The Mentoring Relationship as Experienced by Female Counselor Educators

Kellin Murphy Cavanaugh
Syracuse University

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Abstract
Using Constructivist Grounded Theory as a methodological approach and Feminist Standpoint Theory as a theoretical framework, this study sought to investigate and define the processes throughout the mentoring relationship as experienced by female counselor educators. This study yielded the Female-Responsive Mentoring Model for effective mentorship for female counselor educators over the course of their academic and career trajectories. Findings from this study indicate that effective mentorship is a beneficial practice that assists female counselor educators and doctoral students in developing more confidence in their abilities, increase likelihood of doctoral program completion, and increase research productivity.
THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP AS EXPERIENCED BY FEMALE COUNSELOR EDUCATORS

by

Kellin M. Cavanaugh

B.A., Bennington College, 2011
M.A., University of Saint Joseph, 2015

Dissertation
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counseling and Counselor Education.

Syracuse University
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My most important thank you goes to the fifteen womxn who provided me with their sacred time and energy during a global pandemic. Putting this in writing really solidifies how appreciative I am that they shared their stories, struggles, happiness and hurt to help me pursue this meaningful journey. I am eternally grateful. My hope is that despite any limitations attached to this study, that it can provide a framework for those who would benefit from exceptional mentors. To my own mentors, I want to thank you for the love, labor, and belief you provided to me during my academic and professional careers: Paulo, Kitty, Dibya, and Melissa. I also want to extend my greatest thanks to my committee members, Sherrie, and Heather. Your attention to my development was completely voluntary, and I feel blessed that you gave me your energy.

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Foreword

My passion for mentoring most likely blossomed long before I understood its potential benefits and complexities. As an older sister, a student leader, a teacher, I experienced multiple pulls to guide others and act as a role model throughout my development. It was not until I began considering the pursuit of a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision that I realized I needed a mentor for myself. Pursuing my Ph.D. was a seemingly impossible task, something completely foreign to me, and not attempted by my family and closest confidants. Even after being accepted into Syracuse, and overcoming the assumed insurmountable hurdle, I struggled almost daily to find my way. I had been plunked into a world that did not feel made for me, and feelings of belongingness were scant at best.

While I believe that some of my identities allowed me certain privileged opportunities throughout my doctoral coursework, I often felt scrutinized, spoken over and even disregarded due to both my gender identity and affectional orientation. Personal in nature, at times these factors greatly disrupted my confidence in my ability to be professionally successful. In a few desperate attempts to find support, guidance and understanding, I connected with two peers in the cohort ahead of me, sharing some common identities and struggles. Between their mentoring of me and the mentoring of my advisor, I was able to complete my doctoral coursework, pursue national conference presentations and publications, take risks in applying to intimidating grants and awards and whittle away at my imposter syndrome. While mentorship did help ease some symptoms of imposter syndrome, it was not a linear trajectory. I cycled through feelings of inadequacy and empowerment at certain milestones in my development such as the submission of my first publication, failed grant applications, and achieving doctoral candidacy. In each moment that I could mark off an achievement or success, my own desire to mentor others embarking on their
journeys would re-emerge. My hope is that those to whom I provided mentorship seek to do the same and provide some semblance of a mentoring relationship to those seeming to need it most. In the same way that I have cycled through moments of doubt and self-confidence, I have cycled through the processes of both receiving and providing mentorship. I am fortunate enough to have experienced both the role of the mentor and the mentee, and I am excited to begin to operationalize that which makes mentoring such a valuable relationship in counselor education.

This dissertation will discuss both the psychosocial and career functions of the mentoring relationship, and how mentors decide when and how to oscillate between these two main functions of the relationship. Further, it will explore how the mentoring relationship is structured, how it evolves, and how mentors intentionally and unintentionally choose interventions for their mentees. Given my positionality, I intend to pay special attention when investigating the psychosocial function as it relates to the mentor and mentee sharing the female identity. The psychosocial interventions that my female mentors facilitated permitted me to be able to own my professional development and allowed me to embrace my power at sculpting a fulfilling and meaningful career trajectory. I often wonder if mentorship functions are scaffolded—first psychosocial interventions, second career interventions—for mentees presenting with marginalized identities.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Numerous scholars have examined the mentoring relationship within the context of counseling and counselor education. Since the mid 1990’s, conceptual, qualitative, and quantitative articles have identified how mentorship can positively influence the mentee. For the purpose of this study, mentorship is defined as a unique, adult relationship between a mentor and a mentee in which the mentor provides the mentee with support, guidance and encouragement in both career and psychosocial areas of development (Burke & McKeen, 1990; Chandler, 1996; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Levinson, 1979; Noe 1988). The identified impacts range across a sense of professional competence and identity development, academic success, research productivity, leadership experiences and perceived emotional support based on the quality of the relationship (Casto et al., 2005; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014; Purgason et al., 2018; Taylor & Neimeyer, 2009). Further, in studies which explore doctoral program completion, mentorship has shown to have critical role in students’ persistence and progress through their program, depending upon factors including perceived personal support, availability of the mentor, and the ability of the mentor to help the mentee navigate their doctoral journey (Baltrinic et al., 2013; Burkholder & Jason, 2013; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). While many mentors may enter a mentoring relationship because of their position as a professor, advisor, or supervisor, their role within this context is different from that of mentorship because of the unique components of a mentoring relationship (Borders et al., 2012; Gallacher, 1997; Gibson, 2016; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014). Mentors experience the phenomenon of voluntary and crucial emotional commitment to the mentee in the relationship that often exceeds formal responsibilities of the mentor’s position. Further, mentoring relationships can also result in the mentee finding a personal and/or professional role model who can promote their development across the domains such as professional identity, leadership,
pedagogy, and scholarship (Borders et al., 2012; Gallacher, 1997; Gibson, 2016; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014).

Currently, mentoring scholarship in the counseling literature broadly focuses on select populations such as doctoral students and pre-tenured faculty as well as the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; 2016) competency domains for the counseling profession. Further, the majority of mentoring scholarship focuses on doctoral students and counselor educators new to their academic appointments (Casto et al., 2005; Gibson, 2016; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). By and large, the mentoring scholarship in the counseling literature is conceptual in nature, and despite the noted importance of mentorship within these conceptual articles, mentorship has received limited attention in empirical literature (Purgason et al., 2018). Further, the literature base neglects to more deeply explore how an individual’s presenting identities such as gender or sexuality may influence their experiences with accessing and participating in mentorship as well as how personal identities may impact the benefits of mentorship (Gibson, 2016).

Despite the narrow scope of the extant mentoring scholarship, authors are unanimous that mentorship may have the potential to create positive growth and development for all individuals throughout their professional journeys (Borders et al., 2012; McKibben et al., 2017; Purgason et al., 2018). Some scholars suggest that mentorship has even greater potential for positive impact for historically marginalized mentees, such as female-identifying counselor educators (McKibben et al., 2018). This idea; however, has received limited attention beyond conceptual works, and a handful of dissertations not yet published (Black & Magnuson, 2005; Boswell et al., 2015; Casto et al., 2005; Cannon, 2017; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Portman & Garrett, 2005).
Scholarship examining mentorship in counselor education focuses on how mentorship impacts outcomes such as more productive research, doctoral program navigation and completion, and challenges that exist in providing adequate mentoring (Borders et al., 2011; Borders et al., 2012; Gallacher, 1997; Gibson, 2016; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014; Purgason et al., 2018). However, there is a scarcity of theories or models for effective mentorship programming and training in counselor education. That said, in many ways the mentoring relationship may be similar to the supervisory alliance, especially when compared to Bernard’s (1997) Discrimination Model as posed by Purgason et al. (2018) in their conceptual article theorizing potential similarities and differences.

**Female-oriented Mentorship**

Within the mentoring scholarship, there is a small body of literature which focuses on female experiences of mentorship within counselor education (Black & Magnuson, 2005; Canon, 2017; Casto et al., 2005; McKibben et al., 2018; Portman & Garrett, 2005; Solomon & Barden, 2006). These authors assert that feminist mentorship is a vital aspect for female-identifying counseling professionals as its leads to feelings of empowerment and encouragement that help sustain career goals, professional trajectories, and leadership endeavors. Out of the articles listed above, all but two are conceptual in nature, with Canon’s (2017) grounded theory situated within a dissertation, and one as a published phenomenological study. Even more recently, scholarship remains conceptual in nature. Maccombs and Bhat (2020) developed a framework for providing mentoring towards female-identifying individuals, the Women’s Inclusive Mentoring Framework (WIMF), however it has not yet been empirically validated. This trend of scholarship not only demonstrates scant coverage of this phenomena, it also illustrates the need to examine female experiences of mentorship in counselor education within a more current context.
Black and Magnuson (2005) conducted a phenomenological study which examined the experiences of female leaders of color, and results were synthesized into important traits, behaviors, and characteristics of leaders in personal, interpersonal, and professional domains. A vital component of the interpersonal domain for participants was the act of providing mentorship as an act of leadership which can empower more female-identifying individuals to pursue leadership opportunities (Black & Magnuson, 2005). In Portman and Garrett’s (2005) conceptual article, they explore the possibility of shifting the traditional leadership paradigm in the counseling profession from a Western and masculine framework to one which intersects with femininity, American Indian values, and relational-cultural theory (RCT). The authors suggest that this combination of RCT and American Indian value sets promote not only mentorship as a tenet of a leadership theory, but also collectivism, collaboration, compassion, and courage (Portman & Garrett, 2005). The authors beg the question: What would change at an organizational level, if we shifted the ways in which we related to our colleagues, perceived rivals, students, clients, and supervisees? In a more recently published conceptual article focused on female-oriented mentorship, Solomon and Barden (2016) suggest using a Self-Compassion framework when mentoring mothers in counselor education. They utilize a case illustration to show how a mentoring relationship rooted in self-compassion can help the mentee better balance career and personal endeavors. Further, Soloman and Barden (2016) explore the differing expectations and assumptions that many academic systems have regarding mothers in tenure track positions. In 2018, McKibben et al. (2018) informally interviewed Borders’ colleagues, mentors, and mentees to produce a conceptual article which spoke to the ideologies present in Borders’ approach to leadership development. These interviews elicited themes of mentorship, service, authenticity and humility, role modeling, feminist and developmental frameworks. Borders labeled mentorship as
particularly vital to women in counselor education as a means of encouragement and empowerment for facilitating growth (McKibben et al., 2018). She also stressed the importance of mentorship to leadership preparation and indicated that her leadership style emphasizes the depth of connection that quality mentors should adopt in their mentoring relationship to develop future leaders (McKibben et al., 2018; Peters et al., 2020).

While the scholarship described in this introduction reviews how mentorship has been enacted in the counseling profession, it is by no means an exhaustive exploration of the phenomenon. The aforementioned conceptual and empirical works explore mentorship widely and tend to focus either on outcomes associated with some of the CACREP (2016) competency domains such as leadership, or the positive impact of a mentee having a mentor with similar identities to them as is the case with female-identifying counseling professionals. In examining the body of scholarship as a whole, one can see how often mentorship is informally linked to female-identifying counselors pursuing career goals they would not have otherwise pursued, such as leadership opportunities. The mentoring scholarship in the counseling literature indicates that mentorship has been a common emergent theme in female leadership development (McKibben et al., 2017b; McKibben et al., 2018; Purgason et al., 2018); however, researchers have yet to explicitly investigate how female counseling professionals experience mentorship within the context of leadership development. As a result, one logical next step to build upon and enrich the mentoring literature is to examine female experiences of mentorship in the counseling profession, and how these experiences helped to shape their leadership development.

**Statement of the Problem**

While the field of counselor education has repeatedly underscored the benefits of mentorship across outcomes related to research productivity, doctoral program persistence and
completion, as well as increased teaching confidence, there are gaps in the literature. One prominent omission relates to the examination of female counselor educators’ experiences with mentorship. In the limited instances in which this phenomenon has been explored, scholarship has focused on positive outcomes of mentorship as well as mentorship as a general intervention for certain populations. It has not necessarily acknowledged the processes within the mentoring relationship which promote these desired outcomes. Relatedly, current literature does not examine how both the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship are enacted over the course of the mentoring relationship. Several gaps in the mentoring literature exist related to its potential complexity. There is a lack of clarity related to role definitions, the evolution of mentoring relationships, specific interventions, and if there are aspects of the mentoring relationship between female counselor educators that are unique. By beginning to explore these questions using qualitative methodology, researchers can access the intra- and inter-personal processes within the experience of mentorship. They can then utilize findings to develop frameworks and models for enacting quality mentorship for female counselor educators to assist in developing best practices for future mentors. The field must investigate how female counselor educators enact mentorship; it is imperative to further assess the components of the mentoring relationship as opposed to just the potential positive outcomes of the relationship. This research may have potential impact on training practices for individuals seeking to mentor others if the mentoring process, specific interventions, and mentor decision making are investigated.

Proposed Study

Using Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2014) as a methodological approach and Feminist Standpoint Theory (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987) as a theoretical framework, this study will examine and define the processes that occur over the course of
mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators. Specifically, the current study will seek to answer:

1. What activities and interventions occurring in mentoring relationships are associated with positive outcomes for the mentee?
   1. How do these activities and interventions produce positive outcomes?

2. How are the career development and psychosocial functions of mentorship carried out by mentors?
   a. How do mentors oscillate between the mentorship functions?
   b. What factors influence mentors to oscillate between mentorship functions?

1. Are there characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators that are unique to this population, and if so, what are they?

**Significance of Study**

Over the years, accreditation standards and leaders within counselor education have touted mentorship as an essential part of one’s professional development within doctoral programs and one’s first years as a faculty member (Borders et al., 2011; Dollarhide et al. 2013). Further, mentorship often appears as an intervention for outcomes valued in our profession such as research productivity, affinity for professional identity, doctoral program completion, and teaching confidence (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Borders et al., 2011; Casto et al., 2005; Lazovsky & Shimoni, 2007; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). Mentorship is also often framed as a critical support for future counselor educators with marginalized identities. While mentorship is commonly labeled as a worthwhile intervention for those with marginalized identities, very little scholarship within the field explicitly explores which aspects of its processes deem it effective for female-identifying counselor educators (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020).
By examining the process of effective mentorship and how it relates to positively perceived outcomes of the mentoring relationship, this study can lead to a better understanding of the mentoring process with a more dynamic understanding of the mentoring relationship specifically related to female counselor educators. An emergent grounded theory of the mentoring relationship process may help counselor educators, counseling graduate programs and professional associations create levels of structure to implement effective mentorship programs based in empirical data. Further, a grounded theory of female-oriented mentorship may assist faculty, supervisors and advisors in engaging in mentorship with their colleagues, supervisees and students to produce consistent positive outcomes. Regarding the development of training practices, this study has the potential to promote intentionality in future training practices instead of simply experiencing mentorship and repeating that which we experienced with others.

**Limitations**

The proposed study is not without limitations. While the researcher will make efforts to recruit a diverse group of participants, it is possible that individuals who consent to participate will be homogenous in personal identities, leadership experiences, or current job titles. Further, while the results from this study will provide a richer understanding of the intended phenomenon, they will not be generalizable. However, the data collected and analyzed for the proposed study can provide future researchers with rich material that can be utilized to create a larger scale study that is mixed methods or quantitative in nature and thus more generalizable to this population.

**Definition of Terms**

Within this study, there is terminology frequently used when investigating and communicating the mentoring experiences of female counselor educators. In selecting the most accurately reflective terminology for this study that is also in line with both Constructivist
Grounded theory and Feminist Standpoint Theory (Charmaz, 2014; Collins, 1989), some challenges were illuminated. Most of the mentorship literature dating back to the 1980s was published by white, cisgender men and women. This literature identifies the cisgender women in their studies as a majority minority, however white women comprise most individuals represented in the literature. Thus, the experiences of BIPOC women, or womxn who identify as transgender, or nonbinary are not adequately discussed. Further, the literature reviewed for this study is not recent. Much of the literature grounding this study was published decades ago and lacks a complex understanding of gender as a social construct. Further, the literature base is often conceptual in nature, leaving gaps not only about best practices in mentorship, but also regarding how womxn at the time conceptualized their gender. At times, this literature uses terms such as women, female, feminine and femininity interchangeably which is problematic given that it further conflates gender with biological sex. In an effort to disrupt this, original language from the literature base has been updated to the term womxn throughout the literature review chapter. In instances where participants from this study discussed their female identities, the researcher did not alter language to best represent participant experiences and perspectives as this is considered ideal practice in CGT (Charmaz, 2014). Below the reader will find definitions of several terms relevant to this study that are essential for contextualization of the literature review, methodology, findings and discussion.

The term Mentor will indicate the individual who provides mentees with multidimensional support that spans both the personal and professional growth necessary to develop into an individual who is more mature and confident in their roles (Boswell, et al., 2015; Chandler, 1996; Hammer, et al., 2014).
The *Mentoring Relationship* will be defined as a unique, adult relationship between a mentor and a mentee in which the mentor provides the mentee with support, guidance and encouragement in both career and psychosocial areas of development as according to Noe (1988).

The term *Psychosocial Function* will encapsulate the functions of the mentoring relationship that assist in personal identity development, confidence building, and support for the mentee.

The term *Career function* will describe the interventions mentors facilitate in order to help mentees advance in their chosen career path.

For the purpose of this study, *Female/Female-identifying, and womxn* will describe individuals whose gender identity aligns with being female, regardless of her assigned sex at birth (Wu, 2016) In the counseling literature, this term is becoming more common as it disrupts cisgenderism by expanding the term womxn to include non-cisgender feminine presenting individuals (Reyes et al., 2021; Wu, 2016).

The term *Counselor Educator* refers to an individual who has completed either their Ph.D. or Ed.D. in a CACREP-accredited Counselor Education and Supervision program.

The term *BIPOC* will be used to refer to individuals who identify as Black, and/or Indigenous People of Color.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Across disciplines, mentorship is conceptualized as an essential component for navigating both career and psychosocial aspects of one’s workplace and professional development. For the purpose of this review, mentorship is defined as a unique, adult relationship between a mentor and a mentee in which the mentor provides the mentee with support, guidance and encouragement in both career and psychosocial areas of development (Burke &McKeen, 1990; Chandler, 1996; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Levinson, 1979; Noe 1988). Different from sponsors, supervisors and coaches, mentors provide mentees with multidimensional support that spans both the personal and professional growth necessary to develop into an individual who is more mature and confident in their roles (Boswell, et al., 2015; Chandler, 1996; Hammer, et al., 2014). Mentoring relationships are also unique in that they are choiceful, and not evaluative in nature. A key difference between the mentoring relationship and the supervisory relationship in counselor education is that the supervisory relationship is hierarchical in nature due to evaluative functions it must provide (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983). The career and psychosocial functions of mentoring relationships remain the same across formal and informal mentoring relationships. Formal mentoring relationships are implemented institution-wide and are structured, purposeful, and systemic (Borders et al., 2012; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Informal mentoring relationships, however, tend to develop more organically, and are often the result of another relationship such as a professor-student, or senior faculty-junior faculty relationship (Casto et al., 2005).

Several fields have a robust base of mentorship literature such as business management, and higher education. However, publications are often conceptual as opposed to empirical in
nature, leaving gaps which prompt questions about best practices of mentoring, potential frameworks for enacting quality mentorship, as well as which/if any populations may benefit from quality mentorship the most (Baltrinic, et al., 2018; Casto et al., 2005; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). This is the case in the counselor education mentorship literature, which names mentorship as a beneficial practice for increasing research productivity, confidence in teaching and doctoral program completion (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Borders et al., 2011; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). However, across much of the literature in counselor education, mentorship is not explicitly studied. It is instead noted in the results of several qualitative and quantitative studies, or is the topic of conceptual pieces (Avent Harris, et al., 2019; Hill, et al., 2005; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012).

This review utilizes an overview of concepts of mentorship using scholarship from higher education, business management, and counselor education as its scope. This scope was determined based on several searches in the institutional library databases. It quickly became evident to the author that the fields of business management and higher education provide a substantial amount of mentorship literature to examine critical gaps within counselor education. Mentorship literature within business management has historically examined the role and functions of the mentoring relationship while also acknowledging the need to address female experiences in male-dominated workspaces (Burke & McKeen, 1990; Kram, 1988). Within higher education, the mentorship literature has investigated the importance of identity matching in mentoring relationships, and the intersections of mentorship, career development and leadership outcomes (Airini et al., 2011; Ramey, 1993). When combined, these foci provide the author with the necessary framework to begin to address critical gaps in female mentorship literature within counselor education. This framework will encompass both the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring
relationship, as well as how the relationship can be uniquely beneficial for women. This review seeks to examine existing mentorship literature within counselor education, including the limited amount of conceptual and empirical articles exploring female counselor educator experiences. Next, this review will examine relevant literature related to female mentorship experiences across literature bases with a more critical focus of female mentorship experiences within counselor education, often pulling from the higher education literature to fill significant gaps. An examination of mentorship scholarship in counselor education will follow, including a critical analysis of several studies closely situated to the current study.

**Theoretical Overview of Mentorship**

In the mid twentieth century, fields such as business and management, adult development, and higher education explored the concept of mentorship as an important workplace relationship. Across disciplines, mentorship had been conceptualized as a vital component for male-identifying individuals seeking career advancement in their field, and that lack of access to an adequate mentor may hinder one’s career advancement (Allen et al., 2004; Burke & McKeen, 1990; Chandler, 1996; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Levinson, 1979; Noe 1988). When womxn began to enter the workforce more regularly in the 1970’s and 1980’s, womxn researchers began to explore the role of gender in mentoring, and in later decades, some researchers focused on the role of race in mentorship as well as the intersection of race and gender (Chandler, 1996; Kram, 1985; 1988).

While the term mentor may embody a variety of meanings depending on the context, Alderfer (2014) stated that the mentoring relationship is a rare type of relationship, signified by the mentee emerging from it as a more mature and complex person. Some argue that it is a privilege to be afforded a quality mentor (Allen, et al., 2004; Kram, 1985; 1988; Kuo et al., 2017) given there is empirical support that mentees who engage with their mentor reach greater developmental
achievements than their peers (Alderfer, 2014). Additionally, the mentoring relationship is utilized not only for career advancement, but psychosocial support in and out of the workplace. Within the psychosocial function of the mentoring relationship, the mentor often provides guidance for personal identity development, instills a sense of confidence in their mentee, and acts as a support for challenges which may surface (Boswell et al., 2015; Chandler, 1996; Hammer et al., 2014).

In considering the definition and functions of the mentoring relationship, it is important to draw some parallels between the purposes and functions of the relationship to that of the supervisory relationship within counseling and counselor education. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) described the process of deconstructing the supervisory relationship best: “Supervisory relationships are multilayered and complex. To examine them is akin to scanning a forest through a telescope: Each focal range will reveal different aspects and details of the forest” (p. 64). Supervisory relationships are an essential part of counselor development. Functions of all supervisory relationships include the facilitation of supervisee growth, promoting client welfare and gatekeeping for the counseling profession (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Beyond these three functions, the supervisory relationship can also provide restorative support to minimize burnout; it can help to rehabilitate counselors who have committed ethical violations, and it can be a source of mentorship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Johnson, et al., 2014; Proctor, 1986). Throughout this review parallels will be drawn between the mentoring relationship and the supervisory relationship where appropriate, to further demonstrate the need for examination of how mentorship is enacted with female counselor educators in leadership positions.

**Functions of the Mentoring Relationship**

The language across the mentorship literature includes the terms “mentor,” “mentoring,” and “mentorship”. Some researchers suggest that the words are at risk of losing their unique
meanings (Alderfer, 2014). At times, “mentor” has been conflated with terms such as coach, sponsor, advisor and supervisor. The mentoring relationship provides unique functions to both the mentor and the mentee. For Kram (1985; 1988) and Alderfer (2014), a distinct differentiation of the mentor role is that the mentee and their development tend to be the scope and focus of the relationship. This is different from coaching in that coaching relationships are performance-driven relationships as opposed to developmentally driven. Similarly, sponsoring relationships also focus on performance, specifically professional performance of an individual who is less experienced in a work setting when compared to their sponsor (Alderfer, 2014). This is similar to the supervisory relationship in some ways, in that the scope and focus is determined by the developmental needs of the supervisee (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). While the supervisory relationship maintains three critical functions, in mentoring relationships, the mentor theoretically works with their mentees to intentionally provide both career and psychosocial support to the mentee (Ng, et al., 2019).

