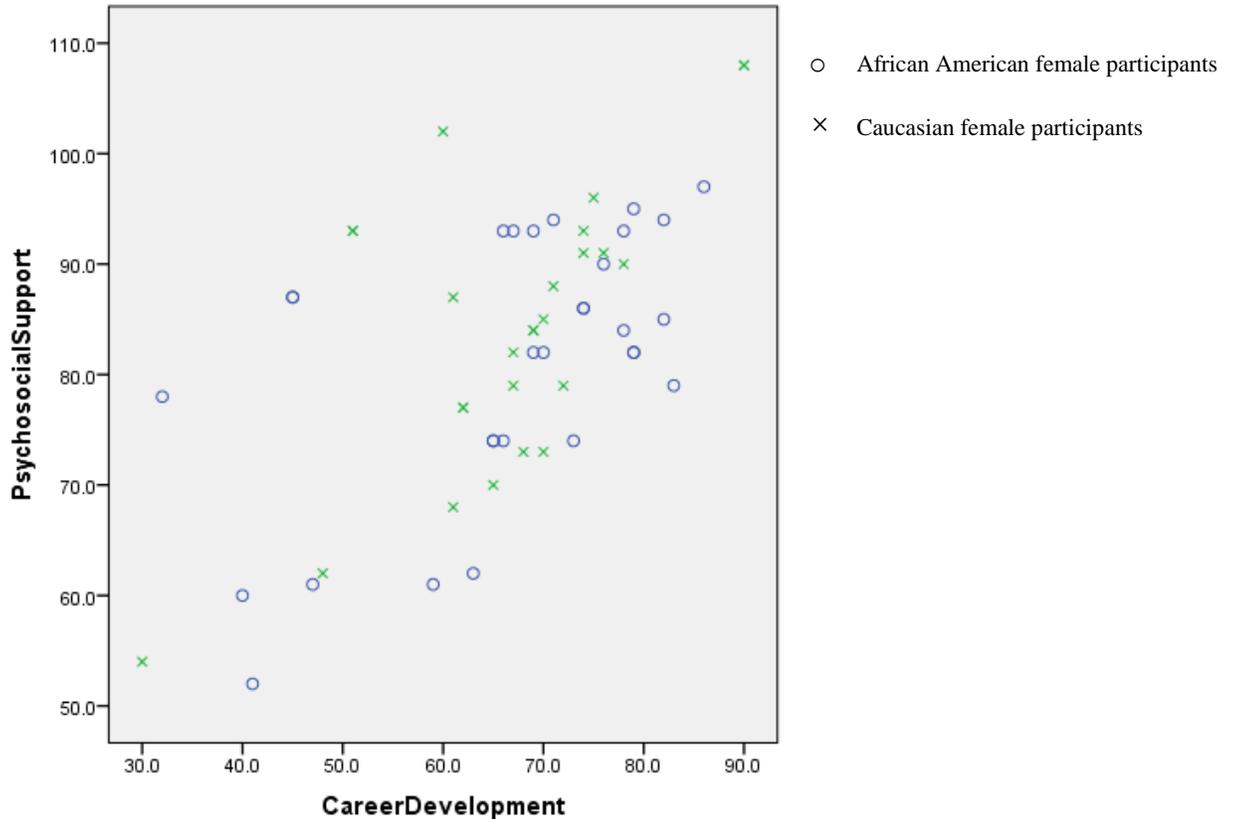


Figure 3. The relationship between the career development and psychosocial support scores of African American and Caucasian female participants.

The researcher conducted a significance test developed by Fisher (1921) which indicated that the correlations between the combined career development and psychosocial support scores of the African American female participants and the combined career development and psychosocial support scores of the Caucasian female participants were not statistically significant, $z = 1.71, p = 0.085$.