**Career development**

Perhaps the more obvious of the two functions, the career development function of the mentoring relationship should provide a mentee with the guidance necessary for them to advance in their chosen career path (Alderfer, 2014; Burke & McKeen, 1990; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Levinson, 1979; Noe, 1998). Mentors teach and counsel their mentees, as well as inform them about the structure of the organization in which they work (Levinson, 1979). Mentors provide their mentees with organizational history, networking opportunities, and important feedback about the mentee’s performance and aspirations (Kram, 1986). Topics such as gaining visibility, skill building for success, and paths to advancement within the organization are thought to be important career development functions within the mentor relationship (Levinson, 1979). At professional settings such as conferences, workplace retreats or social gatherings, mentors may introduce
mentees to other professionals relevant to the mentee’s career goals in the field. They may also encourage the mentee to reach out to other colleagues for collaborative purposes, suggest relevant webinars, or coach their mentees on how to engage with colleagues in a professional manner. In academic settings, mentors may invite their mentee to co-author research with them, present at conferences, and inform them of relevant professional development opportunities of which they may not have been previously aware (Alberto 2018; Baltrinic et al., 2018; Casto et al., 2005; Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Borders et al., 2012; Gibson, 2006; Gibson, 2016). Some examples include inviting mentees to collaborate on projects and programming, advocate for their mentee’s candidacy for campus roles, nominate their mentee for recognitions or awards, and introduce their mentees to their own professional networks. This function of the mentoring relationship is similar to clinical supervision in that the supervisory relationship is used as a method of professional socialization (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Ng et al., 2019). Supervisors often help their supervisees better understand professional culture, embodying ethics, and encourage professional identity development (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

**Psychosocial support**

The psychosocial aspect of the mentoring relationship can be utilized differently by each mentee for both professional and personal purposes and helps to develop respect, trust, and commitment in the relationship (Chandler, 1996; Kram, 1985; 1988). In her seminal work outlining the psychosocial aspects of mentoring, Kram (1986) named several functions necessary to fulfill the psychosocial needs of the mentee: (a) role modeling, (b) counseling, (c) acceptance and confirmation, and (d) friendship. More recent work has expanded/built upon Kram’s (1986) conceptualization and has identified the important role mentors can play in validating mentees whose varying personal identities may be marginalized in the workplace (Butler et al., 2012; Casto,
et al., 2005; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015; Tran, 2014). Given that until recently, many workplaces situated within academia, STEM fields or business organizations were dominated by white, male-presenting individuals, finding quality mentors for individuals who identify as female, non-white, non-heterosexual, or an intersection of oppressed identities is of the utmost importance for career satisfaction and advancement (Casto et al., 2005; Chan, et al., 2015; Chandler, 1996; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015). This literature suggests that matching mentor and mentee personal identities (e.g., race, gender, first-generation status, affectional orientation) can lead to more effective mentoring relationships. Within the supervisory relationship, Bernard and Goodyear’s (2014) recommendation is to practice identity matching to promote quality clinical supervision. Some studies have suggested that cross-cultural dyads can result in the supervisee experiencing acts of discrimination related to their identities such as race, gender or spirituality, when being supervised by a supervisor with a majority identity such as being white, heterosexual or cisgender (Bishop, et al., 2003; Constantine & Sue, 2007; Ellis et al., 2013). However, Bernard and Goodyear (2014) also offer that a supervisor’s own identity development within the three domains of clinical supervision is often more important for quality supervision.

**A mentor’s perspective**

Literature within counseling and counselor education indicates that mentors also benefit from mentoring relationships in that they may experience a sense of increased career satisfaction and networking opportunities, more instances of successful collaborations, and greater self-confidence (Gibson, 2016; Kram, 1985; 1988; McKibben, et al., 2018). As a response to some of the related theoretical and empirical scholarship, Purgason et al. (2018) conducted a Delphi study to promote a research-informed understanding of mentoring from the perspective of counselor education faculty mentors given the majority of mentorship literature focuses on the mentee’s
experience and development through the mentoring relationship. Further, Purgason et al. (2018) identified some important parallels between a mentor’s role and a supervisor’s role using Bernard’s (1997) Discrimination Model as a framework. Purgason et al. (2018)’s participants identified several roles that a mentor can fulfill (e.g., coach, guide, role model, and supporter) in order to meet the developmental needs of each mentee and engage in an effective mentoring relationship. This is achieved by oscillating between roles depending on what a mentee needs (e.g., a coach evaluates a mentee’s skills and a role model models effective professional practice). This is similar to the way in which clinical supervisors oscillate between the three roles described in the Discrimination Model (e.g., teacher, counselor and consultant) based on the supervisee’s needs (Bernard, 1997). This study poses an important point of interest when considering the mentoring relationship. Within the clinical supervision context, there are theoretical frameworks such as the Discrimination Model (Bernard, 1997), or the Integrative Developmental Model (IDM) (McNeill & Stoltenberg, 2016) which guide decision making processes about when and how to oscillate between roles, as well as what techniques to use as interventions to promote supervisee growth. Within the context of mentorship, these theoretical frameworks are scant, and do not provide models for providing quality mentorship based on best practices (Baltrinic et al., 2018). Purgason et al. (2018) suggest that future mentoring research consider utilizing a developmental model which targets different foci of mentee development.

Types of Mentoring Relationships

The functions of mentoring relationships remain the same across two distinct types of mentoring relationships: formal and informal. Formal mentoring relationships are implemented at organizations and institutions in ways that are structured, purposeful, and systemic (Borders et al., 2012; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). They are often evaluated for effectiveness and extend before and
after each mentor dyad has run its course. Individuals coordinate a system which matches mentors with mentees based on criteria such as professional interests, personality styles and career goals. According to Casto et al. (2005), formal mentorships may increase work productivity, instill motivation and purpose in senior staff and act as an attractive draw to individuals considering joining an organization. Over the past decade, counselor education has begun to formalize mentorship more regularly, as has happened in other fields (Evans, 2019). Several divisions within the American Counseling Association as well as Chi Sigma Iota Honors Society provide formal mentoring programs. Emerging Leaders is an example of a widely adopted formal mentoring program, which engages students and young professionals who exhibit leadership and the ability to cultivate competencies associated with leadership (Evans, 2019).

Informal mentoring relationships occur more organically. Different from formal mentoring relationships, informal mentoring is generated at the individual level. Either the mentor or the mentee seeks the other out to engage in a relationship and take it upon themselves to maintain the quality of the relationship and enact its functions without programmatic and structural supports or expectations (Borders et al., 2011; Burke & McKeen, 1990; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Individuals may informally select mentors and mentees based on the outlined formal criteria above, and they may also choose to select one another based on likeness in identities (Casto et al., 2005). Noe’s (1988) study found that mentors tended to associate with potential mentees who shared identities with them such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Conversely, some studies have indicated that potential mentees were not concerned with identity matching when choosing a mentor, but rather were more focused on finding a mentor with shared career interests who demonstrated competence, attention to feedback and honesty (Blackburn, et al., 1988). This raises a yet unanswered question about whether the factors on which mentors and mentees make decisions to
engage in mentoring relationships differ, and if so how. That said, recent research has begun to 
examine barriers to academic and career success experienced by members of minority groups, such 
as non-white individuals, who have access to a limited amount of role models in the workplace 
and academic institutions (Barcus & Crowley, 2011; Purgason et al., 2005) and offered some 
support to Noe’s (1988) work. More research is needed to better define how informal mentoring 
evolves from another form of relationship such as a supervisory, advising or faculty/student. At 
what point might a relationship turn into informal mentorship and do the participating individuals 
need to share an explicit agreement or understanding? Also, is it possible that formal mentoring 
relationships turn into informal relationships and vice versa? A lack of clarity regarding how 
mentoring relationships evolve may confound efforts to distinguish informal and formal mentoring 
relationships.

Barriers to Positive Mentoring Experiences

While the mentoring scholarship is replete with the benefits of engaging in a mentoring 
relationship, not all mentorship experiences are considered positive (Borders et al. 2012; Hill, et 
al., 2005). Interdisciplinary scholarship has noted that there is a spectrum of experiences related to 
mentoring relationships ranging from positive and empowering to discouraging and hurtful 
(Borders et al., 2011). The mentor-mentee relationship is a unique form of adult development in 
which both parties commit their investment to one another not only in pleasant circumstances, but 
also in grief or disappointment across career and psychosocial contexts (Alderfer, 2014; Levinson, 
1979). Like most relationships, mentoring relationships are subject to potential interpersonal 
discord, as well as psychological dissonance or pain for a variety of reasons. A mentor may be 
frustrated or disappointed with their mentee because they do not witness them living up to their 
full potential. Mentors may also experience criticism from their peers based on who they decide
to mentor. Mentees may feel misunderstood by their mentors or question their mentor’s practices. Further, there can be instances in which those seeking out mentorship engage with mentors who do not meet their needs, or with whom they do not feel comfortable (Alderfer, 2014; Borders et al., 2011; Lark & Croteau, 1998). It is also worth considering whether problematic mentorship can still lead to positive outcomes discussed in the literature. If a mentee is exploited by their mentor, but also experiences positive gains from the relationship, such as increased research productivity, should it still be considered effective mentorship?

When considering the working alliance literature in counseling and supervision, principles that predicate the working alliance translate to the mentoring relationship quite well. In Bordin’s (1983) model of the supervisory working alliance he indicated that the relationship’s foundation is built on common goals for supervisee development such as enlarging one’s understanding of clients and processes, mastery of specific skills and building self-awareness. This model demonstrates some parallels between the supervisory working alliance and some common goals mentors adopt associated with mentee career development. However, as previously noted, a key difference between the two relationships is that the supervisory relationship is hierarchal in nature due to evaluative functions it must provide (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983). This means that trust is essential as part of building the working alliance, and if not cultivated by the supervisor, could potentially harm the relationship (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983).

Johnson and Huwe (2002) proposed a list of factors which undoubtedly have the power to hold negative influence over the mentoring relationship: (a) faulty mentor-mentee matching, (b) mentor incompetence to be a mentor, (c) mentor relational incompetence, (d) mentor neglect, (c) relational conflict, (d) boundary violations, (e) exploitation, (f) attraction, (g) unethical or illegal behavior, (h) abandonment, (i) cross-gender and cross-race mentoring and (j) mentee traits. While
Johnson and Huwe’s (2002) list of factors parallels many that have been explored in literature examining harmful supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Ellis et al., 2013), these have yet to be explored empirically regarding the mentoring relationship within the context of counseling and counselor education. Alderfer (2014) argues that when large-scale mentoring programs are implemented, that the above concerns may increase, as institutional leader involvement may inadvertently lessen the potential positive impact that mentoring can have because the institution is often acting with their values, mission and goals in mind. Given the literature on the role of cultural, religious worldviews in counseling relationships (Luke et al., 2013, 2016) a lack of alignment within a mentorship relationship may limit authentic engagement and development for involved parties. In cases of institution-wide programming, Alderfer (2014) suggests that terms such as “coach” or “sponsor” be used instead to preserve the true meaning of a mentoring relationship. More research investigating how the mentoring relationship is altered in the cases of institution-wide programming is needed to better assess if using different terminology as suggested is appropriate.

In academic and higher education environments, the mentoring relationship is especially vulnerable to the above factors outlined by Johnson and Huwe (2002) due to the tremendous amount of pressure that faculty are under to succeed in their own career paths. Tasks such as securing funding for research, publishing, professional service, committee work and increasing teaching loads may limit faculty’s ability to provide quality mentoring (Borders et al., 2011; Chan et al., 2015; Gibson, 2006; Hill et al., 2005). Scholarship illustrates that some mentors exploit their mentees by overworking them, not providing due credit, or reifying problematic systemic structures within the relationship (Borders et al., 2012, Hill et al., 2005; Johnson & Huwe, 2020). Institutions which have followed a trend of hiring adjunct professors instead of tenure-track faculty
may be promoting a culture of limited access to faculty and therefore less opportunity to access mentoring experiences (Barcus & Crowley, 2012; Boswell, et al., 2015; Kuo, et al., 2017). Using the Context-Phase-Stage-Style Model (CPSS) to contextualize counselor identity development, Owens and Neale-McFall (2014) identified that structural barriers to important resources such as time, financial compensation and recognition of mentorship as part of the promotion and tenure process may limit faculty's abilities and desire to provide quality mentoring. In most university settings, administrators do not support mentoring pursuits in the way that they support teaching, scholarship, and service responsibilities such as committee work and leadership in professional organizations (Owens & McFall, 2014). Because of these barriers, it is possible that students receive some mentorship, but of lesser quality, and may not be fully benefiting from how mentoring relationships can enhance and positively impact professional identity development (Owens & McFall, 2014).

Another factor that can reinforce barriers to positive mentoring experiences is how a mentee engages with their mentor in the mentoring relationship (Alderfer, 2014; Brown, et al., 2009; Purgason et al., 2018). Mentees may not conceptualize the relationship as mutually beneficial, utilize their mentor’s guidance for only their own gain, or they may lack awareness to be an active participant in the relationship (Johnson & Huwe, 2002). Even earlier literature asserted the importance of creating a framework for navigating the complex dynamics of the mentoring relationship (Kram, 1988; Noe, 1988). More recently, Brown et al. (2009) suggested that mentoring pairs create a contract as a means of establishing boundaries and addressing issues that may arise in the mentoring relationship. While not common in mentoring relationships, in clinical supervision it is considered best practice to utilize supervisor disclosure statements and contracts with supervisees in order to acknowledge these complex dynamics and issues which may arise.
(Barnard & Goodyear, 2014; Luke, 2019). This approach may be effective in a structured mentoring relationship, in the way that contracts can be beneficial in supervisory relationships. However, in informal mentoring relationships, or peer mentoring relationships, formal contracts may not be appropriate or accessible.

**Identity Matching in Mentorship**

Across the fields of business, counseling, and higher education, the mentor matching research has examined racial identity (Butler, et al., 2012; Chan, et al., 2015; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015), with limited research on matching mentors based on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + (LGBTQ+) and gender identities (Casto et al., 2005; Chandler, 1996; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Lark & Croteau, 1998). The literature reviewed for the purpose of this study has focused on identity matching in mentoring pairs such as junior and senior staff in business organizations; faculty and student dyads; pre-tenured and tenured faculty, with limited exploration of experiences of female higher education administrators (Grant 2012; Hill & Wheat, 2017). Despite the dearth of research on this topic, there are mixed findings. The majority of the racial identity matching literature indicates the necessity for identity matching in mentoring relationships; however, the scholarship that examines gender identity matching in mentorship yields mixed results. Some studies indicate a necessity for gender matching (Airini et al., 2011; Portman & Garrett, 2005), and some argue that gender is not an important factor in mentoring relationships (Hill & Wheat, 2017). Those who advocate for gender matching in mentoring relationships discuss the importance of mentees being able to access mentors who understand how their gender identity influences their experiences in the workplace. They argue that it is critical that mentees can discuss their nuanced experiences with someone who understands them firsthand (Airini et al., 2011; Portman & Garrett, 2005). However, many qualitative studies have revealed that women who did not have access to other
female mentors were able to receive quality mentorship from male mentors and achieve success in their careers (Hill & Wheat, 2017).

For example, Reddick and Pritchett (2015) sought to examine color-cultural mentorship between white faculty and black students from the mentor’s perspective, an inconsistency within the mentorship literature (Purgason et al., 2018). Reddick and Pritchett (2015)’s findings support that there are benefits of identity matching in mentorship, and the basis of their inquiry acknowledged that because of historical oppression, students of color may not have mentors of color readily accessible to them at their respective predominately white institution (PWI). Chan, Yeh and Krumboltz (2015) also conducted a qualitative study to examine how faculty members practiced mentoring with ethnic minority doctoral students in clinical psychology and counseling. Using grounded theory, Chan et al. (2015) formulated a model of multicultural mentoring which focuses on relational and ecological contexts as opposed to identity matching in mentorship. Their model incorporates individual, relationship and institutional, professional and societal dimensions of mentoring in which the mentor has distinct functions, and appropriate practices such as providing quality feedback on work, being available and accessible as well as offering protection when issues related to racism occur. As a next step it would be helpful for researchers to investigate how mentoring models are utilized. Researchers such as Chan et al. (2015) clearly articulate the necessity of multicultural mentoring, as it provides minority mentees with targeted advice related to navigating graduate school as well as career and psychosocial support that is specific to their identities. However, research such as Chan et al.’s (2015) does not explicitly state how models such as these are most effectively enacted. The current study seeks to explore the distinct features of female mentorship and could in turn provide features that could be infused in cross-gender relationships when same gender mentors are unavailable to mentees.
Two decades before, Lark and Croteau (1998) investigated mentoring relationships of lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) doctoral students and faculty in counseling psychology. What they found supports other research exploring the unique function that a mentoring relationship can have for historically marginalized groups (Burke & McKenn, 1990; Butler et al., 2012; Gilbert & Rossman, 1992; Noe, 1988; Watts, 1987). Lark and Croteau (1998) identified two overarching, contextual themes (Perception of safety for LGB people in their environment and level of “outness” to self and others) which influenced participants’ views of formation, function and impact of mentoring relationships with faculty. Students reported seeking out clues regarding environmental safety. For example, participants would look for LGB-affirming symbols or posters in faculty offices, and by reviewing program materials to assess department inclusivity and how reported discrimination is handled. Participants also explained that they considered specific factors such as perceived safety of their mentor, and their level of comfort with their affectional orientation when deciding if/how to share their LGB identity with their mentor(s) (Lark & Croteau, 1998). In counseling and counselor education literature, no other studies have built upon Lark and Croteau’s (1998) work, leaving critical gaps in ways to effectively engage in mentoring relationships with LGB doctoral students.

The empirical literature supports that in the instances in which mentees endorsed experiencing positive mentoring relationships, they reported a subsequent positive impact on their course of personal and professional development (Burke & McKenn, 1990; Butler et al., 2012; Chan et al., 2015; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Purgason et al., 2018; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015). Mentees reported that positive mentoring relationships were most often what helped them to feel safe and affirmed in their training environments regardless of aforementioned factors. Thus, the mentoring relationships that allowed them to fully engage in their professional development
instead of having to be consumed with the struggle to survive. What will be an essential next step is what aspects of the mentoring relationship such as mentor traits, activities, and interactions lead to these feelings of safety, affirmation, and progress.

**Female Mentorship**

Within mentorship literature, there is a sect of scholarly work, which examines mentorship experiences specific to female-identifying individuals. In the 1970s, when more female individuals were entering the workforce and assuming positions that had historically been filled by male individuals (Chandler, 1996; Noe, 1988), this literature began to grow. As females entered more leadership positions, the majority of them had to navigate workspaces that were predominantly created and led by white males who had cultivated methods of communication, interaction and career building specifically for other white males (Chandler 1996; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Noe, 1998). This masculine culture often created barriers for female employees and leaders such as isolation, stereotyping, pay inequity and slower advancement (Avent Harris, et al., 2019; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). Academia, and more specifically, counselor education, is not immune to these barriers. Even though counselor education is one of the only disciplines in the academy where females are the majority of faculty members, they still experience pay inequity, slower advancement and unique challenges to balancing work and family commitments (Avent Harris, et al., 2019; Hill et al., 2005). Trepal and Stinchfield (2012) conducted a phenomenological study of 20 female counselor educators. Participants in this study reported that both their male and female colleagues made remarks questioning their ability to be competent and productive faculty in light of parental leave (Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). In 2005, Hill et al. surveyed 115 female counselor educators about career satisfaction and quality of life within counselor education programs. Hill et al. (2005) found that female participant experiences were nuanced when compared to male
colleague experiences, especially when considering their experiences of their work being controlled by some of their colleagues. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (2017) calculated that about 60% of counselor education faculty are female-identifying individuals, however there is little scholarship that examines how mentorship may be helpful to female counselor educators experiencing differences from their male colleagues both overt and covertly.

**Relevance of Psychosocial Function**

Some empirical studies have found that the psychosocial supports recognized in the mentoring relationship are more relevant to female mentors and mentees when compared with their male peers (Burke, et al., 1990; Dreher & Ash, 1990). It is probable that this trend is a result of gender socialization (Chandler, 1996). Given that females are socialized to be caretakers and nurturers and may be perceived as needing more emotional support than male peers, higher value may be placed on the psychosocial component of female mentoring relationships. Alternatively, a psychosocial emphasis in female mentoring relationships could be a result of the mentoring pair joining over a sense of female-specific career challenges that males do not face (Chandler, 1996; Grant, 2012; Joseph-Collins, 2017; Rheineck & Rolan, 2008).

**Scarcity of Mentors**

Over 30 years ago, Noe (1988) reported that the mentorship available to females was not keeping up with the number of females entering management who could benefit from mentoring. Noe (1988) identified six barriers that could be prohibiting females from accessing mentor relationships: lack of access to information networks, stereotypes and attributions, tokenism, socialization practices, cross-gender relationship norms, and reliance on ineffective power bases. Like Noe (1988), Burke and McKeen (1990) reviewed business and management literature to
examine how and why mentorship is linked to female career success within organizations, and why it is often more difficult for females to find mentors than males. They also explored potential issues that may arise in cross-gender mentoring. Given the societally influenced power differential between males and females, conflict may arise in male mentor and female mentee pairs instead of positive relationship development (Burke et al., 1990; Burke & McKeen, 1990). Females in management may not feel like an in-group member in male-dominated organizations and thus may not feel comfortable seeking out mentorship or be given access to knowledge by male managers about developing informal networks at work (Burke & McKeen, 1990). Kalaitzi et al.’s (2017) systemic literature review reveals that female leaders across healthcare, academia and business may believe that they are unfit to serve as mentors given the lack of leadership skill training available to them, and slower advancement when compared to their male peers. Females’ motivation to secure mentor relationships may be stifled by these factors, in addition to whether or not they believe they are perceived as competent by colleagues and subordinates (Burke & McKeen, 1990).

While more females hold leadership positions in business management, as well as in senior faculty positions and higher education administrators today than in the 1980s and 1990s, the current literature suggests that females still struggle to locate female mentors for support and guidance. Across disciplines, females of color report more difficulty than their white peers, and the majority of the reviewed literature addresses African American female experiences, with much less representation of Latina or Asian female experiences (Alberto, 2018; Grant, 2012; Moss, 2014; Tran, 2014). Females in higher education administrative positions such as provost, vice president, and president also report more difficulty in locating female mentors (Hill & Wheat,
2017; Kalaitzi et al., 2017; Joseph-Collins, 2017; Paterson & Chicola, 2017), given that there is even less female representation in higher education senior leadership.

**Producing Female Leaders through Mentorship**

In higher education settings where senior leadership is predominantly white and male, females may interpret their access to mentors as limited and therefore perceive their chances of obtaining leadership roles at their institutions to be less than their male peers (Anyikwa, et al., 2015; Hammer et al., 2014; Hill & Wheat, 2017). While in some fields, such as counseling, female-identifying individuals are broadly represented, they continue onto doctoral programs and advance to leadership positions slower and proportionally less than their male peers (Hammer et al., 2014). For some male scholars, this may bring to question whether female-identifying individuals should be considered marginalized within a context where they make up the majority of the population. Regardless of this fact, marginalization is about power differentials and not necessarily about numeric representation (Chandler, 1996; Hill Collins, 1990). The field of counselor education still exists in a systemic space where female-identifying people are marginalized and this is often reflected in how many female experiences are filtered through the male lens (Hammer et al., 2014; Hill et al., 2005; McKibben et al., 2018). In some institutional settings, the disparity between male and female faculty members may even result in female faculty members taking on additional responsibilities not expected of their male peers (Chandler, 1996). This may include unspoken expectations such as taking on more advisees, acting in a counselor role to students, and being “volun-told” to serve on diversity- or minority-related committees. These expectations are especially true for females of color (Chandler, 1996; Grant, 2012; Ramey, 1993). Scholars have consistently indicated over time that female faculty and administrators benefit from mentoring in ways which help combat oppressive experiences, including taking on more of an emotional
workload than their male peers, stereotyping, and microaggressions (Black & Magnuson, 2005; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Ramey, 1993).