Research Findings Question 6

Research Question 6 asked: “What were the differences between the perceptions of the overall satisfaction with the mentors between African American and Caucasian female protégés?” The median scores for each participant were determined for the four questions on the Ragins and McFarlin (1990) Satisfaction with Mentor Scale. The median

scores for the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants were calculated. The Mann-Whitney U test results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in satisfaction with mentor between the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants ($U = 239, p = .311$). The results indicated that the African American female participants and Caucasian female participants had similar perceptions regarding their satisfaction with mentors.

Table 29

Ranks for Satisfaction with Mentor

	Race	Number	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
	AA	26	26.31	684.00
	C	22	33.36	492.00
Total		48		

Table 30

Test Statistics for Satisfaction with Mentor

	Sponsor
Mann-Whitney U	239.000
Wilcoxon W	492.000
Z	-1.013
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.311

Conclusions

The first research question examined the differences between African American females' and Caucasian females' perceptions concerning the five functions associated

with career development mentoring, which are sponsoring, coaching, protecting, challenging, and exposing. The Mann-Whitney U tests conducted with the responses to the questions associated with each of the five mentoring functions revealed that no statistically significant differences existed between the African American and Caucasian female participants' responses relating to their perceptions about the five career development mentoring functions. Therefore, this researcher revealed that African American and Caucasian female protégés share similar perceptions regarding the five functions associated with career development mentoring. Because mentoring was perceived as important to the career development of African American women (Bova, 2000) and Caucasian women credited mentoring with providing more advantageous career outcomes (Fagenson, 1989), this researcher contends that both African American women and Caucasian women would benefit from mentoring dyads where mentors employ similar career development mentoring skills.

Research Question 2 examined the differences between African American females' and Caucasian females' perceptions concerning the six functions associated with psychosocial support mentoring, which are role modeling, acceptance, counseling, friendship, socializing, and parenting. The Mann-Whitney U tests conducted on the responses to the questions associated with each of the six psychosocial mentoring functions revealed that no statistically significant differences existed between the African American and Caucasian female participants' responses relating to these four mentoring functions: role modeling, counseling, friendship, and socializing. Statistically significant differences were found in responses to the mentoring functions of parenting, where Caucasian female participants scored their mentors higher than African American female

participants scored their mentors. Statistically significant difference was also identified for the mentoring function of acceptance, where African American female participants scored their mentors higher than the Caucasian female protégés scored their mentors.

Ragins and Kram (2007) revealed that significant variations in range and degree existed among mentoring functions, and within and across mentoring relationships. Ragins and Kram also reported that mentoring relationships evolved throughout the course of the relationship. Taken together, these two findings could account for the statistically significant differences reported in this researcher's data for the parenting and acceptance psychosocial support mentoring functions.

Research Question 3 examined the perceptions African American females and Caucasian females had regarding the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring. A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted on Item 38 to answer Research Question 3. The data confirmed that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American and Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning the race of the mentor in career development mentoring. The results indicated that African American female participants perceived race as more important than did their Caucasian counterparts when it came to career development mentoring.

This researcher draws attention to the fact that while African American female participants did perceive the race of the mentor to be more important than did the Caucasian female participants, both groups had percentages of same-race mentors that exceeded the expected percentages, which supports previous theories and research regarding the preference for same-race mentoring dyads. The preference for same-race mentors is supported by Blackwell's (1983) study where student participants indicated

that they perceived having a same-race mentor made a difference, and both African American mentors and protégés in Kalbfleisch and Davies' (1991) study indicated that they preferred working in same-race dyads over cross-race dyads. Previous research on homophily also concurred with this study's findings that most individuals preferred to associate with others who shared similarly ascribed socio-demographic dimensions. McPherson et al. (2001) identified race as one of the socio-demographic dimensions individuals use when establishing mentoring dyads, showing a preference for same-race mentoring dyads over cross-race mentoring dyads.