Eagly and Carli (2003) conducted a meta-analysis within leadership theory literature regarding how women may demonstrate advantages in engaging in traditional leadership roles; however, their competence as leaders may be evaluated with prejudice in their organizations, especially those that are male dominated. Eagly and Carli (2003) suggested that females often naturally enact transformational leadership practices such as being future-oriented, focusing on mentorship and empowerment, and building trust in staff through role modeling. They, and others, argued that transformational leadership is most congruent with the female gender stereotype that females are more egalitarian, supportive, and considerate of followers when compared to their male peers (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eagly, et al., 2003; Yoder, 2001). Given the complex gender considerations in mentoring relationships Alderfer (2014) suggested that future research could benefit from a multi-gender research team in which researcher and participant pairs share their gender identity. Further, within counselor education, the connection between mentorship and leadership development in female counselor educators would benefit from investigation that is more explicit.

**Female Mentorship in Higher Education**

In higher education, mentoring scholarship focused on female mentorship experiences also highlight accessibility as a barrier for females seeking mentors. Research indicates that males access mentoring relationships with faculty at significantly higher rates than their female peers (Blackburn et al., 1981; Chandler, 1996; Noe, 1988). Several factors have made accessing mentorship relationships easier for females in recent decades than in the 1980's and 1990’s, including a greater increase in female leaders, evolving workplace policies and an increase in
mentorship programming within organizations. However, barriers still exist today in STEM, higher education, counselor education, social work, business and medicine (Anyikwa, et al., 2015; Barabino et al., 2019; Farkas, et al., 2019; Hammer, et al., 2014; Hill & Wheat, 2017). This is especially true when considering that females are more likely to participate in parental leave than their male colleagues. The literature has noted that this type of career interruption can impede on mentoring relationship development and maintenance, and cause stress over navigating promotion and tenure processes (Chandler, 1996; Hammer et al., 2014). Future research could provide insight into how mentorship can help female individuals navigate these career challenges common to women in the academy, and those who act as administrators in higher education.

**Presence of Mentorship in the Counseling Profession**

Gallacher (1997) suggested that mentoring includes the transmission of knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs, and values—the very dimensions asserted as necessary for successful counselor identity development. Currently, only a small proportion of published articles in counseling and counselor education journals discuss mentorship (Boswell et al., 2015; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Cartwright et al., 2021; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Rheineck & Roland, 2008), which influences the inconsistency across the literature base. Mentorship literature in counselor education will sometimes directly link mentorship to professional identity development, doctoral program completion, research productivity, and leadership development (Borders et al., 2012; Boswell et al., 2015; Cannon, 2017). However, other sects of scholarship, such as leadership development and scholarship regarding minority counselor educator experiences, have indicated mentorship as an important factor in their findings but were not seeking to study mentorship as part of their research goals (Holm, et al., 2015; McKibben, et al., 2017; Portman & Garrett, 2005). Further, mentoring is only named four times in CACREP doctoral standards (2016), and it is not noted at
all in the ACA Code of Ethics (2014). Within CACREP doctoral standards (2016), mentorship is stated to play a role in counselor education related to doctoral professional teaching identity, and CACREP (2016) also defined individual, triadic and group supervision as types of mentoring relationships, contradicting previous theoretical work by Kram (1985; 1988) and Alderfer (2014) who assert that mentoring relationships are unique from supervision, coaching and sponsorship. If future research seeks to clarify how mentoring relationships differentiate between other essential relationships in our field, perhaps we could arrive at a resolution regarding how mentoring relationships are uniquely important.

Counselor education scholars agree that mentoring relationships usually provide complex and important development to both mentors and mentees. However, there is some uncertainty regarding how mentors carry out both formal and informal mentoring, what they deem to be the most effective approaches, measuring mentoring outcomes, and which populations may benefit from mentoring more than others (Baltrinic, et al., 2018; Borders et al., 2011; Borders et al., 2012; Orr, et al., 2008). Further, much of the mentorship literature is limited to contexts of faculty-student and junior-senior faculty dyads (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Borders et al., 2011). This section provides an overview of the mentoring literature in counselor education and is organized by the different contexts in which mentorship in counselor education has been explored.

**Mentoring and Advisory Relationships**

In counselor education (CE), a great deal of scholarship has focused on the impact of mentoring and advisory relationships between faculty and doctoral students in addition to pre-tenured faculty (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Borders et al., 2011; Casto et al., 2005; Lazovsky & Shimoni, 2007; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). While a mentoring relationship may differ from a faculty advising relationship, there are parallels between the two, especially when considering that
common goals are career development, enhanced student engagement, and increased student confidence (Kuo et al., 2017). Some scholars have found that the mentoring received as a doctoral student was vital to program completion, a sensing of evolving legitimacy, as well as professional identity development. Protivnak and Foss (2009) found that in the context of doctoral program completion, mentoring was essential for building a student’s self-efficacy, development of professional values and navigating department culture because it provided a safe relationship for the student to address each of these components within their program. Lazovsky and Shimoni (2007) found that mentoring was essential for doctoral students in preparing to enter faculty roles. However, this research is over a decade old, and this phenomenon would benefit from further investigation in future studies.

With these positive findings in mind, CE mentorship literature has not adequately examined how negative mentorship experiences might hinder doctoral student progress. In the clinical supervision literature, the concept of harmful supervision has begun to be examined more thoroughly, including its impact on supervisee development and client welfare (Ammirati & Kaslow, 2017; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Harmful supervision has a variety of forms within the working alliance, and it may be possible to draw parallels from this literature to inform future research regarding harmful mentorship. Harmful supervision may occur through supervisor rigidity, cultural insensitivity and discrimination, lack of affirmation in skill development, or multiple relationships (Ammirati & Kaslow, 2017; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Perhaps future studies exploring mentorship in CE should assess best practices in mentorship, but also practices mentees deem detrimental. Qualitative research aimed at identifying critical processes occurring within mentoring relationships could assist in informing future best practices (Charmaz, 2006; Hays & Wood, 2011).
Faculty Mentoring Relationships

Limited research has been completed in the counselor education literature regarding the mentoring of junior faculty; however, the limited literature is unanimous on the importance of mentoring junior faculty to promote confidence in teaching and scholarship, as well as more collegial engagement within departments (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Hill, 2004; Magnuson, et al., 2009; Rheineck & Roland, 2008). Along with counselor education doctoral students (Lazovsky & Shimoni, 2007), counselor education junior faculty also seek out mentoring relationships with the purpose of obtaining career guidance. In some cases, pre-tenured faculty are assigned senior faculty as mentors to assist them throughout the promotion and tenure process (Borders et al., 2011). Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) surveyed 139 pre-tenured CE faculty to examine research mentorship between pre-tenured faculty and senior faculty. Out of all of the participants, 107 reported receiving research mentorships, and the researchers found that pre-tenured faculty highly valued guidance from their mentors related to navigating the promotion and tenure process, systemic politics of the department and institution, writing help, and career decision making. However, participants perceived obtaining guidance on producing rigorous research to be less of a priority than the aforementioned concerns, which brings into question the quality of research being produced from these mentoring relationships (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008). Given that these participants prioritized navigating the promotion and tenure process, navigating systemic politics and career guidance, it would be advantageous to qualitatively investigate what pre-tenured CE faculty decide to focus on within their mentoring relationships with senior CE faculty and why.

While Briggs and Perhsson (2008) focused more on the professional functions of the mentoring relationship, Borders et al. (2011) utilized Sorcinelli’s (2000) 10 principles of supportive practice for tenure-seeking faculty in assessing their department’s approach to
mentoring promotion/tenure-seeking faculty (PTSF). Sorcinelli’s (2000) principles are conceptually categorized into support in navigating the review and tenure process, encouraging positive connection among faculty and students as well as guidance in work/life balance, and tend not only to the professional function of the mentoring relationship but the psychosocial one as well. In assessing the success of the departmental mentoring structure, Borders et al. (2011) identified mixed results.

Overall, senior faculty and PTSFs reported benefits of mentoring analogous with aforementioned literature such as increase of career productivity and development, new perspectives on curriculum development, better understanding of the department culture, and a greater sense of community within the department. Conversely, some participants reported that it was time consuming and stressful to balance multiple mentor relationships, and that the informal approach to mentoring made it difficult to replicate. Lastly, several PTSFs reported that they felt pressured to say yes when a senior faculty proposed a mentoring relationship due to hierarchical differences within the department (Borders et al., 2011). Given the mixed results yielded in Borders et al.’s (2011) study, it would be beneficial for future research to explore what types of practices implemented by the mentors were viewed as most helpful for the mentees. Further, a study that investigates how mentee choice in the relationship drives attitudes of satisfaction. Both could be helpful for CE senior faculty and other leaders in the creation of more formal mentoring programs within their departments and institutions.

**Professional Identity Development**

Dollarhide, et al. (2013) used grounded theory to provide a framework for CE doctoral student professional identity development. Though they did not set out to focus on mentorship, they identified a series of transformational tasks which doctoral students complete as they evolve
from clinician to doctoral student, to counselor educator. Mentoring emerged as an essential part of a doctoral student’s experience as they integrate their multiple identities and grow more confident in their abilities to fulfill the roles of a counselor educator. Using consensual qualitative research, Limberg et al. (2013) found mentoring to be a vital domain for professional identity development in CE doctoral students. In three focus groups based on cohorts, first-year and second-year CE doctoral students identified mentoring as an integral part of their developmental process, and perceived mentoring relationships to provide them with psychosocial support, an increase in networking opportunities and opportunities to present with faculty at professional conferences (Limberg et al., 2013). These participants identified that they also highly valued the opportunity to discuss their professional development with various faculty members. However, based on Limberg et al.’s (2013) results, it is unclear as to how the participants believed they were receiving mentorship, as they were only able to name some positive outcomes they believed to be related to mentorship. These outcomes included activities such as networking and presentation opportunities, as well as the chance to speak with faculty about their professional development. Future research should seek to investigate CE doctoral students’ perceptions about what activities and interventions make up the basis of mentorship.

Researchers have continued to argue that counselor education and preparatory programs should advocate for mentoring relationships as they aid in professional identity development in students and provide both counseling and CE students with personal and professional role models as they further conceptualize their career paths (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). Some professional identity development research has focused on master’s level counseling students. Owens and Neale-McFall (2014) discussed the potential positive impact that mentoring may have on counselor trainee professional
identity development, in an attempt to advocate for a more formal process of developing professional attitudes among counselors-in-training. Using the Context-Phase-Stage-Style (CPSS) model as a framework, they examine potential benefits of mentoring and barriers to accessing quality mentoring. They reviewed previous mentoring literature and echoed that a mentoring relationship between a faculty and student can be a significant determinant of success, professional competence, perceived emotional support and identity development within students (Bloom, et al., 2007; Casto, et al., 2005; Clark, et al., 2000; Ferrer de Valero, 2001; Taylor & Neimeyer, 2009). Still, there is a lack of understanding of how mentorship becomes a significant determinant of student success based on the literature reviewed for this study.

**Research Productivity**

In many studies exploring faculty-student and pre-tenured faculty-senior faculty mentoring relationships, research mentorship has been a common theme, and a positive relationship between receiving research mentorship and scholarly productivity has been identified in several studies (Borders et al., 2012; Briggs & Perhsson, 2008; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Okech, et al., 2006). Perhaps parallel to clinical supervision, mentorship includes different foci, such as research, professional development or teaching within the CE context (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Now, guidelines for research mentorship exist through the Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES), which focus on mentee development and act as a framework for both formal and informal mentoring relationships across faculty-student dyads and tenured faculty-junior faculty dyads (Borders et al., 2012).

In part, these guidelines were a response to previous empirical and conceptual articles (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Okech et al., 2006; Protivnak & Foss, 2009) recommending more in-depth exploration of the phenomenon of mentorship for both doctoral
students and pre-tenured faculty in CACREP programs. However, these guidelines are not necessarily utilized or enforced across programs or across CACREP (2016) competency domains, despite being consistent with CACREP standards (Borders et al., 2012; CACREP, 2016). Further, the authors of the ACES research mentorship guidelines stress that these guidelines are only a starting point for more formal integration of research mentorship. The guidelines in practice would only be as effective as the mentor’s research and mentoring skill sets, as training and programming for potential mentors is scarce within the field (Borders et al., 2012; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008).

Since the development of the guidelines, Kuo et al. (2017) have used quantitative methods to highlight that the advising relationship between faculty and counselor education students can moderate a student’s research productivity despite other student factors such as fear of failure, research self-efficacy, and motivation. While it is a vital finding that this relationship can enhance student research productivity, this study mimics other scholarship that is outcome-focused on its approach to findings. A critical next step to filling a gap in the literature is to examine the process of mentoring so that we have a better understanding of how we arrive at these desirable outcomes.

**Teaching Mentorship**

In counselor education, scholarship focusing on teaching mentorship has indicated that counselor education doctoral students who access quality teaching mentorship demonstrate more self-confidence in their teaching and their ability to successfully obtain future faculty responsibilities (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Warnke, et al., 1999). Using Q methodology, Baltrinic et al. (2018) examined counselor education faculty members’ preferred styles of teaching mentorship. What resulted was that participants had three different viewpoints on how to engage in teaching mentorship: as a supervisor, facilitator or evaluator. A third of participants reported that teaching mentorship begins when doctoral students act as teaching
assistants or co-teach while supervised by a more experienced peer or a faculty member. For participants, providing a safe place for doctoral students to make mistakes and learn from feedback was essential to the mentor relationship (Baltrinic et al., 2018). They believe that the mentor relationship sustains itself on support, as well as the mentor role-modeling professionalism for the doctoral student in a variety of situations.

**Mentoring Female Counselor Educators in Higher Education**

Within the counselor education literature, there is limited examination of female counselor educator mentoring experiences, as most of the mentorship literature focuses less on personal identities in mentoring relationships and more about the outcomes of mentorship as stated above (Casto et al., 2005). However, there is a small body of literature exploring experiences of female counselor educators related to issues such as work-life balance, wellness, mothering in academia and career satisfaction (Alexander-Albritton & Hill, 2014; Haskins et al., 2016; Hermann, et al., 2013; Hill, et al., 2005; Shillingford, et al., 2013; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012; Trice-Black & Butler, 2013).

Mentoring is, again, not a part of the research questions being asked by scholars but is often found embedded in resulting data from studies that have examined female counselor educator experience. Across several qualitative studies, participants make mention of the positive impact of mentorship, often related to maintaining career satisfaction, navigating promotion and tenure, as well as remaining resilient in the face of race-related stress (Haksins et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2005; Shillingford et al., 2012). Other studies within this literature base (Alexander-Albritton & Hill, 2014; Hermann et al., 2013; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012; Trice-Black & Butler, 2013) do not include mentorship as part of their findings. They have supported that females in counselor education experience female-specific barriers and nuances discussed in business and higher
education such as motherhood and parental leave, complexities in the intersection of race and gender and maintaining work-life balance related to familial and institutional expectations. The fact that mentorship is not an explicit target in reviewed research and yet is a continual finding in scholarship related to female experiences in counselor education is a gap in the literature. It is possible that this trend reflects female socialization within the workplace previously described in this review.

Answering the call to explicitly explore the process of female mentorship, Casto et al. (2005) provided guidelines for both mentors and mentees in female mentoring dyads in counselor education based on higher education mentoring literature and their collective experiences. Potential mentors should provide female mentees with a safe environment so that they may share their ideas, experiences and challenge their surroundings while feeling valued and appreciated (Casto et al., 2005). Additionally, it is important to communicate clear expectations about one’s commitment to mentees, and to establish boundaries to promote understanding that a mentoring relationship is different from a friendship due to the power differential between a mentor and a mentee. Casto et al. (2005) also suggest that female mentors catch female students on the edge, who seem less involved and less engaged than their peers. The authors argue that these mentees’ self-confidence may benefit from encouragement offered by a mentor. Casto et al. (2005) provide suggestions for female mentees as well. They suggest that mentees may benefit from seeking out multiple mentors to meet their professional needs and that engaging with a female mentor can combat feelings of marginalization and isolation in a male-dominated environment (Casto et al., 2005). Mentees can choose potential mentors by personality and professional interest matching. Further, mentees are more likely to experience fulfilling mentoring relationships when they communicate their professional goals and expectations of the relationship and commit to
maintaining the relationship as the mentor does (Casto et al., 2005). This set of guidelines provides a conceptual starting point for the exploration of female mentorship in counselor education; however, it is over a decade old, and based in the personal experiences of the authors. Future scholarship would benefit from empirical investigation of female mentorship among counselor educators.

Gaps in the Literature

Considering the scope of mentorship research within counselor education broadly, it is evident that there are gaps in the literature examining female counselor educators’ experiences with mentorship. Instances in which the phenomenon of mentorship have been explored have, by and large, focused on potential outcomes of engaging in mentorship (e.g., increased research productivity, doctoral program completion, increased teaching confidence) and have neglected to examine the processes within the mentoring relationship which promote these desired outcomes.

To address this critical gap in the literature, future research should aim to examine how both the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship are enacted. To adequately examine how female counselor educators enact mentorship, it is imperative to further assess the components of the mentoring relationship as are presented in this literature review. Specifically, how are roles defined within the mentoring relationship? In which context(s) do informal mentoring relationships between female counselor educators evolve from an advising relationship, or collegial relationship? What interventions are mentors utilizing in order to satisfy the functions of mentorship and why were they selected? How do mentors and/or mentees decide how to oscillate between the functions of the mentoring relationship, and is this oscillation intentional? Are there characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators that are perceived to be unique to this population, and if so, what are they? By beginning to explore these
questions using qualitative methodology, researchers can utilize findings to develop frameworks and models for enacting quality mentorship for female counselor educators to assist in developing best practices for future mentors.

**Analysis of Closely Situated Studies**

The current study seeks to examine the mentorship experiences of female counselor educators specifically related to the processes that define the course of the relationship, such as its beginning and end, as well as the processes throughout the relationship that lead to the desired positive outcomes of mentorship identified in previous studies. This section examines 10 previously conducted studies that are situated closely to the current study based on their use of similar qualitative methodologies, similar sampling, data collection and analysis procedures, as well as population. Studies found outside counselor education are discussed first, followed by the few empirical and conceptual pieces in our field addressing female experiences involving mentorship. Given the dearth of scholarship within counselor education regarding female mentorship, some of the following studies were found in closely related fields such as higher education, and leadership studies. However, in each study, the fact that participants are female-identifying individuals within academic settings remains consistent. Lastly, the following studies are successful in describing certain aspects of mentorship experiences such as the *who* (female-identifying individuals), and the *what* (positive outcomes from engaging in mentorship). However, what is lacking from these studies is a deeper understanding of *how* the female mentoring pairs reach yielded positive outcomes from their relationship.

**Higher Education & Leadership**

Airini et al. (2011) utilized a form of narrative inquiry, the Critical Incident Technique, to explore the experiences of women seeking advancement in higher education leadership roles in
New Zealand. Specifically, these researchers sought to answer research questions related to which parts of women’s experiences help or hinder their advancement in higher education leadership, and what possible changes are necessary to better enable women to advance? While this study did not explicitly investigate female experiences of mentorship, lack of access to mentorship and gender inequities were present in the results.

An overall trend of Airini et al.’s (2011) findings was that participants were twice as likely to discuss instances that helped them advance when compared to instances that they believed hindered advancement. They were also more likely to report professional influences rather than personal influences when discussing advancement in leadership. Five themes emerged from the data included: university environment, work relationships, proactivity, invisible rules, and personal circumstances. Participants whose university offered formal professional development programming by consequence created more mentoring opportunities, which resulted in the mentor and mentee presenting at conferences and/or authoring articles collaboratively and thus more opportunities for career growth. Participants who worked or taught at institutions without formal mentoring opportunities suffering more gender-related inequities when compared to their peers at the aforementioned institutions. About one-third of participants discussed that proactivity was essential for leadership advancement, however, about half of the participants had to engage in additional labor when professional development and mentoring programs were not offered to them. Participants discussed having to seek out their own mentors and collaboration projects and having to volunteer to take on opportunities within their immediate department because they believed it was one of the only ways to develop and practice management skills (Airini et al., 2011). At times, this agency would backfire: One participant reported that when she took on a management role for her department’s research center, her own research productivity suffered. She reported that she
took on the opportunity to showcase her managerial skill set, as well as to bolster her chances for promotion, which was at the decision of her male supervisors. Not only was her promotion significantly delayed because of increased workload, but her relationships with her supervisors suffered, as she had inadvertently communicated the message to her supervisors that her research agenda was not important to her (Airini et al., 2011). Another participant echoed how the perception of an unsupportive supervisor can limit one’s confidence in her abilities, and the support of the greater institution. She reported that after clashing with her director regarding her teaching style, she became so concerned with her lack of confidence, that she audited teaching courses offered by her university and failed to secure her promotion that year (Airini et al., 2011). Taken collectively, one trend in the findings is that the very opportunities womxn were pursuing to bolster their leadership experiences ended up actually delaying their eligibility for promotion because the additional labor detracted from factors such as research productivity.

The results of Airini et al.’s (2011) study suggest some themes worth further exploration within the realm of female mentorship. Lack of access to mentorship as a female in academia can result in the phenomenon of having to engage in additional emotional labor in order to secure the career and psychosocial support necessary to endure academic career development. This raises questions related to when and how mentoring relationships are initiated and would warrant further exploration of if mentoring relationships could be used almost like a preventative measure to tackle burnout or phenomenon such as gender-related stress in the workplace. This is yet another study which provides an overview of positive outcomes of mentorship for women when they engage in mentoring relationships—specifically formal relationships. However, the readers are left wondering what processes these formal relationships included as far as activities, interventions and initiatives to promote career confidence, endurance and satisfaction.
Participants represented in Tran’s (2014) phenomenological study identified as women of color who were serving in leadership roles at Hispanic-serving institutions (HSI) of higher education. This study aimed to examine how mentorship can promote success for women leaders of color in higher education as well as how systemic implementation of mentoring practices could benefit this population. Important themes emerged from this research, which confirm that mentorship is often unseen or invisible work in higher education within both the academy and administration. Participants in this study noted that even when networking and receiving guidance at leadership summits and professional conferences, they were not aware that they were receiving mentorship from other female leaders. Participants did not identify as being a mentee or part of a mentoring relationship, however, they were able to identify how connecting with other women leaders of color benefited their career development as well as psychosocially (Tran, 2014). While participants were not necessarily conscious of when they were receiving mentorship, they did suggest the important role mentorship plays in the career advancement of women leaders of color in cultural, personal, professional, and systemic contexts (Tran, 2014). Participants also highlighted that accessing mentors was more likely if, as mentees, they initiated their search.

As other studies discussed in this chapter have indicated, the narratives in Tran’s (2014) study suggest that mentoring is multidimensional, and women leaders of color have had positive experiences of mentorship in both formal and informal capacities. These participants often found mentorship to be most effective when they obtained a variety of mentors with whom to connect. Based on their results, Tran (2014) suggests that future research address critical questions about who has access to mentors, and which mentoring models are most successful for women of color mentees and why. The present study aims to answer similar questions related to women in
counselor education, especially surrounding the issue of visibility of mentorship, to which Tran’s (2014) results allude as a concern.

In her dissertation, Wiggins (2017) completed an interpretive phenomenological analysis using Black Feminist Thought to examine the mentoring relationships of black female higher education administrators with other female administrators. Data from the interviews conducted with each participant revealed four themes that represent the unique perspective of black female administrators as well as confirm previous conceptual and empirical research about female mentorship experiences (Wiggins, 2017). Participants reported feeling hyperaware of their blackness and their femininity in higher education spaces, which subsequently influenced them to actively seek out relationships with other black womxn at their institution. Participants also discussed their gratitude toward work, which instilled a sense of responsibility to give back to others in an effort to share how they navigated their identities in difficult spaces such as higher education. This theme of Opportunity to Give Back through Work was often achieved through providing mentorship to fellow black, female administrators (Wiggins, 2017). Wiggins (2017) noted that participants in this study labeled mentorship as an intervention or relationship designed for male, non-black colleagues without their identities in mind. Similar to female participants in studies analyzed in this chapter, mentoring experiences varied greatly among them. Participants shared multiple mentoring experiences with other black females, others were only mentored by male or non-black mentors (Wiggins, 2017). Additionally, some participants had no mentoring experiences with other black female administrators, but those who did greatly emphasized the important role that mentoring played in their career development, dealing with race-related stress, and work/life balance.
Wiggins’ (2017) acknowledged the important role of identity matching in mentoring relationships for black women situated in higher education administrative roles. Based on the results of this study, it is imperative that future research within counselor education investigate the nuanced differences that women experience which may promote feelings of difference, isolation and marginalization from their male colleagues. It will be especially important for future research to commit to diverse samples of participants so that researchers can identify if and how levels of sexism when combined with oppressions such as racism or homophobia further influence female counselor educators’ need for mentorship. Further, based on female counselor educators’ intersecting identities, are some interventions more pertinent for use within the mentoring relationship than others?

Grant (2012) utilized black feminist thought (BFT) framework to investigate the significance of mentorship for African American identifying women in higher education leadership. BFT makes the intersection of race and gender as experienced by African American women the central focal point of its theory. Within this framework, Grant (2012) conducted a qualitative study to better understand experiences of African American women leaders in higher education through their narratives. All participants had been working as tenure track faculty for at least three years in Educational Leadership at PWI’s and endorsed that they had been mentored during their doctoral studies, with the intention of pursuing faculty and administrative positions. Overall, the participants acknowledged the importance of having an African American woman faculty mentor them through their respective programs as well as peer mentoring from other African American women. They also named that mentorship helped them to better navigate academia and promoted confidence in entering professoriate roles (Grant, 2012). Each participant stated that had their mentors been a white man or woman, they would not have been able to provide
a deep enough understanding of the experiences of African American women at PWI’s to provide adequate support and guidance (Grant, 2012). In instances in which participants were not afforded a faculty mentor, they relied on their African American female peers for mentoring relationships. They framed these instances as informal mentoring, and much like seeking support from a “sister” or “friend”. This study differs from some others examining female mentoring experiences in academia because it focused more heavily on the psychosocial function of mentorship as opposed to the career function. The psychosocial focus that this study adopted is unique in that it brings up questions for future research to answer, related to how mentee identities (i.e., race, gender, sexuality) might mediate how mentors prioritize focus on the relationship’s functions. Additionally, given that the black-, female-identifying participants framed their mentoring relationships to parallel to sisterhood and friendship, future research may warrant exploration of how various mentorship styles may align differently with different populations.

Hill and Wheat (2017) utilized a postmodern feminist framework in addition to a feminist qualitative methodology to present the voices of 16 women who were either in line to holding university presidency, or already acting as university presidents regarding the meaning that mentors played throughout their career development. Through conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews with participants, Hill and Wheat (2017) derived four themes from the collected data, two of which contradict much of the literature previously discussed in this chapter: 1.) The minimal roles of mentors; 2.) How gender dynamics characterize mentoring relationships; 3.) Mentoring with multiple, non-traditional mentors; and 4.) The benefits of mentors. The most contradicting theme described how participants discussed that mentors played a minimal role throughout their career development. Participants indicated that they lacked a mentor in the workplace, and the majority of them attributed this to the fact that they began their careers without
the ambition to pursue university presidency and therefore did not realize that obtaining a mentor could have been helpful for their career development (Hill & Wheat, 2017).

This finding directly conflicts with counselor education mentorship research, which consistently identifies mentorship as a primary factor of development and resiliency (Airini et al., 2011; Wiggins, 2017). Participants also reported that aspects of their identities such as age, gender and race moderated their access to mentors over their career. Further, 13 out of the 16 participants reported that they were the first women in their administrative position in line to presidency, and that this environmental factor meant that there simply were no other female mentors available who had held the same position as them (Hill & Wheat, 2017). Overall, participants did not perceive their lack of access to female mentors as limiting their career advancement.

The findings of this study present a dynamic worth investigating related to how participants simultaneously did not view mentorship as integral to their career development, while also perceiving it as inaccessible given their respective positionalities. Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) (Harding, 2004) would argue that these participants’ responses are a result of the knowledge they have been afforded based on their social, political and positional standing. Hill and Wheat’s (2017) study further supports that women experience both systemic and cultural barriers when accessing mentorship for career development, as well as calls upon women in senior leadership positions to act as mentors. While it offers suggestions such as incorporating formal mentoring programs at institutions and placing more women into senior administration positions on campus (Hill & Wheat, 2017), it does not deepen readers’ understanding of how participants specifically engaged in mentoring relationships, or how the mentoring processes were decided.

In a qualitative study, Joseph-Collins (2017) were the first to investigate the mentorship experiences of seven female presidents at Adventist Higher Education institutions (AHEIs) due to
the lack of representation of women in presidency at AHEIs. The study’s findings revealed that participants valued mentorship as a critical part of their career advancement as female leaders, however most of the participants were mentored by men and not women due to lack of access to other women in leadership positions, and the perception that female leaders at AHEIs were less inclined to engage in mentorship (Joseph-Collins, 2017). Further, participants were able to identify that they were engaging in informal mentoring relationships as opposed to formal, and that their experiences involved both the career and psychosocial functions of mentoring.

Like the other studies in this chapter, Joseph-Collins (2017) provides recommendations that institutions work to develop formal mentoring initiatives for women, especially those in leadership roles that are male-dominated as well as promote more women into presidency to promote more access for women to access other women as mentors. However, they do not name how institutions could best utilize their resources such as time, funding, and training capabilities to promote a formal mentoring program for female leaders. Joseph-Collins (2017) also does not consider how the patriarchal climate alluded to in this study as a result of AHEI culture may be contributing more to the lack of representation in female leaders than lack of access to mentorship.

While Joseph-Collins (2017) does not discuss strengths and limitations associated with their study, it is evident that this study only represents a small and specific niche of women at a specific type of religious institution, and thus may not be applicable to women in counselor education. Further, this study does not name a methodological or theoretical frame within their publication. It would benefit from a more detailed explanation of methodological procedure, including the framework from which it drew.

Counselor Education
Through constructive grounded theory, Cannon (2017) sought to examine how female doctoral counseling students’ research mentoring experiences promoted scholarly development in her dissertation. Cannon (2017) utilized intersectionality as a framework to further investigate how gender in addition to other identities mediate this population’s ability to navigate research mentorship within doctoral counseling programs. Through the results of Cannon’s (2017) study, the Female Doctoral Counseling Students Research Mentoring Process Model emerged. This model describes the factors which significantly impacted the participants’ research mentoring experiences, mentoring functions, and the outcomes of mentoring interactions. Within the model, factors which influence research mentoring relationships are addressed such as (a) program/department culture, (b) interpersonal dynamics within the mentoring relationship, and (c) participant individual factors (e.g., social capital, cultural influences, and self-esteem).

Cannon’s (2017) grounded theory study offers a foundation for future research related to how various cultural and social factors impact female doctoral students’ scholarly development through their research mentoring relationships. However, this study only explored mentoring experiences related to research, and did not focus on general mentoring experiences of female doctoral students in counselor education. This study did not make distinctions regarding types of mentoring relationships (i.e., formal, informal or peer), nor were activities or interventions discussed to further solidify what processes positively reinforced scholarship outcomes (Cannon, 2017). Aligned with the current study, Cannon (2017) suggests that future research examine the areas of differences and consistencies across mentoring experiences in order to assist counselor educators in designing empirically validated approaches which can be integrated in discipline-wide guidelines and recommendations.
Boswell et al. (2015) sought to examine the mentoring needs of master’s and doctoral students as well as pre-tenured faculty in counseling and counselor education programs. Utilizing a phenomenological approach to their research, they identified seven meta-codes to describe the lived experience of mentees in counseling and counselor education programs. Across the three sample groups, the codes were: “Relationship between mentor and mentee,” “Communication style or patterns,” “Preferred gender of mentor,” “Introduction to the relationship,” “Mentee needs,” “Mentee benefits,” and “Experiences as a mentee” (Boswell et al., 2015). 29 out of 30 participants in this research identified the mentoring relationship as beneficial, and the majority of participants reported that the relationship positively influenced their growth and professional development regardless of education or career stage. Each of the sample groups presented with developmentally specific concerns (Boswell et al., 2015). For instance, master’s students reported a stronger desire for their mentor to be approachable, encouraging, and individualized than the other two sample groups. Master’s students also reported a significant need for mentors to provide feedback, information and advice in an unsolicited manner, because of the perception that mentors are more aware of opportunities and possibilities for career growth than the mentee. Further, master’s students most frequently reported that they valued their mentor’s ability to expose them to opportunities for growth, which extended their learning outside of the classroom. Interestingly, Boswell et al. (2015) found that all doctoral-level participants reported the ability to choose the gender of their mentor was important. Specifically, female-identifying mentees valued the opportunity to discuss female-specific stressors with their female-identifying mentor, further building a case that future mentorship research in counselor education should specifically investigate the experiences and processes of female counselor educator mentoring relationships. Doctoral students also valued having access to multiple mentors more often than master’s students
and pre-tenured faculty. This preference was guided by the desire to have their needs met by different mentors who identified unique areas of expertise (Boswell et al., 2015). The pre-tenured faculty participants reported the highest rate of “unmet expectations” from their mentoring relationships. Understandably, Boswell et al. (2015) noted that perceived “unmet expectations” led to negative experiences in their relationship and professional development. This result in particular prompts questions about potential disconnect between mentor and mentee expectations. Did mentors believe that they were providing adequate mentorship? Did mentees attempt to communicate their needs, and if so, did they perceive them as being heard by their mentors? Being able to have multiple needs met by one mentor, in addition to feelings of connectedness were more significant desires for this sample group than the other two. While Boswell et al. (2015) provide a richer picture of mentoring needs of students and pre-tenured faculty in counseling programs; they neglect to highlight nuances, which may be beneficial in creating a framework or model for mentoring practices in the future.

While Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) phenomenological study did not seek to directly study mentorship, the results identify that the role of mentorship would be an essential practice for assisting women in navigating academia within the context of counselor education. This study sought to examine female counselor educators’ experiences with microaggressions as doctoral students and faculty in CACREP programs. Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) study reveals similar findings to Wiggins (2017) related to the complexity of power differentials among colleagues related to intersecting identities such as gender and race. This study also echoes Wiggins’ (2017) theme “Hyperawareness of self” with a similar theme unveiling participant experiences being not only hyperaware of their femininity but also about the microaggressions being committed. Unique to Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) study, the female participants discussed instances in which they
experienced microaggressions and committed microaggressions unknowingly. Perhaps this result may provide a counter argument to the necessity of identity matching in mentoring relationship if women are also found to engage in oppressive actions consciously and unconsciously.

Avent Harris et al. (2019) suggests that mentoring relationships can be a useful tool for helping female counselor educators combat the stress brought on by persistent microaggressions, given the importance participants placed on seeking out allies among their peers and colleagues. While this mentorship outcome for female counselor educators would be important to examine further, Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) study represents additional research conducted within counselor education that describes mentorship as a solution to a current problem and as something vital to specific population within the field—in this case female counselor educators.

The results of this study related to mentorship help to further the argument that future research must directly investigate how female counselor educators engage with mentorship to mitigate stresses associated with the female identity in counselor education. Additionally, Avent Harris et al.’s choice of phenomenology begins to unveil critical information about female experiences of microaggressions in counselor education; however, it did not directly investigate female experiences of the mentoring relationship within counselor education. The current study will seek to build upon Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) work by directly investigating mentorship related to female counselor educators utilizing constructivist grounded theory. By using this framework, the current study has the potential to unveil critical information about the processes by which female mentorship in counselor education occurs, which is different from the results from the several phenomenological studies analyzed in this review. This approach will be essential for adding to a more dynamic understanding of mentorship experiences of female counselor educators.
Within the counselor education literature, there is a newly developed framework for providing mentoring towards female-identifying individuals, the Women’s Inclusive Mentoring Framework (WIMF) (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). This framework combines promoting access to leadership development and mentoring opportunities to female-identifying doctoral students and faculty within any given academic department on a basis that does not privilege social capital, financial standing or a sense of prestige. WIMF was developed by synthesizing recommendations from counselor education, higher education and female mentorship literature, in which primary factors emerged. The factors that resulted are as follows: a.) relational-cultural theoretical approach; b.) quality mentors and mentor-mentee matching; c.) culturally competent mentoring; d.) vision development and planning; and e.) women- and counseling-specific mentoring interventions (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020).

While WIMF succeeds at identifying potential strategies to enacting each factor within the framework, the authors note limitations. WIMF is in the infancy of its development, and the authors (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020) subjectively conceived the foundational categories of which the framework is constructed. Further, WIMF has yet to undergo any empirical testing. Maccombs and Bhat (2020) suggest that future research tests for efficacy of this framework as well as the foundational support for the five identified factors above. Future studies could be qualitative and quantitative in nature and investigate the perspectives of both the mentors and mentees. A longitudinal study on mentee development could also help identify strengths and limitations of WIMF (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Specifically, Maccombs and Bhat (2020) state that an essential next step in development would be to focus on the experiences of women of color related to participating in WIMF.

**Collective Analysis**
Given Maccombs and Bhat’s (2020) work and the other studies collectively, we can see that the literature pertaining to mentorship experiences of female counselor educators would benefit from future research addressing the processes by which mentorship occurs and produces the positive outcomes identified in each of the scholarly works above. Due to the dearth of literature within counselor education addressing female experiences of mentorship, the author drew upon research in closely related fields to better understand what previous studies have examined related to this phenomenon. By exploring outside of the field of counselor education, this review benefitted from finding mentorship research as experienced by female populations closely related to female counselor educators such as female faculty, graduate students, or higher education administrators. All the analyzed studies were qualitative in nature, except for one conceptual piece pulled from the counselor education literature which was the only published work located that provided a framework for female mentorship in counselor education. Many of these studies utilized forms of phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and grounded theory as frameworks for their methodology, however two studies did little to articulate their respective methodological processes beyond defining them as qualitative and feminist (Hill & Wheat, 2017; Joseph-Collins, 2017).

Taken collectively, the fact that two of these studies are dissertations and not peer-reviewed is worth considering (Cannon, 2017; Wiggins, 2017). Perhaps these studies were not considered rigorous enough for publication in peer-reviewed journals or perhaps the authors decided not to pursue publication for their work for reasons unknown to us. While this observation holds a tentative nature, this might also indicate that in higher education, mentorship is often yielded in results of studies pertaining to retention, leadership, or professional identity development. This is an important trend to note because it speaks to the lack of explicit exploration of mentorship
throughout the counseling scholarship. Further, it simultaneously promotes the idea that mentorship may be inextricably linked to the activities listed above. This is evident in two of the studies in this analysis (Airini et al., 2011; Avent Harris et al., 2019). Airini et al. (2011) and Avent Harris et al. (2019) both sought to investigate different phenomena from mentorship but labeled it as an important theme within their results. Possibly, mentorship becomes conflated or mislabeled as advising which might be viewed as the more important work in the academy (Ng et al., 2019). Perhaps this trend may also indicate that directly investigating mentorship itself is not considered important work (Tran, 2014). It is also possible that, as suggested by some scholars, mentorship is considered to be an emotional task not rooted in academic prowess and therefore is put upon women and other minorities within department settings (Airini et al., 2011; Chandler, 1996), suggesting that mentoring is often incorporated into these quasi-roles that are not explicitly researched. When assembled, these studies collectively suggest that mentorship may be simultaneously hidden work and yet essential work for promoting life-sustaining behaviors of the academy such as program completion, research productivity and teaching. Further, when taken together, these studies suggest that there may be something inherently feminine in pursuing mentorship in academic settings as a means of sustenance, connection, and skill development given its inherently relational and nurturing qualities.

The present study will begin to address the aforementioned gaps in the literature base by examining the mentorship experiences of female counselor educators. Specifically, this study will examine and define the processes that occur over the course of the mentoring relationship, which lead to the desired positive outcomes of mentorship. The hope is that this approach to assessing the mentoring process will promote a more dynamic understanding of the mentoring relationship
and its purposes that is parallel to clinical supervision frameworks and what the counseling profession understands about the supervisory alliance.

**Conclusion**

This review provided an overview of mentorship using scholarship from higher education, business management, and counselor education as its scope, which was then utilized to examine literature related to female mentorship experiences with a critical focus of female mentorship experiences within counselor education and closely related fields. Taken together, the literature reviewed in this chapter suggests that the majority of scholarship examining mentorship is both population- and outcome-focused as opposed to process-focused across disciplines. To address these critical gaps in the literature, future research should aim to examine how both the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship are enacted. In order to examine how female counselor educators, enact mentorship, it is imperative to assess the components of the mentoring relationship as are presented in this literature review.

This provides the author with the necessary framework to begin to address critical gaps in female mentorship literature within counselor education. This framework will encompass both the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship, as well as how the relationship can be uniquely beneficial for women.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Across disciplines, female mentorship is named as an essential component for navigating both career and psychosocial aspects of one’s professional development. However, in counselor education, little research exists regarding effective frameworks for providing mentorship to women. In the current study, I will use Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) combined with Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) to explore mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators for the purposes of developing a theory which describes the process by which effective mentoring occurs according to female counselor educators.

First, this chapter will provide an overview of CGT and FST as my chosen methodological and theoretical frameworks for this qualitative study. I then provide rationale for why, when combined, CGT and FST are ideal frameworks for investigating female counselor educators’ experiences of the mentoring relationship process. Next, I will then shift into examining my positionality as the researcher of this study followed by describing my use of CGT throughout my research procedures, including participant recruitment, data collection, trustworthiness measures and conclude with my steps for data analysis.

Constructivist Grounded Theory

As an inductive methodological framework, grounded theory contains systematic, yet fluid guidelines for collecting and analyzing qualitative data from which the researcher then constructs theories (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hays & Singh, 2011). In grounded theory studies, the researcher begins with an inductive approach to analyzing gathered data, and then engages in iterative strategies of comparative data analysis with the purpose of keeping the researcher constantly engaged and involved with collected data and emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2014). By the early 1990s, some scholars adopted a constructivist turn of Glaser and Strauss’ (1967) original approach
to grounded theory by moving farther away from the positivist paradigm it adopted to one that was more pragmatic in tradition.

Constructivist grounded theory (CGT) answers many criticisms raised about earlier grounded theory approaches such as its inflexible mechanics in practice as well as its tie to modernist epistemology (Charmaz, 2014). Charmaz (2016) stated that, “Many qualitative researchers study disadvantaged people and want to help change their situations. If so, starting research with (not on or about) these people and their concerns moves our studies toward social justice” (Charmaz, 2016, p. 50). Other scholars echoed this sentiment (Conrad, 1990; Ellis, 1995; Richardson, 1993), and believed that by taking on a more postmodern approach to grounded theory, they would in turn be able to provide a completer and more representative picture of participants’ narratives and emphasize the importance of subjectivity in experiences (Charmaz, 2014). Further, CGT disputes the notion that researchers are neutral parties in the research process and acknowledges that we may not be aware of our preconceptions of the phenomena we seek to explore. CGT calls researchers to examine how their unique positionality shapes all aspects of the research process as well as data analysis.

Charmaz (2014) built upon grounded theory by stressing that the acts of knowing and learning are immersed in social life and suggested using six differentiating approaches to research in CGT to produce more rigorous research in her (2014) book:

1. Researchers should simultaneously involve themselves in data collection and analysis.
2. Analytic codes and categories should emerge from data and not from previously deduced hypotheses.
3. It is crucial to engage in the constant comparison method, which involves making comparisons of data during each stage of data analysis.
4. Each step of data collection and analysis should be advancing theory development in a way that most accurately represents participant experiences.

5. It is essential that researchers engage in memo-writing throughout the research process to elaborate on emerging categories, specify their distinct characteristics, define relationships between categories, and identify gaps within the findings.

6. In the spirit of subjectivity, theoretical sampling should be utilized to work toward theory construction, and not for representation of the population.

By engaging in these practices, researchers are then able to control their research process and increase the analytical potential of their work while ensuring that the researcher approaches their work with participants in a partnership.

**Feminist Standpoint Theory**

Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) is critical of how the existing societal structures create a hierarchal social order which sustain levels of access to knowledge based on social relations such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, ability, etc. (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). Politically charged and oriented in epistemological thinking, FST attempts to unveil how the act of scientific discovery, scholarship, and shared knowledge further prescribes a limiting and oppressing social contract to individuals not considered members of a ruling group (Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). FST theorists use these *standpoints* to highlight how social interaction and learning are experienced by marginalized groups who have been assigned inferior social locations at the systemic level.

Smith (1987) analyzed how women’s expectations and activities are shaped by our male-dominated culture (e.g., women are expected to nurture, engage in care-taking roles, and fulfill emotional labor while men are expected and encouraged to lead). Related to research, FST scholars
argue that academic contributions made by marginalized groups such as black women are often excluded, suppressed, and appropriated within their respective disciplines (Hill Collins, 1990; Harding, 1991). This type of oppression can perpetuate the ruling group (i.e., white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, male) to reproduce instances of biases within their field and further the neglect felt by marginalized populations through the act of silencing (Hill Collins, 1990; Harding, 1987; 1991). Further, this phenomenon limits access to various forms of knowledge to oppressed groups. For instance, historically and currently, the medical profession silences aspects of female reproductive health related to pleasure and sexuality (Tuana, 2004). In Watson et al.s’ (2018) study exploring how feminist-identified women cope with discrimination, the researchers paired CGT with FST, given how FST centralizes female experiences throughout the research process. FST claims that women experience a *double consciousness* due to the fact that they possess a marginalized identity. Women develop an awareness of not only their own experiences, but the experiences of the dominant group (Brooks, 2007; Watson et al., 2018). FST theorists seek to enact social change by sharing their critical analyses of problematic social orders with those in more privileged social locations who are less likely to draw these conclusions on their own. In selecting FST as a theoretical framework for the current study, I will be able to provide an anchor for my readers and demonstrate how the theory that develops from the gathered data refines, extends, challenges and supersedes extant concepts within FST. These theoretical codes will also assist me in explaining how I conceptualize the arrangement of the key ideas that emerge from the data.

**A Socially Constructed Framework**

Together, CGT and FST provide a framework that permits me as the researcher to promote scholarship that privileges the voices and experiences of a marginalized group that has little recognition in the counselor education literature base. They are complimentary in that they
prioritize a co-constructive, and mutually reinforcing relationship between the researcher and participants, while continuously promoting critical thinking in the academy as a male-constructed and -ruled space (Charmaz, 2014; Collins, 1990; Smith, 1987). CGT and FST approach knowledge and the act of learning as being integrated within the social context. Both approaches specifically study processes and provide ample methods for theorizing action in underrepresented groups (Charmaz, 2017; Collins, 1990). The mentoring relationship is inherently social and theorized by scholars to provide the mentee with a context for learning that is both career- and psychosocial-focused. Not only do CGT and FST fit ideally within this socially constructed paradigm, but they also prioritize amplifying marginalized voices, similar in some ways to the work of mentors reviewed in Chapter 2. CGT and FST will guide this critical inquiry into mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators and assist in developing a theory identifying the process by which effective mentoring occurs between female counselor educators. My hope is that by utilizing both CGT and FST in my approach, I will be able to conceptualize the mentoring process with a more dynamic understanding of the mentoring relationship in a way that can provide a theory for future female counselor educators.