Research Question 4 examined the perceptions of African American females and Caucasian females regarding the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring. This researcher conducted a Mann-Whitney U test on Item 39 in order to answer Research Question 4. The data confirmed that a statistically significant difference existed between the African American and Caucasian female participants' perceptions concerning the importance of the mentor's race in psychosocial support mentoring. The results indicated that African American female participants scored race as more important than did their Caucasian counterparts in the area of psychosocial support mentoring. These findings paralleled the results of previous research conducted by Crawford and Smith (2005), Ragins (1997), and Thomas (1990), which indicated that African-Americans perceived same-race mentoring relationships as providing more psychosocial support than cross-race mentoring relationships.

Research Question 5 examined the relationship between the African American female participants' scores for career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring, and the Caucasian female participants' scores for career development

mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring. A direct correlation was revealed between the African American female participants' career development mentoring scores and their psychosocial support mentoring scores. A direct correlation also existed between the Caucasian female participants' career development mentoring scores and their psychosocial mentoring scores. The data clearly demonstrated that if African American and Caucasian protégés scored their mentor's respective career development mentoring behaviors favorably, they were also inclined to score their mentor's psychosocial support mentoring behaviors favorably. The reported results related to Research Question 5 were consistent with the reported results of Burke and McKeen's (1997) study, which indicated that a "significantly and positively intercorrelated" (p. 54) relationship existed between career development mentoring functions and psychosocial mentoring functions. Noe's (1988) study also supported this researcher's findings with concluding data that indicated women who received more career planning, i.e., career development mentoring, and also reported receiving more psychosocial support mentoring.

The information regarding the positive correlations revealed in Research Question 5 aligned with the results of the data analysis for Research Question 6. Research Question 6 examined the perceptions of the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants concerning their overall satisfaction with their mentor. The data analysis demonstrated that the African American female participants and the Caucasian female participants had no statistically significant differences in their scores regarding satisfaction with mentors. African American female participants and Caucasian

female participants indicated that they were consistently satisfied with their mentors in both career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring.

Implications and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of African American and Caucasian female protégés regarding mentoring behaviors and the importance of the mentor's race. The resulting data will contribute to the development of mentoring programs that will provide strategies for African American females to overcome pressures and barriers, while engaging both groups of women in the process. The findings of this study indicated that the perceptions of African American females and Caucasian females were similar in all five of the career development functions and four out of the six psychosocial mentoring functions. Additionally, this study revealed that the overall perceptions of satisfaction with their mentors were also similar between the African American and Caucasian female participants.

The researcher received feedback from participants who chose not to remain anonymous, which led the researcher to recommend that any attempts at replicating this study include the provision of a more visible and intentional definition of the term *mentoring* for potential participants. Although a working definition of mentoring was provided via the website that housed the data collection tool, and two drop-down boxes were embedded in the data collection tool containing definitions for the terms *career development* and *psychosocial mentoring*, some participants expressed confusion over whether or not individuals who clearly fit this study's guidelines for mentor could be identified as mentors. Their confusion was associated with the fact that the individual in

question was not affiliated with the protégé through what Thomas and Higgins (1996) referred to as an intra-firm developmental relationship.

Prior to the Bonferroni correction, statistically significant differences were identified in the psychosocial support mentoring functions of parenting and acceptance. Caucasian female participants scored mentors higher in parenting functions than did African American female participants. The more in-depth findings concerning the racial demographics of the mentors indicated that 95.5% of the Caucasian female participants were mentored by Caucasian mentors, compared to 46.2% of African American female participants who were mentored by Caucasian mentors. The results of the analysis on parenting prior to the Bonferroni correction could be a consequence of Caucasian female participants who had more same-race mentors being better able to identify with their mentors in the more familial aligned parent mentoring function, while African American female participants, who had fewer same-race mentoring dyads, would have less exposure to a more familial relationship. The reported data regarding the parent mentoring function in this study is supported by other researchers who concluded that same-race dyads fostered more comfortable interpersonal relationships between the partners (Armstrong et al., 2002; Blackwell, 1983).