**Research Questions**

Using CGT as a methodological approach and FST as a theoretical framework, this study sought to examine and define the processes that occur over the course of mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators. Specifically, the current study sought to answer:

1. What activities and interventions occurring in mentoring relationships are associated with positive outcomes for the mentee?
   a) How do these activities and interventions produce positive outcomes?
2. How are the career development and psychosocial functions of mentorship carried out by mentors?
   a) How do mentors oscillate between the mentorship functions?
   b) What factors influence mentors to oscillate between mentorship functions?
3. Are there characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators that are unique to this population, and if so, what are they?

**Researcher as an Instrument**

Given the integral role that researchers play in the qualitative research process, it is important that researchers transparently claim their positionality, experiences, and previously obtained knowledge about the phenomenon which they seek to study (Hunt, 2011; Kline, 2008; Morrow, 2005). In CGT, it is difficult to separate the roles of participant and researcher, as both are seen as co-researchers within the study (Charmaz, 2014). As the researcher explores participants’ experiences, the researcher works in partnership with participants in the investigation of the research questions. Like a chemical reaction, both the researcher and the participants are changed by the interaction, and the product that emerges is co-constructed throughout the process (Charmaz, 2014). Researcher subjectivity is unavoidable and thus it is crucial to consider one’s biases, assumptions, potential power dynamics, and ethical issues that may emerge throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2011; Morrow, 2005). As I obtained informed consent, interviewed participants, analyzed data, and presented my findings, I intentionally communicated to participants that my priority was to capture their authentic perspectives. As a researcher, one of my goals is to honor participant perspectives above any pre-existing assumptions I have entering the research process. These biases and assumptions might be related to my own experiences as both a mentee and a mentor while in a counseling and counselor...
education doctoral program. After 4 years participating in both formal and informal mentoring relationships as well as providing mentoring, I have a conceptualization of what effective mentoring practices look like from those experiences. I addressed my biases by making sure that my analytic conclusions tied directly to data gathered from participants and not my past experiences. By utilizing CGT for the current study, it allowed me to gain a deeper understanding directly from the participants rather than imposing my beliefs and theories on the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2014).

I identify as a white, queer, cisgender female who, at the time of this study, was a doctoral candidate in a counseling and counselor education program at a large, Northeastern university. Before conducting the current study, I conducted an extensive literature review of conceptual articles, as well as quantitative and qualitative research exploring mentorship and the mentoring relationship across the fields of business, higher education and counseling. Within this review, I focused heavily on female experiences of mentorship within these three contexts and made some assumptions about the fields of higher education and counselor education in particular, related to the framing of mentorship. While I view higher education and counselor education as different fields, I also understand them to be inextricably linked given that the majority of counselor educators work within the context of higher education, not just in the academy, but also on institutional committees that usually rely on interdisciplinary work and divisional crossovers. Further, I believe it is important to acknowledge that some counselor educators do not choose to pursue faculty positions. Counselor educators can be found in dean and provost positions, as well as counseling center director and training center positions. For me, this further emphasizes the link of counselor education and higher education. I believe that as counselor educators, we develop a skill set that lends itself well to a variety of contexts within higher education institutions.
Generally, I perceived the literature regarding female mentorship to be calling for greater accessibility to quality mentorship for women based on its positive impact on professional and personal development. I also understand this call for greater accessibility to be tied to trends of multiculturalism and social justice within both the counselor education and higher education.

**Methodological Procedure**

The current study employed CGT as its guiding methodological framework given its inductive nature and commitment to upholding researcher responsibility in conveying participants' voices and experiences accurately while working alongside participants as opposed to over participants (Charmaz, 2014). Given the gaps in counselor education literature regarding female mentoring processes, CGT provided an ideal frame for operationalizing the processes involved in the female mentoring relationship which have yet to be theorized within the literature base. Using CGT allowed me as the researcher to create a theory of female mentorship with socially just practices in mind, so that the foundation of future research examining the female mentoring relationship in counselor education is rooted in the population’s unique voices and experiences.

**Sampling**

Before any recruitment of potential participants or data collection began, I obtained IRB approval of the current study as one means of ensuring this study meets ethical standards of research. In CGT, participant recruitment usually begins with purposive sampling to identify potential participants (Charmaz, 2014). This sampling method promotes researcher intentionality when selecting participants to promote richer and more in-depth data in line with the theoretical goals of the current study (Charmaz, 2006; 2014). I selected participants based on the following inclusion criteria: a) 18 - 64 years of age, b) identify as female, c) have completed a CACREP-accredited, doctoral-level degree in counselor education, counseling and counselor education, or
counselor education and supervision d) self-identify as a counselor educator e) and identify as having experienced positive outcomes due to a mentoring relationship during their career in counselor education. In order to recruit participants who match this inclusion criteria, I posted a Research Participant Request (Appendix D) on CESnet which explained the aims of the current study, participant inclusion criteria as well as information on how to contact me. CESnet is a widely utilized Internet listserv for counselor educators and supervisors and yielded an adequate number of necessary participants. In order to increase access to potential participants, I also used the CACREP Program Directory on www.cacrep.org. Using the directory, I reached out to female-identifying counselor educators who taught in both master’s and doctoral counseling programs that are currently CACREP-accredited. In reaching out to them, I sent them the same copy of the Research Participant Request via email. Both participant recruitment methods resulted in me successfully using purposive and theoretical sampling throughout data collection and analysis as is common in CGT (Charmaz, 2014). Theoretical sampling is an effort to simultaneously collect and analyze data while also deepening each consecutive interview to examine emerging themes among participants. For theoretical sampling specifically, I used CESnet for recruiting purposes. I used purposive sampling (Bahari et al., 2016; Maree, 2019), to help to diversify the participant group according to race, ethnicity, affectional orientation, first-generation status, ability, nationality and/or age. I made these efforts in order to ensure a participant group that accurately represents current demographics of female-identifying counselor educators. Ultimately, all but one volunteer acted as participants in this study, the one exclusion being related to age restrictions put forth by the Institutional Review Board. As a final sampling method, I used snowball sampling at times when participants offered to refer their own mentors and/or mentees for recruitment.

Participants
In reviewing best practices for CGT methodology, I found a large range of suggestions for the necessary number of participants needed to reach data saturation (8 – 60). Creswell (2013) advised that researchers should conduct between 20 and 60 interviews while engaging in a grounded theory study in order to achieve sufficient data saturation. Guest et al. (2006), however, counseled that data saturation can occur within the first 12 interviews with participants. Further, Charmaz (2006; 2014) described several CGT studies with sample sizes ranging from 8 to 12 interviews. Within counseling scholarship, it is recommended that researchers remain reflexive throughout the sampling process and continuously reassess sampling procedures, including number of interviews, theoretical saturation, and adequacy of data throughout the research process (Hays & Singh, 2011; Hays & Wood, 2012). With this guidance in mind, I recruited 15 participants who participated in semi-structured, in-depth initial interviews. Out of these 15 individuals, 8 followed through with participating in a subsequent focus group.

Instruments

**Informed Consent**

All potential participants received an electronic copy of the researcher’s informed consent (Appendix C) form which indicated IRB approval, the purpose of the current study as well as a description of participant inclusion criteria. This document also included the name and contact information of my dissertation chair, in the instance that the potential participant wished to ask her questions, or if they had concerns about any aspects of the current study. All potential participants had access to the informed consent before they chose to participate in this study.

**Demographics questionnaire**

For the purpose of the current study, I collected the following demographic information from the participants: a) age, b) race, c) affectional orientation, d) nationality, e) ability status, f)
first generation graduate student status, g) occupation, h) year of doctoral degree completion, i) what type of setting(s) do you work in? j) what level(s) of students do you work with (If applicable), and k) tenure status (If applicable)

**Semi-structured interview guide**

I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method for the current study because I wanted to position myself to be able to focus on specific areas of the participants’ mentoring relationships, while simultaneously hearing the participants’ viewpoints (Rabionet, 2011). I believed that for the purpose of this study, unstructured interviews posed the risk of not being able to elicit enough data for the purpose of theoretical construction (Fontana & Frey, 2003; Rabionet, 2011). I used a format (see Appendix A) in which I provided an opening statement about how I am defining the mentoring relationship, and then asked the participant a general question about mentoring relationships of which they have been part to elicit conversation. Below I have listed this introductory question, as well as follow up questions I created, to keep the scope of the interview focused on the mentoring process rather than its purpose. I based this interview guide on two main factors: my research questions, and my review of the mentorship literature. Rabionet (2011) suggests that a critical component to conducting a successful interview is to be well versed in the phenomena the researcher intends to investigate.

**Focus Group Guide**

Charmaz (2014) emphasizes the importance of collecting data using multiple methods in CGT to help guarantee richer theory development. The current study sought to not only use semi-structured interviews to collect data but also a focus group of participants after individual interviews were completed. This helped to ensure that the emerging theory accurately represented participant experiences of the mentoring relationship process, as well as provided an additional
measure of member checking to promote this study’s credibility. The focus group guide I used provided participants with questions meant to promote additional interaction with the data and emerging theory (See Appendix B).

**Data Collection**

I intended to recruit 15 - 20 participants with the purpose of conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews as well as one subsequent focus group as a second data collection method. At my thirteenth interview, and in consultation with my principal investigator, I determined that I had reached saturation from conducting individual interviews. I then invited all 13 participants to attend the focus group, and 8 attended. Because not all participants were able to attend the focus group, I conducted two additional, individual interviews with 2 other participants to discuss the thoughts and feedback of the 13 participants who attended the focus group. As was done in Peters et al.’s (2020) grounded theory study regarding socially just and culturally responsive leadership, saturation was determined when there were no new emerging themes or diversions present in the data as well as when the emergent theory is confirmed to be fully developed by the researcher, and participants. After conducting the first four interviews, the researcher revisited the initial script for the semi-structured interview and incorporated targeted follow-up questions to elicit process-oriented responses that were more in line with the presented research questions. This is in line with Charmaz’s (2014) methodological approach to CGT. I utilized the focus group and two follow-up interviews to examine both confirmatory and divergent data that arose throughout the data analysis process. Charmaz (2014) suggests that adding multiple data collection methods to a CGT study can be beneficial for developing findings and utilizing a focus group in a CGT study aligns well with the essential experience of meaning making and knowledge creation at the center of CGT (Charmaz, 2014). That which takes place in the context of a focus group acts as a microcosm
for the larger field of counselor education. By using a focus group in addition to individual interviews, participants had the opportunity to engage with each other around the questions asked to further make meaning, react and interact with each other’s experiences (Fontana & Frey, 2013). Using a focus group also complimented FST in that it promoted a shared space for female counselor educators to discuss experiences navigating a shared context in which knowledge acquisition and the act of learning are critical to success. As suggested by Hays and Singh (2011), I also utilized reflexive practices, such as memoing, to continuously assess the need to recruit additional participants (Hays & Singh, 2012). As a qualitative researcher, I believe that the richness of data which emerged from a CGT approach has the most effective approach for theorizing a model for an effective framework for mentoring female counselor educators.

**Trustworthiness and Rigor**

Morrow (2005) defined trustworthiness in qualitative research as including credibility, validity and rigor, and purports that trustworthiness can be a tool to assess the quality of research. As the primary researcher in this study, I utilized multiple methods to establish trustworthiness through memoing, triangulation, member checking, peer debriefing and thick description.

**Memoing**

Within qualitative inquiry, the researcher’s role is continuous and interwoven throughout the entirety of the process. Thus, it is critical that the researcher utilizes the act of memoing to record thoughts, reactions, and questions as they develop throughout the research process (Hays & Singh, 2012). Memoing is a form of trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry which addresses credibility, confirmability, authenticity, and substantive validation when implemented. Further, according to Charmaz (2014), the act of memoing is essential to establishing trustworthiness within a CGT study because it provides researchers with a method of consistent data interaction
which aligns with CGT’s constant comparison framework throughout data collection and analysis (Charmaz, 2014; Hay & Singh, 2012). By requiring the research assistants as well as myself to engage in memoing throughout the research process, everyone’s reflectivity was increased as was the number of opportunities to triangulate with the other individuals involved in the study (Hays & Singh, 2012). Further, by memoing consistently, I extended my bracketing practices throughout the research process which kept researcher subjectivity in check (Peshkin, 1988).

**Triangulation**

I utilized five student research assistants from the Department of Psychology at a private liberal arts institution as a form of investigator triangulation during the data analysis process. I recruited assistants who were either in their junior or senior years, who had completed at least one research course in their coursework, and who were highly recommended by their instructors of record to ensure competent analysis. Further, I selected five students who collectively represented a diverse makeup of social identities. This was done in line with FST, to promote the number of different lenses represented on the research team (Hill Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). I then provided them with additional training relevant to the current study. Each of the assistants acted as second and third coders to a group of the interviews to provide better accuracy and depth in analysis of the data. I provided each research assistant with the following readings: Charmaz (2017), which discusses the power of using CGT for critical inquiry; and Peshkin (2000) which provides guidelines for maintaining awareness of research subjectivity. Assistants had two weeks to complete these readings, at which point I met with them over Zoom to discuss any questions they had about the research process. I then conducted a 90-minute training with the group of assistants which included expected memoing procedures, a coding tutorial as well as guidance on how to utilize Sharepoint for ongoing communication about findings, questions, and
interactions with the de-identified data. Each time a research assistant coded an interview, for the first and second time, I met with them over Zoom or Microsoft Teams to review how their coding and my own coding aligned and diverge. After this second meeting, I corresponded with the research assistant via their own memos that they shared with me, and email correspondence. These forms of communication helped to serve as a means of constant comparative analysis of the emerging data, an essential component of data analysis in CGT according to Charmaz (2014; 2017).

**Member-checking**

Member-checking allows participants the opportunity to better establish credibility within a study by reviewing a researcher’s interpretation of data and theory development so that the results can accurately represent the participants’ complete experiences (Hays & Singh, 2011). To engage in member-checking, I sent each participant their interview and focus group transcripts once coded for additional thoughts, feedbacks, or concerns. Given the collaborative nature of CGT methods, member checking helped ensure trustworthiness by promoting co-construction of the emerging data (Charmaz, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Hays & Singh, 2012). Charmaz (2014) views member-checking as an essential method of trustworthiness in CGT, because it situates the participants’ interpretation of data to be as important as the researcher’s interpretation thus continuously prioritizing participant experiences in theory development.

**Peer debriefing**

I utilized a peer debriefer as an additional check for trustworthiness because this allowed for an individual outside of the research team to locate inconsistencies and divergent codes throughout the data (Patton, 2002). In Bruner’s (2017) CGT study investigating the persistence of marginalized doctoral students in counselor education, a peer debriefer was utilized to provide
regular feedback about data collection and analysis as well as researcher positionality throughout the study. None of the 10 closely situated studies reviewed and analyzed in Chapter 2 claimed to use a peer debriefer as a method for establishing trustworthiness in their methodological approach. Nonetheless, by using peer debriefing as a central method for trustworthiness, the current study built upon the existing literature base regarding female mentorship in counselor education. I selected an individual who demonstrated interest in the phenomenon of mentorship related to female counselor educators to act as my first peer debriefer, and she also identified as having engaged in mentoring relationships previously. This helped ensure that this peer debriefer was invested in the outcome of the current study. The second peer debriefer selected was chosen because she has several scholarly publications that explore the phenomenon of female mentorship in counselor education and thus could offer a perspective of expertise. Several qualitative methodology experts in counselor education assert that peer debriefing is a sufficient way to ensure an emergent theory that is data-driven (Hays & Singh; Hays et al., 2016). This approach is suggested by Hays and Singh (2012) as method to help develop ethical validation when interpreting data.

**Thick Description**

Hays et al. (2016) conducted a review of methodological rigor in the *Journal of Counseling & Development* qualitative research articles over a 15-year period. The utilization of thick description of participant quotes and data analysis procedures was one of the most common trustworthiness methods adopted across social work, counseling psychology, counseling, and counselor education qualitative research articles (Geertz, 1973; Hays et al., 2016). Thick description is a traditional strategy for establishing rigor in qualitative research by helping address credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Hays et al., 2016). I used thick
description to provide a detailed account of my research process and findings to the point that readers of the current study would be able to apply the results to relevant contexts and replicate the study themselves if they so choose (Hays et al., 2016). Morrow (2005) also recommends that scholars in counseling and counselor education strive to provide readers with thick descriptions that contextualize as well as deeply explain research processes and results.

Analysis

In CGT, data analysis occurs over at least two main phases. The first phase is an initial coding process in which the researcher codes data line by line, followed by the second phase of focused coding which consists of reviewing the most significant and/or frequently reoccurring initial codes to synthesize and theorize the data collectively (Charmaz, 2014). Throughout both phases of data analysis, I used constant comparative analysis. Constant comparative analysis is a trademark of CGT methodology, requiring each researcher to oscillate between collected data in order to compare emerging codes and themes in order to make comparisons at all levels of the analytical work (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2009; Hays & Singh, 2012). By comparing data with data, the researcher was actively able to engage in testing out their ideas about what they are observing in the analytic process, and thus make sense of the data in new ways that can lead to the surfacing of otherwise hidden concepts (Charmaz, 2014).

Initial Coding

Through initial coding, I raised analytic questions about data gathered from interviews starting from the first one. I first conducted an interview, and then transcribed it verbatim by transcribing it personally or utilizing the HIPAA-compliant transcription service Rev.com. After the interview was transcribed, I used line-by-line coding as my initial coding practice. Line-by-line coding is a common first step in data analysis in grounded theory practices (Charmaz, 2014;
Glaser, 1978). Concretely, it requires that the researcher provide a code for each line of data in order to intentionally access details and potentially undetected patterns within each participant’s experience (Charmaz, 2014). Charmaz (2014) suggests the tactic of line-by-line coding when attempting to capture not only the nuances of a participant’s experience, but also their environment, sequence of events, emotion and implicit context that may be lost in a more generalized observation.

After coding an interview line by line, I engaged in memoing to record my thoughts, questions, and reactions related to my position in the analytical process as this acted as a secondary source of data to which I could compare the primary data collected from the interviews (Charmaz, 2014; Hays & Singh, 2012). I kept my memoing log in a password-protected Microsoft Word document, as Microsoft Office 365 is HIPAA-compliant. This document was stored on my personal DropBox account which is also HIPAA-compliant. As is strongly suggested by Charmaz (2014), and is considered ideal practice in CGT, I did my best to commit to coding an interview line by line before conducting my next interview, as each coded interview further informs the subsequent interview (Charmaz, 2014). This approach also emphasized the constant comparative practice of moving back and forth between earlier interviews and more recent ones throughout data analysis so that I was engaged in which concepts were being confirmed in the data, and which might have been divergent. There were only two instances where this was not possible given scheduling conflicts and availability of participants and research assistants. In these two instances I worked to honor this tenet of CGT by conducting line-by-line coding in sets of interviews before moving on to a subsequent set of interviews.

Once I progressed through the process outlined above, I provided a research assistant with an interview to be coded and met with them to observe how our respective coding aligned and
diverged from one another. Differences across our coding were thoroughly discussed to consensus (Charmaz, 2014). In total, each transcript was coded by myself and two research assistants. I utilized this same coding process for the focus group following the individual interviews, and the two follow up interviews subsequent to the focus group. By using a focus group in addition to individual interviews, participants had the opportunity to engage with the researcher as well as one another to further define codes within the initial coding phase of data analysis (Fontana & Frey, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012). I recorded the focus group with my HIPAA-compliant Zoom license, in the same way that I recorded each individual interview with Zoom. I also used a HIPAA-compliant transcription service to transcribe the focus group. I compared the feedback from the focus group with the existing codes created by the research assistants, participants and myself and then led two follow up interviews with two new participants to discuss my findings thus far. By including this step of comparative analysis with my research assistants in this part of initial coding, I was able to distill and sort the data to give me, as the researcher, a handle on how codes, concepts and themes were evolving in the collected data before moving on to the focused coding phase of data analysis (Charmaz, 2014). Throughout data analysis, grounded theorists emphasize what is happening throughout the process participants are describing when they begin initial coding of the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glasser & Strauss, 1967).

**Focused Coding**

Focused coding follows the initial coding phase and requires the researcher to make decisions about what initial codes are most useful in beginning to solidify an emerging theory (Charmaz, 2014). In CGT, focused coding is a critical step in data analysis as it helps to advance theory development through the synthesis and conceptualization of larger sections of data (Charmaz, 2014). In the current study, the focused coding process contained steps aimed at
ensuring that the theory that was emerging from the data had been carefully constructed to accurately represent the participants’ experiences.

After the initial coding of each interview and comparing line-by-line coding with each research team member, I revisited each interview to define focused codes. In doing so, I continued to engage in the memoing process using specific focused coding questions as instructed by Charmaz (2014):

“What do you find when you compare your initial codes with data?
In which ways might your initial codes reveal patterns?
Which of these codes best account for the data?
Have you raised these codes to focused codes?
What do your comparisons between codes indicate?
Do your focused codes reveal gaps in the data?” (p. 252).

In order to continue to engage in comparative analysis, I utilized two peer debriefers as a final step in comparative analysis. I specifically asked them to check for any inconsistencies or divergences in the codes that I may have missed by asking them to compare the emergent theory with the transcriptions of the focus groups. As an additional method of trustworthiness, I included a final member checking with participants for confirmation of authentic representation of their experiences.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of CGT and FST as the chosen methodological and theoretical frameworks for the current study. I then discussed that, when combined, CGT and FST are ideal frameworks for investigating female counselor educators’ experiences of the mentoring relationship process because both approach knowledge and learning as being integrated within
social context. Further, CGT and FST provide ample methods for theorizing action in underrepresented groups (Charmaz, 2017; Collins, 1990). I then examined my positionality as the researcher of the current study and described my use of CGT and FST throughout my research procedures, which included participant recruitment, data collection, trustworthiness measures and concluded with my steps for data analysis. The next chapter will discuss the results of the current study.
Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter, findings that emerged from individual interviews, a focus group, and input from two peer debriefers are presented. The purpose of the current study was to develop an emerging theory for the effective mentorship of female counselor educators. This study utilized constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014) to analyze data from 15 participants who identified as female counselor educators who had completed CACREP-accredited doctoral programs in counselor education. The analysis revealed four categories that authentically represent the experiences of participants about the process of the mentoring relationship. These categories include Developmental Factors, Filtering Behaviors, Interpersonal Factors, and Outcomes (See Figure 4.1). In addition to these four overarching categories, several subcategories emerged from data obtained from the participants that help to deepen the complexity of each of the four categories. The chapter is organized by categories and subcategories in the temporal order that they occur within the processes of the mentoring relationship. Figure 4.1 illustrates the model of effective female mentorship as described by participants. This model includes both the categories and subcategories that resulted from the data.
Figure 4.1 Female-Responsive Mentoring Model
Developmental Factors to the Mentoring Relationship

The first category describes how participants discussed factors which contributed to the development of mentoring relationships. Collectively, participants stated that effective mentoring relationships begin organically, and that their beginnings were triggered by a combination of developmental factors that helped to differentiate the forming of a mentoring relationship from other relationships such as a faculty/student relationships or advisor/advisee relationships. Such as Leslie, who described being drawn to one of her professors because she admired her,

I just really admired like the personality she had, like how she walked in the world. And our interactions that first semester were pretty sparing, talking about assignments, just kinda typical things. And then the next semester … I got to know her a little bit better.

Other participants, such as Maggie and Justine, stated that their mentoring relationships also began organically. Maggie offered that meeting one of her significant mentors “was a combination of happenstance and sheer luck” and Justine shared a similar experience,

I think about one of my early graduate school of mentors and a series of what seem like random events but a series of unstructured, I would say, and unplanned and informal events that transferred into a mentorship relationship…

Within this category there are three subcategories: Shared identities, mentee needs, and experiences.