Because of the statistically significant difference in scores between the African American and Caucasian female protégés in the parent mentoring function, this researcher recommends that additional research be conducted about mentoring constellations. Mentors in mentoring constellations provided different mentoring functions to protégés (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Mentoring constellations also broadened the concept of mentoring to “include the interaction of multiple organizational contexts”

(Blake-Beard et al., 2006, p. 28), which included identities, i.e., race, gender, and work group; and both intra-firm and extra-firm (Thomas & Higgins, 1996) mentoring relationships (Blake-Beard et al.). The researcher recommends that additional research about mentoring constellations be conducted to examine three aspects of mentoring. First, analyze mentoring constellations in order to determine whether African American protégés are more likely to have same-race dyads outside of the workplace to support them in areas not addressed by intra-firm mentoring dyads. Secondly, examine mentoring constellations to determine to what extent African American females receive psychosocial support outside of the work environment (Bova, 2000; Ragins & Kram). Lastly, examine mentoring constellations to determine to what extent race is perceived as a factor in extra-firm mentoring dyads versus intra-firm mentoring dyads.

The other statistically significant difference in the psychosocial support mentoring functions was found in the acceptance mentoring function. The scores for acceptance revealed that the African American female participants' scores were significantly higher than the Caucasian female participants' scores. Bell et al. (1994) documented that the career satisfaction of Caucasian women was connected to feeling accepted. Although Caucasian female participants in this study scored the acceptance mentoring function lower than the African American female participants, and the difference was statistically significant, this study did not measure the degree to which career satisfaction was associated with the acceptance scores of the Caucasian participants.

African American female participants did have statistically significant higher scores than Caucasian female participants concerning the perception of the importance of the mentor's race in career development mentoring and psychosocial support mentoring.

Both the African American female participants' and the Caucasian female participants' numbers of same-race mentors exceeded the expected cross-tabulation count as it related to same-race mentors. However, this researcher cautions that the implications of this finding are difficult to discern. Conclusions cannot be drawn regarding whether the perceived importance of race had any correlation to the racial makeup of the mentoring dyads, because there was no information collected regarding who initiated the mentoring relationship.

What the statistically significant difference in group scores concerning the importance of the mentor's race in career development and psychosocial support mentoring imply is the need for exploring the development of mentoring schemas that address the racial dynamics of mentoring dyads designed to support African American females. To exemplify a mentoring schema designed to support a specific group, the researcher reintroduces the previously revealed findings in McKinsey and Company's (2012) report concerning gender diversity. McKinsey and Company revealed that gender diversity was best supported when the corporate ecosystem consisted of three parts:

- A management team and CEO that were committed to being champions of gender diversity by setting targets for the number of senior women in the organization;
- Instituting a women's development program designed to equip women with the skills and access to networks necessary to traverse the corporate ladder and master corporate codes; and
- Enablers, which were designed to ease women's progress within the organization. This included identifying inequalities, tracking

improvements, reviewing current human resource processes and policies, and providing supportive systems like assistance with childcare.

This researcher contends that the components of the aforementioned ecosystem could be broadened so that the ecosystem addresses the results of the data revealed in this study, i.e., the statistically significant difference in scores concerning the importance of the mentor's race. An example of such an amended component would be a corporate ecosystem that supports women interested in participating in same-race, psychosocial mentoring dyads from external sources when no same-race mentors are available via intra-firm mentoring programs.

The similarities in the African American and Caucasian women's group scores lead this researcher to conclude that these two groups could effectively participate in and benefit from the same mentoring programs. The caveat would be designing flexible programs that intentionally address the areas in this study where statistically significant differences in scores were revealed. Future studies would be needed to determine similarities and dissimilarities among other racial groups.

The significance of this study was the fact that it included the perceptions of African American women regarding mentoring, which were either omitted or were not acknowledged in previous researchers' studies regarding race and mentoring. This researcher also compared the African American female participants' scores to the scores of Caucasian female participants and revealed many similarities and some statistically significant differences between the two groups. This researcher's results bolster the importance of undergirding future discussion and research on mentoring with the knowledge that although researchers often study groups, we collect our data from

individuals. Putting the individual's contributions in the forefront, this researcher contends that successful organizations will transition from historical mentoring programs that attempted to create equality for specific groups to creating mentoring programs that treat the individuals within each group equitably based upon results from this study. An effective mentoring program would take into consideration the fact that there was a statistically significant difference between the African American participants' scores and the Caucasian participants' scores regarding the importance of the mentor's race. Developing a mentoring program where this data is introduced and potentially applied to each individual rather than it being assumptively applied to an entire group would begin the transformational shift that moves organizations "beyond awareness education about race, gender, culture, and sexual orientation" (Wilson, 2013, p. 23) to appreciating fully the human equity that each person brings to the corporate table.

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Appendix A

Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Role Instrument

Ragins and McFarlin Mentor Satisfaction Scale

**RAGINS AND MCFARLIN MENTOR FUNCTIONS TOOL AND
RAGINS AND MCFARLIN SATISFACTION WITH MENTOR SCALE**

Note: This instrument has been amended from a 7-point to 6-point Likert scale. Thirty-three questions address 11 mentoring roles and have been randomly listed. Four questions, #'s 33 to 37, address the protégé's satisfaction with mentor. The researcher added questions 38 and 39 to address the importance of the mentor's race in career development and psychosocial development.

Career Development Roles

Sponsoring Functions

1. **My mentor helps me attain desirable positions.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
2. **My mentor uses his/her influence in the organization for my benefit.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
3. **My mentor uses his/her influence to support my advancement in the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Coaching Functions

4. **My mentor suggests specific strategies for achieving career aspirations.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
5. **My mentor gives me advice on how to attain recognition in the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
6. **My mentor helps me learn about other parts of the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Protecting Functions

7. **My mentor "runs interference" for me in the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
8. **My mentor shields me from damaging contact with important people in the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
9. **My mentor protects me from those who are out to get me.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Challenging Functions

10. **My mentor provides me with challenging assignments.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
11. **My mentor assigns me tasks that push me into developing new skills.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__
12. **My mentor gives me tasks that require me to learn new skills.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Exposure Functions

13. **My mentor helps me be more visible in the organization.**
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

14. My mentor creates opportunities for me to impress important people in the organization.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

15. My mentor brings my accomplishments to the attention of important people in the organization.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Psychosocial Support Roles

Friendship Functions

16. My mentor is someone I can confide in.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

17. My mentor provides support and encouragement.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

18. My mentor is someone I can trust.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Socializing Functions

19. My mentor and I frequently have one-on-one, informal social interactions outside the work setting.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

20. My mentor and I frequently socialize one-on-one outside the work setting.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

21. My mentor and I frequently get together informally after work by ourselves.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Parenting Functions

22. My mentor reminds me of one of my parents.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

23. My mentor is like a father/mother to me.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

24. My mentor treats me like a son/daughter.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Role Model Functions

25. My mentor serves as a role model for me.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

26. My mentor represents who I want to be.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

27. My mentor is someone I identify with.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Counseling Functions

28. My mentor guides my personal development.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

29. My mentor serves as a sounding board for me to develop and understand myself.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

30. My mentor guides my professional development.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Acceptance Functions

31. My mentor accepts me as a competent professional.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

32. My mentor thinks highly of me.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

33. My mentor sees me as being competent.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Ragins and McFarlin Satisfaction with Mentor Scale

34. My mentor is someone I am satisfied with.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

35. My mentor fails to meet my needs (reverse-scored).
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

36. My mentor disappoints me (reverse-scored).
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

37. My mentor has been effective in his/her role.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

Questions added by researcher

38. The race of my mentor was important for my career development.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__

39. The race of my mentor was important for my psychosocial development.
Strongly Agree__ Agree __ Slightly Agree__ Slightly Disagree__ Disagree__ Strongly Disagree__