Shared identities

According to participants, one of the essential contributing factors to the development of the mentoring relationship was related to the various identities they shared with their mentor or mentee. Within the context of FST, this category represents the mentor/ee joining together based on marginalized identities that are common between the pair. By joining with a mentor/ee who has a common identity, there may be greater potential for the understanding of the mentor/ee’s lived
A myriad of identities was discussed and represented among participants, such as gender, race, first-generation status, and counseling identities. They discussed how holding their specific identities influenced their experiences within the mentoring relationship as well as in their doctoral programs and faculty roles. In addition to sharing a female identity, some participants portrayed the shared identities they held with their mentor/ee as biologically or culturally based (e.g., race and ethnicity, affectional orientation, age). Additionally, some participants described things such as shared research interests or similar clinical backgrounds as being a shared identity that helped them initially connect to their mentor/ee. Participants who described their identities according to research interests or clinical background tended to be white participants. These participants suggested a more privileged experience in that they often got to choose the identities relevant to their mentoring relationships as opposed to BIPOC participants. Further, some participants discussed their identities using an intersectional lens, in that they discussed how their identities were weaponized against them in counselor education spaces (Chan et al., 2019; Crenshaw, 2015; Sharma et al., 2021). Other participants discussed their identities singularly, and some discussed their identities as intersecting, but not using an intersectional lens. These participants tended to hold identities that were less likely to be weaponized in the academy (e.g., white, cisgender, U.S. citizen). Thus, findings from the data related to participant identities will be presented as such. For many of the participants, having a shared identity with their mentor/ee was a means of developing a sense of what to expect in their roles as counselor educators related to these identities, especially historically minoritized identities. Michelle explained,

When students that have a shared identity, when I work with them, I'm much more attuned to just the different contextual issues related to socio-economics status, acculturation,
language, immigration, mixed status in their family, all sorts of other things, like a much bigger picture.

For Michelle, acknowledging shared identities with her mentees helped to contextualize her mentees’ experiences as a student in a holistic, culturally sensitive way. Throughout her interview, she discussed her intentional outreach to Latina mentees, given that is how she identifies. When acting as a mentor, Justine described how she would conceptualize her mentees’ singular identities using a framework that acknowledges, “the values and the cultural norms and meaning that were a part of someone's upbringing are more significant and the influences on a mentoring relationship than the identity, often socially constructed identity categories and some biologically constructed identity categories.” This emerged as an important caveat for Justine regarding the development of an effective mentoring relationship because of her own experience as an African American woman being mentored by a professor who was a white man.

As a mentee, similarly Maggie shared that it was important that her mentor was able to acknowledge the identities they shared because it normalized her process and validated her anxiety around speaking English as a teaching associate. Because her mentor could relate to some of her identities that brought up feelings of self-doubt for her while teaching, she was able to feel more confident speaking English in an academic setting as an immigrant, and also build self-awareness around the issue,

I'm an immigrant. English is not my first language. I was still learning how to express myself in the academia world...And one of the things that I found so interesting about [my mentor] is she would just...she kinda like saw through me, and a lot of the reason is because of her training, but also she has some identities that are similar to me in different ways...so she kind of saw a lot of what was going on within me that I may have not even been completely aware of myself.
Other participants noted the importance of shared identities as a factor in the development of the mentoring relationship, even when these shared identities were not historically minoritized. Participants discussed sharing identities with their mentor/ee related to being mothers, survivors of sexual assault, and even counseling specialty area (e.g., school counselor). Rose recalled how vital it was that her mentor understood what it was like to have a loved one fighting cancer,

> My mom has cancer too, and I think there's an... And I worked with people who had cancer, and so I think there is sort of a shared identity there. So, I know when I heard that, I was like, ‘Oh my gosh,’ ‘cause it's so hard when somebody you know... And seeing them change and be different. So, I think there is some shared identity there, which prompts the caring.

Rose’s recollection also illustrates how having shared identities with one’s mentor/ee can prompt feelings of connection and care, thus further developing the mentoring relationship.

Often, participants talked about the importance of a mentee being able to see their future selves in their mentor and that having a shared identity was part of this. According to participants, such as Michelle, this accessibility can make milestones such as doctoral program completion or being hired as a faculty member seem more achievable,

> I don't think that this is the only way to form a relationship, but I think people naturally kinda gravitate towards people who are similar than them, at least initially, because that typically isn't as uncomfortable as a relationship in which someone's not may be similar, as similar, to the mentee or the individual. So, I think that definitely has a huge role, and I've even had people give me feedback at my last institution like, ‘You're a good asset to our faculty because a lot of students might be able to see themselves in you.’

Given that all the participants in this study identify as women and currently work in academic settings, the shared identity of being a woman in higher education was a significant
thread that connected how participants viewed the mentoring relationship. All participants reported various inequities experienced as a woman in the academy when compared to their male counterparts. Notably, women with more than one minoritized identity (e.g., BIPOC, immigrant, first-generation, LGBTQIA+) reported increased instances of inequities. Regardless of which minoritized identities participants held, they reported that the mentoring relationship was a helpful method of processing these inequities and often finding ways to move past them or address them. Theo noted that “women aren't always valued or treated the exact same. There are studies that show that they're rated poorly, and they're typically seen as more stern, as opposed to, if [a man] had done the same thing.” Mary shared that despite the increase of women hired into academia recently, that it was still necessary for women to navigate academic systems in ways that favor male socialization, thus emphasizing the importance of sharing the female identity with one’s mentor/ee,

There's a good collective of [women in higher ed], but in higher ed, I think that's a big shift from the way things used to be in a very male-dominated space, it's still a very very male-dominated space, and socialization, like how women are socialized doesn't fit in higher education, because you have to be assertive and you have to talk about yourself, and you have to find that fine line between being boastful and arrogant, but still making sure that the people who need to know what you're doing know what you're doing, and stop holding, because that's just the system.

For mentees specifically, sharing the female identity with one’s mentor was reported to help alleviate some of the hardships and inequities experienced. Jane reported,

I think something about our shared women-ness, there is a sense of just a lot more bullshit that we have to navigate in academia and kind of a mutual understanding of what it's like
to be a woman, and cisgender women in particular. And so, I don't... It's kind of unspoken, a sense of comfort.

Another participant, Clara, recalled,

There's things I can connect with. Even if it's a woman from a different ethnic or racial background, as a woman they can tell me certain kinds of experiences. Even though my advisor is a white man, his professional identity prior was that of a school counselor, and so we could make a lot of connections in that way.

Generally, participants reported that having shared identities with their mentors/ees acted as a catalyst for developing the mentoring relationship further because it provided comfort, connectedness, and a sense of feeling understood. Shared Identities provide a foundation from which effective mentoring has the potential to develop, and from this foundation, mentees can identify specific needs unique to the relationship.

**Mentee Needs**

The second type of developmental factor that aided in the development of the mentoring relationship relates specifically to the mentee’s needs. Participants described their needs representing both personal and professional functions within the mentoring relationship. Mentee needs are sometimes interconnected but participants also differentiated them given that they satisfied different functions of the mentoring relationship. Participants discussed mentee needs in both personal and professional capacities. Some needs were rooted in the personal function of the relationship and spanned across phenomena such as processing personal matters that were affecting the mentee in class. Other needs were viewed as being directly related to the professional function of the mentoring relationship and included tasks that were viewed as bolstering professional development. Some of these phenomena included co-authoring papers with a mentor with the purpose of adding to one’s curriculum vitae.
Needs were introduced by either the mentee or suggested by the mentor. In some instances, participants recalled that they entered mentoring relationships as mentees with specific needs in mind, whereas sometimes participants described instances in which mentors would use information provided to them by the mentee to help establish what the needs of a mentee may be, and work with their mentees to solidify them. Dana shared that her mentor was able to intuit one of her needs,

He knew that I was nervous about doing the things I needed to do to build up my CV and build up my involvement in the field, so he was willing to extend opportunities that I probably wouldn't have had on my own.

Some participants reported that they took it upon themselves to select a mentor based on their specific needs. Rose, for example, described that she purposefully sought out one of her mentors in her doctoral program based on one of her personal needs,

One of my mentors that I really sought out was a single mom, and she was actually the person that I sought out to ask questions about because I decided to become or get a donor, and I had two kids on my own as a single mom…

She also shared that for her, there was a spiritual aspect to developing a mentoring relationship based on her needs at the time. Rose expressed that she would often experience a sense of fate once her mentoring relationships began to develop,

When you need people in your life for a specific reason, God will provide them. And I've always found that to be true, even though I wouldn't maybe think of God as a being in the clouds, but I always found that to be kind of true. And I think of that with mentoring, it was just sort of like, ‘Oh, there you are. I needed you. Maybe I didn't know I needed you, but I did.’
Regardless of what needs the mentee brought to the relationship, participants indicated that it was important for the mentor to be attuned to their mentees’ needs, as this oftentimes filled a gap of support students were not experiencing with an assigned program advisor. Lulu described how mentoring relationships are naturally more supportive than advising relationships, given that there is less rigidity in how a mentor fulfills their role to a mentee, “I view mentorship as a supportive experience where the rules are less rigid, they're more flexible, so that specifically the mentee's needs can be met. An ally if you will.” In addition to acting as a supportive ally to mentees, participants who identified as mentors shared that they were intentional in approaching the individual needs of their mentees. Savannah shared that she conceptualizes each mentee differently based on their individual needs,

I feel like I am always thinking through a filter when I am giving something, say in the mentoring relationship, for example. Of understanding that individual and what they want and making sure that it's not focused on me or my background or my experiences or what I want, or think they want.

Beyond de-centering herself as the mentor to prioritize her mentees’ needs, Savannah shared that she would also approach needs with a vision of a plan to promote successful outcomes related to the mentee’s development,

I want the mentee to be successful in whatever they want out of it. So that's usually I would say, the approach that I would take or kind of the outcome that I would like to see. Maybe whether successful in being able to solve a problem or an issue or just something that's going on with them that they need some information about.

This subcategory illustrates how the mentoring relationship can be task- and goal-oriented, depending on what the mentee may be needing from their mentor. It demonstrates the emphasis on mentee development as an important component that defines the relationship and reinforces the
idea that the mentoring relationship is unique because it addresses both the personal and professional functions freely when compared to other types of relationships that may be more professionally focused. As a subcategory, Mentee Needs represents both the personal and professional functions that the mentee may hope to satisfy within the mentoring relationship. At times, these functions might not just be influenced by the Shared Identities between the mentor/ee, but also by what lived experiences a mentor/ee may be bringing into the relationship, given how an individual’s various identities directly impact their lived experience.

Experiences

Both mentor and mentee experiences comprised the third contributing factor to the development of the mentoring relationship. While Shared Identities describes the varying and intersecting identities that mentors/ees share with one another, Experiences describes both personal and professional experiences that the mentor/ee have lived through. Participants reported that transparently communicating about one’s own experiences as the mentor/ee were essential to the development of the mentoring relationship. According to FST, experiences make up an essential developmental factor to the mentoring relationship because it begins to combat the devaluing of the experiences of marginalized groups (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). Summer shared that she approached being a mentor by reflecting on “what kind of experiences do I have that shed light on the situation in a way that [my mentee] may not have had experiences.” Rose recalled her doctoral mentor, and how he integrated his past experiences into their conversations to normalize for Rose,

We would talk a lot about who...for example, who I am as a person in the relationships that I have, and how that factors into what I want out of life. And he would share a lot about his life and his life experiences and what he was like as a doc student, so I feel like there
was a lot of mutual sharing that happened back and forth, and also a lot of, I think, just personal empowerment and also checking in…

Overall, participants reported that having the opportunity to process their experiences with their mentors/ees helped establish a sense of being cared for, validation, normalization, and confidence. Leslie indicated she “had a lot of fear that because of [her] own trauma and own experiences, [she] wouldn’t be a good counselor, and [her mentor] really did a lot to help [her] see that differently”. Leslie’s mentor was able to help her reframe her experiences as an asset to her becoming an effective counselor and this had a positive impact on how Leslie then conceptualized herself as a trauma counselor. As a mentor, Dana discussed that “[her] own experiences with introversion and shyness have made [her] very sensitive to that with students, so [she] tries to be super encouraging with [her] students and tell them, ‘If you're struggling, it's okay, please reach out.’” At time, some participants discussed how their various identities directly influenced their experiences in academia. Michelle reported that being a Latina in a counselor education program—in addition to the only Latina in her past program and current department—has been impactful in her experience first as a doctoral student and now as a faculty member,

I think that being Latina or just being a woman of color in general, that my experience in higher education has been very different, and so a lot of that I didn't realize until I got to my first job. And so, in some respects, I felt really caught off guard.

Michelle highlighted that for women of color in higher education, this subcategory can be especially relevant, given that BIPOC women seeking mentors with similar experiences to them may not be able to access them due to underrepresentation of BIPOC women in higher education. Further, she illustrated how interconnected an individual’s identities are to their lived experiences. Some participants spoke about how their experiences felt determined for them because of the underrepresentation of BIPOC women in higher education. Some participants were only afforded
white and/or male mentors because those were the identities represented within their program or department. For some participants like Michelle, this lack of representation motivated them to become mentors for future BIPOC women and other students. For example, Michelle also noted, “I absolutely love mentoring our students, especially the Latinx students, it makes me feel like it’s all worth it you know? Especially when they make it to graduation day.” Other participants like Clara and Justine framed this lack of access differently, and at times, reported that they were accepting of it. Clara recalled that despite her mentors having different experiences than her, that she sensed their care for her,

So, all my mentors were very different from me, and from the identities that I have, I'm sure that there may be some limitations to it, maybe they don't understand all my experiences, but they're obviously very open to it and want to know and are curious and ask me about it, and they're also cognizant and aware of it too, and intentional.

Related to how Clara conceptualized her mentoring relationships, Justine, who identifies as an African American woman, spoke about her experience as a mentee in higher education within the context of colonizing influences,

I don't think the identities are as significant as the person's historical experiences with people who happen to carry those identities as well as acculturation...so as my particular version of a Black American woman, I've had very colonization-based education experiences. And so, my ability to relate to other people who have been educated and grown up in family dynamics where some of the influences of colonization have been prevalent, whether overtly or covertly, it didn't matter that I'm a woman or that I'm a Black American woman and you may be a man of whiteness.

Like Shared Identities, the Experiences subcategory represents how mentor/mentee connection can develop when the mentor/ee shares an authentic part of themselves with the another. Generally,
participants reported that when the mentor/ee communicates their experiences into the relationship that the sense of connectedness and understanding would help to continue its development. Taken collectively, the Developmental Factors represent the information that organically flows between the mentor and mentee and assists in the first step of the development process. These factors are explicitly tied to the characteristics, experiences, needs and goals of the mentor/ee. Filtering Behaviors, on the other hand, represent attitudes and actions directly enacted by the mentor/ee.

**Filtering Behaviors**

The second category, filtering behaviors, reflects participants’ report of the essential attitudes and behaviors that facilitate the continual development of the mentoring relationship and differentiate it from other relationships. The filtering behaviors are unique from the developmental factors in that they describe how both mentor and mentee approach one another to help the mentoring relationship evolve into a safe and sustainable relationship that is uniquely different from other relationships such as an advising relationship. Participants such as Lulu, Theo, and Alvin noted that as their mentoring relationships began, they were aware of the personal support and investment of their mentors. For example, Lulu shared that,

> There were some things where I would feel awkward speaking to my advisor about even though that’s what he was there for…mentorship [was] a supportive experience where the rules [were] less rigid, they’re more flexible, so that specifically the mentees needs can be met. An ally if you will.

Theo similarly reported that she observed her mentor’s “faith or a willingness to invest in [her]” in the beginnings of their mentoring relationship. Alvin stated that for her the “mentorship piece definitely has a personal connection and personal undertones…advising relationships can be very task-oriented, but mentoring relationships are a lot more process-oriented.” Within this larger
category, three subcategories emerged which describe behaviors important to the developmental process of the mentoring relationship: Intentionality, mutuality, and cultural sensitivity.

**Intentionality**

Mentors/ees in this study reported the importance of intentionality when developing a mentoring relationship. They described this key element as helping to differentiate the mentoring relationship from other closely compared relationships such as advising or supervision, where individuals may be assigned to one another with inherent hierarchical differences that involved assessment and evaluation. For example, Lulu said her reason for approaching her mentor instead of her advisor was that “[she was] sure there were many times where, [she] could have very simply gone to [her] advisor without any consequences, but [she] just felt like it was important to be cautious about doing that.” Participants also suggested that although a hierarchy may exist within the mentoring relationship between the mentor and the mentee, because of dual relationships, however none of the participants described the relationship as being evaluative in nature. Thus, participants such as Rose and Dana felt that it was easier to establish a sense of safety in the relationship. For example, Rose shared “when I form mentoring relations with people, like when I'm looking for a mentor, I think I'm oftentimes looking for something.” Rose described this as one means of practicing intentionality in the development of the mentoring relationship. As a mentor, she shared that she does something similar,

I often choose, I can tell the people who are kind of anxious or nervous and so then my role is to help them build confidence and so on and so forth, I think—although I like all sorts of different people—but I think that's one that I often choose, I'm like, ‘Oh, I can help you with that.’

Dana also indicated that she practiced intentionality when selecting potential mentees, especially those that she perceived as being more timid in the classroom,
I try very hard to intentionally reach those students who aren't willing or aren't as much of a self-starter, and then I also... Not in a weird way, but I like target students to kind of email and check in throughout the semester and just make sure they're doing okay.

Some participants such as Michelle, and Mary stated that not only did they practice intentionality on their own accord, but that they witnessed their female colleagues engaging in mentorship similarly. As for example, Michelle shared, “one explicitly said, ‘I make a very conscientious effort to mentor all of the female doc students because I know it can be really hard, dealing with the old boys’ club.’” As for Mary, she also witnessed two of her more senior colleagues rally together to support their junior colleagues who identified as female,

I think they both had that same kind of perspective of wanting to be really protective of women in this space, in the higher education space, to make sure that we had a voice, and we were treated fairly, and we had good role models to work with.

Mentors/ees reported that intentionality did not stop during the development process of the relationship but continued throughout the relationship related to mentor interventions. It remained a sustained constant that kept the relationship going. Related to this, Jane shared her observations of one of her mentors who helped her throughout the entirety of her job search process,

I also think that she was intentional about preparing me for the interview process, and took time sat down with me, these are the things that you wanna ask, the things that you wanna present about your work that are gonna make you stand out, helped me through to the negotiation process, all those pieces.

Intentionality also showed up as an important factor in developing mentee autonomy. Jane reflected on her mentor’s own process and framed her mentor’s intentionality as a way of modeling growth,
I think there is intentionality in her process to give you a little bit of modeling and then take her hands off and say, you’ve got it, to do that encouragement piece, and to be there if you need her, but not to do it for you.

Participants described intentionality as an important aspect of developing and sustaining an effective mentoring relationship. They illustrated that intentionality helps both the mentor and mentee stay engaged and moving forward with one another so that the relationship evolves beyond a transactional relationship and becomes transformative for both parties involved. The beginning of Mary’s relationship with her mentor helps to illustrate this process,

It was her just always checking in and always like initiating contact. I got to where I initiated contact too but [she] just made it very clear that there weren't any stupid questions I could ask her, or my needs were not a bother to her, [she] just made it very clear that she wanted to see me do well and be successful.

For Mary, “the biggest difference between her [mentor] and other colleagues that [she] would talk to, is that [her mentor] would turn it into action steps on her part.” Her mentor demonstrated her intentionality in mentoring Mary over time, and this made room for their relationship to continue to develop in a way that was reciprocal and mutual in nature.

**Mutuality**

The second filtering behavior, mutuality, was described by participants as the mutual understanding between the mentor and the mentee in developing and sustaining the mentoring relationship together. Alvin reported that “mutual understanding, mutual respect, collaboration and humility are very critical to me when it comes to mentoring relationships.” For some participants such as Savannah, the mutuality was unconscious, or something that they did not realize until prompted to reflect on the relationship. For example, Savannah shared that she was not aware of how she was moving toward a meaningful relationship with her mentor at the time of its
development, but that she now recalls how the mutual respect and openness had positive influence on the relationship,

Looking back, I didn't even think I was doing it at the time, but I just think I was really open to what would happen and throughout then and just having respect for them as well as professionals. And I do think that naturally contributed to that positive nature of it.

As a mentor, Savannah reported that by now being able to recognize mutuality within the mentoring relationship, “I understand the students a little bit more and probably feel connected to them too, maybe a little bit more invested in their success as well.”

For others like Dana and Rose, a sense of mutuality was something that motivated them to pursue a mentoring relationship with a mentor/ee. For example, Dana shared that a sense of mutuality influences which students she may seek to mentor, “I'll always talk to them at the end of class about opportunities, presentations, conferences, and it's those students who respond and really want to get involved, those are the students who I'm more likely to mentor”. One participant, Rose, who had participated in a formal mentorship program, shared that she was assigned a mentor to report to who did not embody any of the traits or experiences for which she had requested. She described it as lacking mutuality and different from other meaningful mentoring relationships she had experienced,

I think when there's sort of that shared understanding versus there are a lot of people that can be assigned mentors and maybe they look at things or they do some help with the plan of study, but I don't think of that as real mentorship. I think there has to be a pretty strong bond.

Rose went further to state that she believed the sense of mutuality in the mentoring relationship between female counselor educators was related to the femininity of our field,
At the counseling level, [this field is] at least a female-dominated profession. And so, I think that there's probably more mutuality, I think more personal check-ins, everything is probably a little bit more personal, more shared vulnerability, I think, happens. Savannah also recalled that she and her mentor “had that reciprocal relationship and because I was really committed once I got started and knew what I wanted, that really helped [my mentor].” Like intentionality, when the mentor/ee engaged with one another in a mutual way, it helped to develop and then sustain the relationship so that it could evolve into an effective mentoring relationship that brought positive fulfillment to both individuals. Like how Clara discussed that mentorship must be mutual to be fulfilling and worthwhile to both the mentor and mentee,

I think with mentorships is that it's like a... I don't know what word I'm looking for, but it's like a two-way street, right? It's not just you are receiving this knowledge and receiving this mentorship, but I feel that as a mentee I have to give something back to them, or I have to show them that I'm worthy of being mentored, in a way. Not that I'm unworthy, but I have to show that the time and energy that they put into me, that it's worthwhile and it's meaningful.

While both parties must practice mutuality in the mentoring relationship to demonstrate their investment in its success, cultural responsiveness is a trait that a mentor is expected to display.

**Cultural Responsiveness**

Participants described cultural responsiveness as an essential filtering behavior specific to how mentors engage with their mentees in a way that acknowledges their respective identities. FST would argue that cultural responsiveness is essential to the mentoring relationship as well, given that it cultural responsiveness can fill in gaps and distortions in the dominant cultural narrative that exists in academia (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). As a mentor, Justine shared that “the different parts of [my mentee’s] identity that intersect within how they
experience this program and some of their needs are more on my radar” to illustrate how she is intentional in being a culturally responsive mentor. Leslie recalled that her previous mentor broached the topic of mentoring others who identify as non-white by “talking about these different things and how I could be a better mentor in relationships I have with people who are different races than me.” Participants such as Jane and Michelle stated that it was important that mentors approach their mentees with cultural responsiveness in order to build and sustain a positive mentoring relationship. Jane shared that her mentor knew “that I was queer, she knew that I came from an Appalachian background, that I wasn't the first in my family to go to college, but I was the first to pursue a PhD, and took those things into consideration” when mentoring her. In discussing mentorship that she wished she received, Michelle reported that “it would have been helpful to have some culturally responsive mentorship when it [came] to the different psychosocial factors, just in general across my life,” that she was bringing into her doctoral program.

Some participants such as Dana and Rose noted that effective mentorship was synonymous with being a culturally responsive individual, and that this had benefits for mentees related to navigating academic systems. For Dana, her mentor’s cultural responsiveness helped her frame how gender influences one’s experience in academia,

One of my professors who has mentored me in some ways, has really helped me become aware of just gender roles in academia and how different it is for females and males in academia and things that probably would have never occurred to me.

In addition to highlighting gender differences in academia, Rose noted the importance of being culturally responsive as a mentor given the antiquated nature of pursuing a doctoral degree,

I think this is sort of an old process, and it was probably created by people who had full assistantships and didn't have any outside work responsibilities and could just devote all of
their time to studying for comps. In real life, people have families and they're working so many jobs to try to get by.

Specifically related to becoming a counselor educator, some participants discussed the importance of being or having a culturally responsive mentor because of the role that our identities and experiences play in our professional identity development as counselor trainees and counselor educators. Lulu shared a specific example from a current mentoring relationship,

The younger woman that I'm helping right now, that I'm mentoring right now, when she feels ignored in the classroom because she's older and she's supposing she is the only African American in the classroom, this has an impact on her identity as a counselor, because she looks around her and she sees that she's clearly in the minority, and that the classroom is symbolic of what she's going to face when she goes into the community and starts practicing. So, the work that I do with her actually discusses all of these cultural components.

Even though Lulu does not share all of her respective identities with this particular mentee, she stressed the importance of practicing cultural responsiveness in order to promote her mentee’s wellbeing and growth. Echoing this, as a mentee, Clara was not afforded a mentor that shared her identities as an Asian woman in counselor education; however, she indicated that she valued her mentors engaging with her in culturally responsive ways,

I don't know of many Asian women in counselor education, so I can't say that I had anyone in particular that looked exactly like me, had...shared exactly my experiences. So, I've never actually had that experience where someone had my exact shared identities in this particular field that I'm in. So, all my mentors were very different from me, and from the identities that I have, I'm sure that there may be some limitations to it, maybe they don't understand all my experiences, but they're obviously very open to it and want to know and
are curious and ask me about it, and they're also cognizant and aware of it too, and intentional. But regardless of what my advisors' identities have been, they've just... I've been very grateful that they've taken some kind of interest in me and have supported me.

Cultural responsiveness is an important characteristic that the mentor must practice in order for their mentees to get to a place of feeling that the mentoring relationship is a safe space where they can be seen, valued, and understood.

Taken collectively, the category filtering behaviors, describes the attitudes and behaviors that are vital in facilitating the development of the mentoring relationship that differentiates it from other relationships. Leslie compared the advising relationship and the mentoring relationship as, “more superficial or more like skill and intervention-based than personalization, reaction, emotionally-based.” The filtering behaviors help give the mentoring relationship the personal and emotional qualities necessary to develop into a working relationship where specific interpersonal factors are made possible, and thus the positive outcomes associated with mentoring are achieved.

**Interpersonal Factors**

As the mentor and the mentee join through the developmental and filtering behaviors of the mentoring relationship, the relationship itself is solidified by Interpersonal Factors which make it unique, supportive, and beneficial to the point of being able to sustain subsequent positive outcomes. As a mentor, Dana shared, “I try to be as approachable as possible, as caring as possible and humanistic”. Jane recalled her mentor explaining to her that she was consistently “attending to the human” when mentoring her in their relationship. Similarly, Summer reported the importance of making sure “that person is feeling seen and understood and held within the context of the relationship as their authentic self” when providing effective mentoring. To be considered effective, certain interpersonal factors needed to be present to create a safe holding space for the mentor to guide the mentee through interventions and their shared systems. These interpersonal
factors also address the personal function of the relationship so that it maintains its differentiation from other relationships in academia. This can be observed in the subcategories of this category, *Safe Holding Space, Mentor Interventions, Mentee Navigation of Systems* and *Attention to Humanness*.

**Safe holding space**

Participants such as Theo, Leslie and Mary noted one of the unique aspects of the mentoring relationship was related to the relationship acting as a safe holding space within the context of their doctoral program or faculty role. Both Theo and Leslie discussed the importance of the mentoring relationship being a safe holding space for dealing with personal needs. For example, Theo indicated that “there was a safe space for things, when it came to things, especially personally.” Relatedly, Leslie stated that the safe holding space, her mentor created was essential in helping her overcome her hesitation to be vulnerable with others, “I wanted to run away and avoid and not talk to any kind of authority figure or show any vulnerability, and she always pushed me and created that safe space for me to be vulnerable with her.” Another participant, Mary also reported that when her mentor created a safe holding space in their relationship, that she felt more comfortable being vulnerable about her pre-tenure trajectory,

...us being in the same space and me just saying like, ‘I don't even know what to ask. I feel like I need to be doing something and I don't know what that thing is, and so these are the things that I'm thinking about doing, but which ones are probably better?’

Likewise, Maggie and Michelle also illustrated the importance of having a sense of established safety in their mentoring relationships. Maggie highlighted the positive impact the safe holding space had on feelings of reassurance and connectedness,
I think in that safety of having that mentorship relationship and being able to express myself and getting my needs filled because I knew what I needed in that moment at the start of the program is that I needed that connection, and I needed that reassurance. Similarly, Michelle stated that she believed that a safe holding space makes for an effective mentoring relationship. Specifically, she stressed that it was the most important thing a mentor could facilitate,

I think a lot of it wasn't anything that they necessarily did other than holding space. I think often people, when they're acting as a mentor, feel that they have to be doing all of these things, when sometimes just not doing anything, just being a safe haven for somebody is really the best thing that you can do. Generally, participants spoke about the safe holding space within the mentoring relationship as a necessary foundation to produce positive outcomes for mentors/ees in both the personal and professional functions of the relationship. Jane noted that she thought the safe holding space within her mentoring relationship helped her and her mentor make “the move from, "Here's the intervention, okay, now here's the outcome," more seamless because it was genuine to what [Jane] needed” to feel safe with her mentor. Thus, indicating the importance of a safe and stable environment for mentees in their process of accepting the ways in which their mentors engaged with them.

**Mentor interventions**

Throughout data collection and analysis, participants reported a variety of interventions that mentors utilized to produce positive outcomes from the mentoring relationship. Participants Dana, Jane, and Mary provided examples of mentor interventions such as “providing emotional support for mentees through the [doctoral] program”, providing “opportunities to collaborate on research and conference presentations” and facilitating growth-oriented discussions such as “What
are some areas where you wanna focus your goals or your work over this year? What areas do you want to build or change or add to,” when proofreading a mentee’s curriculum vitae. For many participants like Leslie and Theo, a mentor intervention was effective because it demonstrated care and commitment to the mentee. For example, in describing her mentor, Leslie shared that she “believed in me when I didn't believe in myself at all, repeatedly, throughout my time in my master's and doctorate program,” and that this was an essential step in helping her stay motivated and confident to continue through her studies. Echoing this, Theo shared that, “I don't think I would be done if I didn't have someone who encouraged me, supported me how they did.” By intervening through encouragement and support, Theo believes her mentor helped her complete her doctoral degree.

Beyond general support and encouragement, participants named additional specific interventions that mentors facilitated which they associated with positive outcomes that related back to the personal needs and professional goals they established during the development of their relationship. Savannah, Justine and Mary all identified mentor interventions that produced positive professional outcomes. Savannah reported that her mentor recommended her for professional opportunities as an intervention,

She was always the support for me, she was willing to write a letter of reference, references, things like that for... I imagine she probably advocated for me in faculty meetings, or something related to some of the things that I received in the program.

Additionally, Justine stated that as a mentor she is intentional when “introducing a mentee to other potential mentors or individuals of potential support, whether that's been while we're together at a conference, making email connections and sharing contact information.” One of Mary’s mentors would intervene in the mentoring relationship by teaching her how to navigate faculty interviews and salary negotiations,
We have a lot of the same conversations about how to be assertive in a job interview and how to negotiate for what you feel like you deserve and taking ownership of your voice in spaces where it doesn't feel like there's always room for your voice, which I'm still not awesome at.

Participants such as Rose and Maggie highlighted personal interventions that they experienced as mentees or facilitate themselves as mentors now. Rose shared that “When students come to me and they have life things, they come up, I'm so ready to talk about the life stuff and put the academic stuff aside.” Rose’s willingness to tend to the personal aspects of her mentees’ lives is an example of her oscillating between the professional and personal functions of mentorship by prioritizing the mentee’s personal wellbeing. As a mentee, Rose reported that she experienced this kind of intervention from one of her mentors as a doctoral student,

That one mentor who I completely broke down in his office... I'm terrible, just sobbing and sobbing, I was so overwhelmed. And for him just to be there and present and then guiding me like, okay, and then in that moment I needed that, like, ‘Here's what I think you need to do.’

Maggie also described a similar personally focused intervention that one of her mentors used when she was distressed by a triggering conversation with one of her professors,

Sometimes if I had a particularly hard day because a professor did something to trigger me, I would just say like, "Can I please just talk to you?" And close the door and I start crying, right? So that's the kind of activity that we'd do a lot. She would invite me for coffee, and we'll talk.

Both Rose’s and Maggie’s experiences illustrated that in some cases, mentors may use a personal intervention as a first step in order to get the mentee to a place where they can facilitate positive
professional outcomes such as authoring publications, presenting at a professional conference or obtaining an organizational leadership position.

Participants indicated that mentor interventions described the various points of contact and activities that mentors facilitated with their mentees in order to produce the positive outcomes associated with effective mentorship. Collectively, participants identified dozens of potential interventions that mentors can utilize to satisfy both the needs and the goals of the mentee (Appendix F). These included “demystifying the [tenure] process”, “fostering a sense of self-efficacy” and “discussing strategic career decision making processes.” By using various interventions, mentors communicated a sense of care and intentionality to their mentees, reifying that the mentoring relationship was a safe holding space. This is line with FST in that knowledge sharing must be framed in caring and responsible attitude to be considered ethical (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). One significant intervention revealed in the data was to guide mentees in navigating complex systems such as doctoral programs and academic departments.

**Navigation of systems**

Participants such as Summer described navigation of systems as an interpersonal factor within the mentoring relationship which, when linked to mentor interventions relevant to the mentee, can help promote success. According to FST, this interpersonal factor describes a mentor attempting to help a mentee survive and navigate systems which hold dominant ideologies of which mentees may not feel apart (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). For example, Summer conceptualized mentorship as an ideal method for helping someone become successful in academia,

I think mentoring is just sort of like, how do you teach the people coming behind you to be successful in the systems? And certainly, you want some amount of that. That information is very helpful to have. How would a person know?
While Summer spoke about the navigation of systems in a broad sense, some participants such as Lulu, and Justine, directly related the importance of helping minoritized mentees navigate systems. For example, Lulu shared that she offers mentorship to historically minoritized students in order to help promote equity among students within her departmental system.

With respect either people of color or individuals that exist on the margins of society, even today, where everyone is much more accepting, at least on a college campus or a university campus, there are still issues, so it is important to me that the field is level as possible.

Justine talked about how she has grown to consider how her mentees’ minoritized identities could be impacting their navigation of her academic institution. She shared a specific example through her mentoring relationship with a Jewish student,

I wonder, again, how my Jewish student is navigating this very Christian privilege sort of program and institution and different dynamics like that. I think about the different ethnicities of my students versus just the fact that, ‘Hey! I have these students. They're awesome!’ But you're a female, and you're transgender, and you're non-traditional-age student, and you're a full-time student and you're a parent and you're...so, the different parts of their identity that intersect within how they experience this program and some of their needs is more on my radar than it used to be.

Similarly, Jane reported that one of her mentors guided her through the process of interviewing for counselor educator positions as a queer woman who was wanting to find a department culture that was LGBTQIA-affirming,

I found that really helpful, particularly when I was thinking about the dynamics of my future co-workers and did, I want to disclose my identity upfront or wait. And she helped me realize it's actually important for me to go into it without having any hidden agendas or anything like that.
Some participants noted that mentees with difficulty navigating their respective systems would seek out potential mentors to assist them. Savannah recalled,

> Ultimately academia, at least where I am at, is still heavily male-dominated. Obviously, white dominated. So, I feel like I am always working within that system, and there's a lot of outcomes based upon that system and so I think students who are more similar to me, I notice them coming to me more, just probably because of all the...Just the way the system is.

For Dana and Rose, *navigation of systems* intersected with some of their personal needs and professional goals as mentees. Dana shared this about her mentor,

> She's very aware of what it takes to get tenure, and she understands the pressure. She understands what I need to do to succeed, and so she's helped me a lot with the practical aspects of job hunting and tenure and just navigating academia in general.

While Dana’s mentor helped her navigate academia related to one of her career goals of achieving tenure, Rose looked to some of her mentors to help her navigate the professoriate as a mother,

> Especially balancing it with being a mom and everything, I think people look to other women who have been through it and know it so that we can ask questions about it and try to figure out how do we navigate all of this.

As previously discussed, participants illustrated how help with navigating systems is beneficial to mentees on an individual level. However, Michelle spoke about how her conversations and observations with individual mentees informed her approach to creating a more inclusive and effective department culture for students,

> As a mentor, it helps you identify some unmet needs or ways that you can change anything from admissions, recruitment, retention, the curriculum, policies, the student handbook,
whatever it is, it helps you identify ways that you can change and evolve to better support students or to better prepare students for working with clients.

Helping mentees navigate systems within academia is a major component of what participants believe make mentorship effective. While the process of demystifying these systems makes mentees more likely to experience beneficial outcomes from the relationship, it also further demonstrates the mentor’s commitment to attending to the mentee’s humanity.

Attention to humanness

The last subcategory of *Interpersonal Factors, attention to humanness*, acts as a foundation for the safe holding space in the mentoring relationship so that mentor interventions and guidance through system navigation can be effective and trusted by the mentees. It also echoes the FST tenet that stresses the importance of sharing knowledge in a caring and responsible capacity (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). At times, participant descriptions of the importance of attending to humanness in the mentoring relationship, such as Summer’s and Jane’s, held similarities to the counseling relationship. Summer described effective mentorship as “a more humanistic process, like a person-centered process, where it's like this mentoring is serving to help the mentee develop their identity.” Jane shared that one of her favorite mentors, Mentor X, “had a way of kind of seeing the whole human in ways that other people couldn't” and that this had a positive impact on the effectiveness of their relationship together. Because of this mentor, Jane reported that she utilized her mentor as a role model for how to acknowledge the humanness of her mentees,

I try to embody her in the same way that I mentor my students now. So, what I mean by that is having a balance of attention to personal and professional, so getting to know my mentees on a human level to understand how they're gonna walk into their professional tasks and roles.
In discussing how she understood her mentor’s ability to pay attention to humanness within their relationship, Jane also reported that it was at times difficult to operationalize how the mentoring relationship was unique, and different from other relationships she had,

I do think there is something about mentorship that is not concrete that can't be named or replicated, because I think some of it is someone sharing their humanness with someone else, and that humanness, I think that's what can't be replicated.

Reports from other participants like Leslie, Rose and Lulu helped expand the understanding of attention to humanness through examples of mentors behaving in vulnerable, authentic, and respectful ways. For example, Leslie spoke about one of her mentors as a model for embodying attention to humanness,

In so many ways, she was such a good model for vulnerability, authenticity, and autonomy...she really helped me see that mentoring could be so personal and not just logistical, cognitive, scholarship-based…

Similarly, Rose recalled “my mentors were vulnerable with me a lot of times, and they would tell me difficult things from their lives and cry and share emotions.” When acting as a mentor, Lulu shared, “that's the biggest piece for me, is the respect, where the door toggles back and forth between the both of us.”

As a mentor, Justine spoke about how she attends to humanness with her mentees by “not just trying to move [them] through these series of experiences and why they are in the program. I see [them] as a person. I see this other layer of how [they're] showing up and being impacted.” Relatedly, Lulu spoke about the importance of mentors attending to their own humanness within the mentoring relationship as a means of cultivating mutual respect and dealing with moments when mentees may be challenging,
We are talking about the respect; you know that human-to-human respect of... That mentee at some point is going to challenge me and that needs to be a very important milestone to be celebrated, even though I may be uncomfortable with it because I am a human being. Beyond establishing attention to humanness in the mentoring relationship through taking on certain humanistic traits and behaviors, one participant, Rose, highlighted how a sense of spirituality revealed itself within the mentoring relationship through a mentor’s acknowledgement of humanness. For Rose, an effective mentor takes the extra time and energy to hold a mentee’s humanness, and what may be happening for them outside of their role as student or faculty member,

I think when I think of mentorship, it really is sort of... I think of it as spiritual because it's...anybody can tell you what courses to take and so forth, but for somebody to sit with me while I am literally at the depths of despair in these panic attacks and I don't even know what's going on with me, and I'm thinking, ‘What is happening to me?’ and for them to sit with me and just be there and be deeply present to me...

Rose’s statement above helps to illustrate how deep of a connection the mentoring relationship can elicit when a mentor decides to engage with their mentees in a way that is attuned to their humanness.

In order to attend to humanness, participants described the need for the mentoring relationship to extend beyond one with a task-oriented agenda and acknowledge the personhood of both parties. For Michelle, it was important that her mentor, “just saw me for who I was and they supported me.” When the mentor and mentee engage in "shared trust, shared vulnerability, and a willingness to be open," as described by Rose, the interpersonal factors of the mentoring relationship embody specific actions and behaviors that can ultimately facilitate its beneficial outcomes.
Outcomes of the Mentoring Relationship

Collectively, participants in the study described beneficial outcomes from being engaged in an effective mentoring relationship as both a mentee and a mentor. Participants reported an abundance of both personal and professional outcomes that had a positive impact on their professional lives and personhood such as Savannah who reported, “socially, I felt more connected, I think, to the program and the profession overall.” As well as Clara, who described being afforded, “opportunities to do research and then therefore have publications and then have opportunities for conference presentations and travel, to earn scholarships that I couldn't have imagined ever receiving.” This category is split up into subcategories by first addressing a common outcome between mentors and mentees: Desire to Mentor. It is then followed by an additional outcome for the mentor: fulfillment, and Outcomes for the Mentee: Identity Development, Increased Confidence, Sense of Care and Accomplishments.

Mentor Outcomes

Both the mentor and the mentee have the potential to experience unique, beneficial outcomes from an effective mentoring relationship. Given their respective roles in the relationship, the mentor experiences some different outcomes than their mentees. Participants reported that in addition to experiencing a desire to continue to mentor, mentors are likely to experience fulfillment as an outcome.

Desire to Mentor

Each participant voiced that their experiences with effective mentorship throughout their doctoral programs and/or their time as pre-tenured faculty influenced their desire to mentor others. Some participants, like Dana and Michelle, reported that their desire to mentor was related to “really wanting to pay forward the good mentorship I've had.” Michelle indicated that she too “wanted to replicate the amazing support that I've been so blessed to have.” Even beyond personal
reasons for wanting to mentor as some participants expressed, some participants, such as Savannah, Michelle, and Alvin, shared professional reasons for wanting to mentor. Savannah said that “one of the biggest reasons that I got my doctoral degree and wanted to become a faculty member, was to be able to engage in mentorship with students.” Similar to Michelle and Dana, Alvin also described that she felt the desire to provide the effective mentorship she once had,

To me, that personal connection I have with my mentees is critical for their motivation, them feeling that they are working toward something meaningful, and which all of them do and I was treated that way when my own mentors which I worked well with, and I am trying to make sure that I am paying back what was given to me.

Though the desire to mentor was generally reported among participants, some participants, such as Theo and Mary, discussed that there were notable transitions to becoming a mentor or believing that one could be an effective mentor. Maggie also illustrated barriers to engaging in mentorship such as teaching online classes. For Theo, her beginnings of being a mentor were influenced by her struggling with how she would develop her own unique mentoring style while being true to certain parts of her identity,

I think for me, it's actually given me a different way to be a mentor, that at first I wondered if it was gonna be similar to how I said when I went into higher education, like, ‘I'm gonna have to kill a part of myself in order to do this.’ And so, I was worried with mentorship I had to do a similar thing.

In this excerpt, Theo expressed worry that she would not be able to be entirely authentic with her future mentees. She goes on to report that she began modeling her mentoring style after one of her own mentors to further transition into the mentor role,

In the few opportunities I've had to be a mentor, it's actually been a struggle in a really interesting way though, because it's balancing what I feel like is my natural mentoring
ability, which is to maybe be a little bit overbearing...but because of this experience, I feel like I kind of am able to bracket that a little bit, I think in a very helpful way.

Another participant, Mary, shared that she transitioned into the mentor role because her own mentor saw her potential to be effective in that role,

Once she retired, the students that she was chairing, she specifically gave to me because she knew that I would kind of foster and care for them in the same way that she did to help them finish the journey.

While most participants reported that they were able to fulfill their desire to mentor, one participant Maggie, shared,

I think one of the sad parts is that I don't get to mentor a lot, because I do a lot of online [teaching], and so there's kind of a different dynamic there. For the ones who are able to, I do a lot of…

Here Maggie illustrates the position that some counselor educators face if they are teaching for an online program and have the desire to mentor, but limited accessibility to do so. Regardless of whether or not participants had the means to mentor others, it was evident that the desire to mentor creates a cyclical effect that incentivizes individuals to continue to engage in subsequent mentoring relationships. Michelle illustrates this by sharing, “I absolutely love mentoring our students…it makes me feel like it's all worth it.”

**Fulfillment**

Some participants reported that an outcome of engaging in effective mentorship elicited a sense of fulfillment. Savannah shared that she enjoyed that she could “see students grow related to what we are working on together. They might continue to work with me on something or ask me about or have me help them with aspects of their career.” Dana and Clara also shared that they experienced
a sense of fulfillment when acting as a mentor and compared it to their respective work as school counselors. Dana stated,

I get so much joy. I really do love, even when I was teaching fourth grade, for me, it was all about the students and the relationship with students, and I feel that way now. I really love my students; I care about them. For me, it's just why I feel like I'm here to help others and care for others, so for me, it's very gratifying.

In comparing how she experienced fulfillment towards her students as a school counselor to how she experiences it as a mentor, Clara said,

As a school counselor, and I imagine that as a mentor, it's so rewarding to watch your young ones...in that case, as a school counselor, my young people who are now all grown-ups now, gosh, to watch them just flourish, it's like the most rewarding feeling.

For Michelle, being a mentor in a mentoring relationship provided a sense of fulfillment as well, especially when she was feeling challenged by her professional responsibilities,

It's usually cards at the end of the semester, or at graduation, or even in email, but I save them all, and I have a bulletin board where I have all of them up in my office, and it's a great reminder, and every now and then, especially when I'm feeling super surly about my job, I will take down a few and I will read them and they're such a great refresher and a reminder of all of the wonderful things about my job.

Another participant, Alvin, recalled,

Observing particularly doctoral students from the start, they all took faculty positions, and they all are actually growing into their own researchers and their own practitioners...basically seeing that the tree is giving fruit. I’m not saying that I’m the tree, but the tree giving fruit is very fulfilling.
For Justine, experiencing the outcome of fulfillment was also related to feeling connected and cared for. She described this not only as something the mentor experiences, but something that the mentee can communicate to their mentor,

And whether or not it's my goal, I also experience a sense of, again, my own connectedness and being...appreciation, right? Like when I can do something for someone else and they express appreciation, I feel a sense of social-emotional uplift and care and reciprocity in the relationship.

In these excerpts, participants illustrate the positive impact that the outcome of fulfillment has on individuals who choose to act as mentors in a mentoring relationship. For Justine, it was fulfilling, “knowing that I contributed to [their growth] in some way, shape or form.” Additionally, Savannah shared that “as a mentor, one of my favorite parts of the job is seeing students from beginning, like admissions, to end, graduation beyond.” Much like the symbolism Alvin provided, fulfillment is connected to the time, commitment, and energy that mentors dedicate to their mentees and acts as a crucial influence over one’s desire to act as a mentor.

**Mentee Outcomes**

Participants in this study spoke to the positive experiences they had as mentees. Attached to these positive experiences as mentees were positive outcomes that participants believed were directly related to having received effective mentorship. Such as Michelle, who noted that “retention and faster matriculation and really feeling the sense of confidence that I am well prepared,” were significant outcomes for her. As another example, Dana shared that her mentor “helped me form my identity as a counselor educator.” Related to Michelle and Dana’s experiences, Maggie noted that her mentor “helped me find my voice. She helped me be comfortable with who I was.” Within this category, four subcategories emerged from the data: *Identity Development, Increased Confidence, Sense of Care and Accomplishments.*
Identity development

Several participants noted that identity development was a positive outcome of their mentoring relationships when they were in the mentee role. Participants such as Jane, Mary and Maggie shared that identity development could embody both professional and personal identity development, and was an outcome directly related to learning from one’s mentor. Jane stated that, “I think that mentors are crucial in the process of giving you some insight into the outcome that you hope to achieve, especially as it relates to professional identity development.” Similarly, Mary shared that her mentor “helped me get grounded and get a better sense of my professional identity a little bit and learn how to take ownership of that identity.” In line with Jane and Mary, Maggie reported that her mentor played an essential role in helping her develop her counselor educator identity since she did not attend a CACREP master’s program,

In my professional identity, I wasn't inducted into this kind of counselor education identity as much. My master's degree was in what I call an identity confused program because they were counseling psychology, but they were trying to get clinical mental health. Most of my professors were psychologists that were not counselor educators, so I did not really know the culture and the kind of big names of counselor education.

Rose helped highlight the impact that an effective mentor could have on personal identity development. Rose said that “there's the sustained relationship but a transformational change in the person…I know for me, every single mentor I've had, I can say I was a different person, I learned something so unique. I was a different person.” Summer, who spoke of both positive and negative experiences with mentorship throughout her schooling and career, discussed a fine balance between authentic identity development and a type of indoctrination into the field. “Sometimes I observe mentoring that seems extremely tied to identity development, almost to the point of like, "Here is our identity," in the field or something.” For Summer, it was important to
differentiate that facilitation of identity development in the mentee needed to be authentic to the mentee to be considered a positive outcome of the relationship.

*Identity development* reflects the personal and professional growth of the mentee that results from having been engaged in their mentor relationship. Closely related to identity development is the outcome of *increased confidence*, as mentees build up their confidence, they are more likely to embrace the growth associated with identity development.

**Increased confidence**

Collectively, participants reported a sense of increased confidence as a positive outcome from being in an effective mentoring relationship, like for Dana who reported that “confidence and growth were some of the outcomes that happened” in the mentoring relationship she discussed. Similarly, Savannah shared that “I had more confidence in my work as a master's student and what I was doing, and it just became enjoyable for me,” because of her mentoring relationship. Rose also shared that “the things that I've learned about just how to be in a relationship with other people has been so transformative, and certainly I learned a lot of confidence also from the three mentors.” Not only did participants experience increased confidence related to personal matters, but some participants discussed increased confidence that was essential for them in adapting to academia. Michelle shared how important it was to be able to access her confidence when applying for her first faculty positions,

Really feeling the sense of confidence that I am well prepared, I'm smart, I have a ton to offer...especially when, as you probably know, when you're applying for a lot of different faculty positions and you get so many rejections, that that's not an indicator of who I am as a person, any time I don't get an opportunity that I have sought after...

In a similar vein, Maggie talked about the importance of increased confidence as an outcome of effective mentorship, given societal factors that come about in the academic context,
I think a huge part is our own society, that you know we question ourselves a lot and our voice because our voice is questioned all the time. And I think in academia, you're placed into this, that you're supposed to be an expert, but you never really grew up with that confidence to begin with. And what's really frustrating is that... And throughout my entire journey, my male professors will tell me, ‘You lack confidence.’

In discussing how her male professors expressed their concern about her level of confidence, Maggie described that she would utilize her mentor to help build confidence by “[having] a lot of conversations about that impostor syndrome and about that confidence” to increase her confidence in herself and in her teaching abilities. This aligns with how Rose believed that because of her mentor, she “learned a lot of confidence and trying to stand up on my own two feet when I was a doc student and then moving into being a professor.”

Some participants, such as Theo, Maggie, and Dana painted a picture of how the mentoring relationship could increase mentee confidence by counteracting the effects of impostor syndrome. For example, Theo’s mentor helped counter some of her impostor syndrome which helped her believe she could complete her Ph. D,

I really don't think I would be here if I didn't have someone who was very intentional in mentoring me. Again, I have a lot of anxiety, a lot of insecurity. And we're all our own worst enemies, especially in a doctorate program that just festers with impostor syndrome. And so, I think personally, the kind of mental capacity it takes to go through a program like that, I really don't think I would have been able to get through it.

Similarly, Maggie reported lacking confidence as both a doctoral student and a junior faculty member. She noted that she believed her mentor was able to help her increase her confidence and alleviate her impostor syndrome because she had experienced this as well,
Impostor syndrome, which is huge for me. It's part of my personality to be doubtful of myself a lot. And maybe that fear of getting it wrong because I was a student, so I think that it was that kind of developmental area that she was seeing too, but also the identity piece of it that she could see and identify with…

Dana remembered how her lack of confidence as a doctoral student prohibited her from taking on new opportunities. Now when she mentors students, she is attuned to those who may be experiencing a lack of confidence and is proactive in helping them build this up as her mentor did for her,

So that to me was finding a student who felt uncomfortable or impostor syndrome-y in a certain area and said, ‘Let me help you with this, let me give you an opportunity that you…’

There's no way I would have ever submitted a proposal to present about SPSS on my own, never in a million years. And [my mentor] gave me that opportunity.

*Increased confidence* describes an outcome of the mentoring relationship in which mentees develop more solidified beliefs in their ability to be a successful doctoral student, and subsequently, an effective counselor educator. It also helps to reinforce the meaningful identity development that occurs within the mentoring relationship. The investment and interventions enacted by the mentors not only elicited increased confidence in their mentees, but also helped to communicate to the mentees that their mentors believed in them, and that they genuinely cared for them as individuals.

*Sense of care*

Participants such as Justine, Leslie, Summer, and Michelle made it clear that one of the more pronounced outcomes of the mentoring relationship was the *sense of care* felt by mentees who had had effective mentors. This finding makes sense within the context of FST, given the importance that FST theorists place on how a sense of care is important when sharing or conveying
knowledge to others (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). Justine reported that an outcome of an effective mentoring relationship is “a sense of care, that one is cared for, which we all need as people,” communicating that the mentoring relationship has the propensity to meet this basic need. Similarly, Leslie shared that her mentor made her feel “really cared for” over the course of their relationship. Summer recalled that she “craved that intimate authenticity, that really knowing somebody, of being...of feeling seen and feeling like I can really see the other person. And I've had multiple, I've been so lucky, multiple [mentoring] relationships like that.” Michelle also reminisced about the sense of care she felt from her mentor in her doctoral program,

I always remember...the way that my mentor made me feel...he made me feel so validated and entirely supported, and I think that it wasn't like anything that they necessarily said or did, but they just saw me for who I was, and they supported me, and that's been such an amazing feeling to have.

Rose built on the excerpts above by describing how a sense of care can help mentees feel acknowledged and special to their mentors,

I think a lot of it is knowing that somebody cares. I think they're sort of this feeling sometimes when we go into academia, either as a student maybe, and then we're like, ‘Well, I'm just another student,’ and knowing that like, ‘Hey, you know what, my professors they do care about me, and they care about me not just as a...I'm not just a person in a factory that they're gonna mold, but I'm actually like a real person and they care about me and they wanna help me.’

In another example, Jane framed how her mentor conveyed a sense of care by connecting her to other professionals in counselor education that could lead to fulfilling relationships,

...thinking about the ways that she helped me network with different people. It wasn't just for the purpose of professional networking to do professional tasks together. It's like, ‘I
think you two might actually hit it off well.’ So it was, again, that genuineness and holistic kind of care for who you are as a human and also who you're becoming as a professional.

This excerpt from Jane’s interview highlights how this positive outcome could potentially cause a ripple effect into the greater professional community of counselor education. Thus, producing increased opportunities for effective mentoring relationships.

As indicated by Rose, this outcome represents “the feeling underneath of like, ‘Oh, somebody cares about me and cares how I'm doing.’” This outcome is a result of how the interpersonal factors within the mentoring relationship can facilitate a personal and process-oriented experience for mentees. However, the same interpersonal factors discussed previously in this chapter may also produce accomplishments, which may be more task oriented.

**Accomplishments**

Participants reported a variety of mentee accomplishments as another positive outcome of the mentoring relationship. Examples of accomplishments included Maggie “becoming a better writer”, and Savannah “becoming [Chi Sigma Iota] president” as well as “winning some scholarship money”. Additionally, Theo recalled that because of her mentoring relationship she achieved the “publication of [her] first article.” Some participants like Dana and Maggie framed effective mentorship as the most important resource for getting through a doctoral program. Dana stated she “had such amazing mentoring throughout my doc program that I don't know how I would have gotten through the program without it.” Like Dana, Maggie stated that without her mentor, “I don't even know if I would have completely graduated.”

Participants such as Mary, Leslie and Clara mentioned other specific accomplishments as well. Mary spoke of how her mentor “helped so much with setting me up with ways to get started career-wise, so connecting me with professional organizations or giving me advice about what kinds of service to pursue.” Mary shared that her mentor also “always offered to look over my
stuff without ever asking to be an author, just to give me feedback on my writing skills.” Leslie discussed her accomplishments from a clinical context, stating that she was “definitely a better trauma clinician because of [her mentor].” Clara shared Mary’s sentiments in how her engagement in a mentoring relationship brought about scholarly accomplishments,

As a result of the mentorship, I had opportunities to do research and then therefore have publications and then have opportunities for conference presentations and travel, to earn scholarships that I couldn't have imagined ever receiving.

Savannah specifically stated that because she had effective mentorship in her master’s program, she pursued her Ph.D. in counselor education because her mentor made it appear more accessible to her,

The most significant [outcome of my mentoring relationship] was I went to doctoral school, or I went to get my PhD in CES. There were a couple of positive things too. I took an active role in the program as well. From a student's perspective, I even became CSI president while I was there, and was really active in the program. I won some scholarship money from there.

Savannah’s excerpt also revealed that her mentoring relationship prompted her accomplishments of obtaining organizational leadership and earning scholarship funding. For Rose, one of her mentors guided her to a personal accomplishment by challenging her to be more assertive,

I learned how to use my voice; I think. She challenged me a lot to use my voice and to be more honest about things and stand up for myself in certain situations where I was kind of playing sort of meek.

When recalling the accomplishments that resulted from one of her mentoring relationships, Summer emphasized the blended nature of the personal and professional among her accomplishments,
My ability to achieve [professional] things was really a product of a process, and that the process has changed who I am as a person, and now I can apply that process and those changes to my awareness and skill set to lots of situations. It's not just like, ‘Here's the next phase of your career, and here's how to navigate it.’

Participants spoke of how the accomplishments they achieved ultimately propelled them forward in their academic and career trajectories. Accomplishments spanned both the personal and professional functions of the mentoring relationship, and the subcategory represents a variety of beneficial outcomes that are possible for mentees to achieve. Further, what a mentee may frame as an accomplishment is highly individualized to where they perceive their areas of growth to be. This outcome can also be directly related to what needs and goals the mentee identified during the development of the mentoring relationship.

Taken together, the outcomes reported by participants are, at times, specific to only mentors or only mentees. However, every participant shared the desire to mentor despite their respective role in the relationship. Summer postulated that benefitting from outcomes of the mentorship as a mentee and then transitioning into a mentor role may be “a parallel process…I know what it is to be the mentee, and I've learned so much as the mentee, so I want to share that learning with somebody else that could use it.” Thus, possibly contributing to the cyclical process of the mentoring relationship.

Summary

This chapter detailed the findings from the fifteen participants interviewed for this study who shared their experiences, thoughts and feelings about how female counselor educators engage in effective mentoring relationships. Participants indicated that the initial development of an effective mentoring relationship begins organically and is fueled by a variety of developmental and filtering behaviors that promote connectedness, and confidence that the mentoring relationship
will develop into a sustained relationship that embodies support, guidance, and care. Participants reported the importance of shared identities, experiences and interests between mentors and mentees, and emphasized that mentors needed to practice cultural responsiveness in order to be effective for their mentees. By being in an effective mentoring relationship, mentees were able to experience positive outcomes that may not have occurred otherwise which had significant impact on their personal and professional growth. The process of receiving effective mentorship as a mentee also resulted in a universal desire to mentor on throughout one’s career.
Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from this constructivist grounded theory (CGT) study as they relate to the originally posed research questions for the study and the counselor education and higher education literature reviewed in the second chapter. In addition, the strengths and limitations of the study are outlined, specifically how these may impact the findings. Implications for counselor educators, counselor education programs, and professional organizations as well as future research and limitations of the current study are also discussed.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine and define the processes that occur over the course of mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators. Specifically, this study sought to develop a model of effective mentorship for female counselor educators over the course of their academic and career trajectories. The Female-Responsive Mentoring Model emerged from the findings of this study. While the field of counselor education underscores the positive impacts of mentorship (CACREP, 2016), there are gaps in the literature regarding how to mentor effectively. There is also lack of clarity related to role definitions, the evolution of mentoring relationships, specific interventions, and if there are aspects of the mentoring relationship between female counselor educators that are unique.

Feminist Standpoint Theory (FST) was used as a framework to guide this CGT study. FST allowed the researcher to privilege the marginalized voices and experiences of the participants throughout data collection and analysis as they shared their perspectives and experiences related to effective mentorship from their unique standpoints. By utilizing both CGT and FST in this study, I was able to conceptualize the mentoring process as something that is co-constructed and with a more dynamic understanding of the mentoring relationship in a way that can provide a theory for
female counselor educators in the future. FST provided a useful framework for this study because it argues that academic contributions made by marginalized groups such as women are often excluded or appropriated within their disciplines (Collins, 1990; Harding, 1991). These instances of *standpoints* illustrate how various social interactions and learning are experienced by marginalized groups who are assigned inferior social locations within a system such as an academic department or higher education institution. This frames the importance of helping female mentees learn and grow within academia, a traditionally male-dominated system, in a way that promotes safe holding spaces and equity among individuals in counselor education programs regardless of one’s social locations. In this chapter, key findings as well as implications for counselor educators and future research are presented. First, significant findings that extend the literature base are discussed, such as how this study produced one of the only mentorship models in our field grounded in research, the necessity of shared identities in mentoring relationships, and how the desire to mentor may sustain its practice. Next, I discuss findings from the study as they relate to each primary and secondary research question that guided the study. Limitations of the current study, implications and an outline for future research follow.

**Research Grounded Model for Female Mentorship**

Arguably, the most significant contribution yielded from this study is that of the Female Responsive Mentoring Model (FRMM), one of the only mentoring models in the field grounded in research. Other models include the Rheineck Mentoring Model (Rheineck & Roland, 2008) which is grounded in a mixed methods study and the Women’s Inclusive Mentoring Framework (Macoombs & Bhat, 2020) which is rooted in an extensive systemic literature review. The Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES) also has thorough guidelines for
research mentorship, which were curated using various experts in the field as well as review of the overall literature (Borders et al., 2012).

The FRMM is a cyclical model which begins with the mentor and mentee navigating the development of their relationship through various developmental and filtering behaviors. Developmental factors include shared identities that the mentor and mentee may share such as race, gender, research interests and professional identities (Butler, et al., 2012; Chan, et al., 2015; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015). These shared identities support a foundation from which effective mentoring can develop, and from this, mentees identify needs and goals unique to the relationship (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Mentee needs represent personal and professional functions within the mentoring relationship (Rheineck & Roland, 2008). They emphasize mentee development as an important component that defines the relationship (Rheineck & Roland, 2008). This is further emphasized by the last developmental factor: what lived experiences a mentor/ee is bringing into the relationship.

The developmental factors are heavily influenced by filtering behaviors which reflect certain attitudes and behaviors of the mentor/ee. These behaviors facilitate the ongoing development of the mentoring relationship. The first filtering behavior, intentionality, is a key element in differentiating the mentoring relationship from other similar relationships such as the supervisory alliance or advising relationship because it reflects the purposeful nature of how the mentor/ee build and sustain the relationship (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Mutuality, the second filtering behavior describes this mutual understanding between mentor/ee to develop and sustain the relationship. Lastly, cultural responsiveness is a filtering behavior that the mentor is expected to display to demonstrate investment in the mentee’s success (Cannon et al., 2020; Hammer et al., 2014; Portman & Garrett, 2005).
Once the mentoring relationship moves through its development stage, it is sustained by interpersonal factors between the mentor/ee which create a unique, beneficial, and supportive environment that is able to sustain subsequent positive outcomes. The first interpersonal factor, safe holding space, represents the safe, stable, and open environment created by the mentor that can hold space for the mentee’s personal needs (Cannon et al., 2020; Casto et al., 2005; Hammer et al., 2014; Portman & Garrett, 2005). It allows for mentees to accept and engage with the second interpersonal factor, mentor interventions. Mentor interventions are the activities that mentors use to yield positive outcomes from the relationship (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Casto et al., 2005; Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Borders et al., 2012; Gibson, 2006; Gibson, 2016). Examples include providing opportunities to collaborate, emotional support, facilitating reflective discussions and tasks such as proofreading professional materials. The third interpersonal factor, navigation of systems, represents the significant undertaking of guiding and instructing the mentee through their respective academic system. When linked to mentor interventions unique to the mentee, system navigation can promote mentee success (Canon et al., 2020; Hammer et al., 2014; Hill et al., 2005; McKibben et al., 2018). This interpersonal factor also illustrates the mentor’s attention to humanness, the final interpersonal factor. This factor acts as the foundation for the mentoring relationship so that a mentor’s guidance and interventions can be considered trustworthy by the mentees and can produce beneficial outcomes.

Both the mentor and mentee can experience positive outcomes from being engaged in a mentoring relationship. Regardless of whether the woman is fulfilling the role of the mentor or the mentee, the desire to mentor is a universal outcome of this model. This finding promotes the cyclical nature of FRMM. Additionally, a mentor may experience fulfillment as an outcome. Mentees may experience personal and professional identity development (Rheineck et al., 2008),
increased confidence, a sense of feeling cared for, and various accomplishments such as publishing original research, doctoral program completion (Borders et al., 2012; Briggs & Perhsson, 2008; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Okech, et al., 2006; Protivnak & Foss, 2009), and navigating motherhood as a counselor educator (Haskins et al., 2012; Trepal).

Mentee Identity Development

A significant finding from this study which expands the literature base is that effective mentorship has the potential to facilitate both personal and professional identity development in mentees. The only current framework for mentorship that poses personal identity development as a major component is the Rheineck Mentoring Model (Rheineck & Roland, 2008). Previous research that has investigated both professional and leadership identity development have yielded mentorship as a potential factor which promotes development in these areas. (Boswell et al., 2015; Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014) However, these researchers were not explicitly exploring mentorship as part of their studies. Specifically, this study found that mentors help to elicit identity development by role modeling and through various interventions. Some participants reported being inspired and reassured that they could present as themselves authentically in academia because their mentors role modeled this behavior in their own professional presentation while teaching and engaging with their colleagues. Further, BIPOC participants noted the importance of role modeling for mentees who also identify as BIPOC as a means of promoting greater racial and ethnic representation in counselor education. These participants stated that they generally did not have access to mentors who shared their racial and ethnic identities when they were pursuing their graduate degrees. At times, this underrepresentation resulted in lack of confidence in their abilities and instances of imposter syndrome. This is consistent with findings from previous research (Cartwright et al., 2021; Casto
et al., 2005; Vaishnav, 2020) which has investigated the role of identity matching in mentorship as well as considerations for cross-cultural mentoring.

In addition to role modeling, mentors often introduced mentees to professional opportunities of which they may not have been aware or were hesitant to pursue due to lack of confidence. Mentors encouraged mentees to pursue these opportunities by communicating belief in their abilities as well as helping them through potential obstacles such as application processes. Such opportunities included inviting mentees to co-author publications, assisting mentees in applying for professional leadership positions, or helping mentees through the research process. These examples of interventions align with findings from focus groups facilitated by Limberg et al. (2013) for the purpose of examining professional identity development in doctoral students. Additionally, mentors helped mentees develop their identities as counselor educators through conversations about career goals, research interests, and teaching style. Previous studies related to professional identity development have often yielded mentorship as a result, linking mentorship as beneficial for professional identity development (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). Again, these studies did not seek to explicitly explore the relationship between identity development and mentorship. The current study is additive to the professional identity development literature base in that it explicitly investigated what processes occur within the mentoring relationship to facilitate mentee identity development.

Findings from this study also indicate that the mentoring relationship processes facilitate personal identity development as well (Rheineck & Roland, 2008). More current literature exploring links between identity development and mentorship only discusses professional identity development as a potential positive outcome for mentees (Limberg et al., 2013; Owens & Neale-
McFall, 2014). However, older literature such as Casto et al.’s (2005) literature review of female mentorship mentions the potential for holistic identity development in mentees as does the Rheineck Mentoring Model (Rheineck & Roland, 2008). The current study expands on this, as participants specifically associated mentorship with personal identity development in addition to professional identity development. Participants reported that mentees may become more mature, more self-aware, and better able to integrate their personal selves into their counselor educator roles. The fact that some participants reported seeking mentors specifically so that they could help them integrate their personal and professional identities is also additive to the literature (Dollarhide et al., 2013; Limberg et al., 2013; Owens & Neale-McFall, 2014; Protivnak & Foss, 2009).

An additional niche finding in this study was found in participants’ discussion of motherhood and how it intersected with identity development. For several participants, there was an emphasis on balancing being a mother or caregiver with the demands of academia, given the historical difficulties of navigating both roles. This is consistent with previous literature exploring the experiences of counselor educators who identify as mothers (Haskins et al., 2016; Hermann et al., 2014; Holm et al., 2015; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). Participants who identified as BIPOC mothers discussed how mentorship positively impacted their abilities to promote work/life balance and lessen professional strain. In Haskins et al.’s (2016) transcendental phenomenology, African American mothers in counselor education shared similar experiences using language of support, as opposed to mentorship. In their phenomenological study investigating experiences of doctoral students becoming mothers, Holm et al. (2015) also found that mentorship was a valuable protective factor for counselor educator mothers. This supports findings from this study in those participants who identified as mothers often discussed the importance of having a mentor to role model navigating care taking and professional responsibilities.
Relevance of Shared Identities for Effective Mentorship

Like previous studies, findings from this study indicated mixed perspectives about the importance of identity matching in mentorship (Boswell et al., 2015; Cartwright et al., 2021; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Some participants discussed the importance of shared identities within the mentoring relationship in terms of not only aspects such as race, gender, and sexual orientation, but also professional identities such as school counselor or trauma clinician. This is in line with mixed findings from other scholars, that mentor/ee matching should attend to both personal and professional identities of both parties (Butler, et al., 2012; Chan, et al., 2015; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015).

Participants also indicated that while they may have had a preference to be paired with a mentor who held similar identities and interests to them, it was also important that mentors be culturally responsive when engaging with their mentees. This is consistent with Cartwright et al.’s (2021) findings that Black female doctoral students prefer to be mentored by Black female counselor educators, but that mentors need to practice cultural responsiveness regardless in order to be considered helpful and effective. These findings also expand upon portions of Boswell et al.’s (2015) results from their psychological phenomenological research. This study yielded mixed results regarding master’s, doctoral and faculty level mentees, and the importance they placed on gender matching in mentorship.

Similar to scholars who investigated the importance of mentorship for non-white, non-male individuals, participants in this study did not always have access to individuals with whom they shared identities in their academic environments (Casto et al., 2005; Chan, et al., 2015; Chandler, 1996; Hill & Wheat, 2017; Lark & Croteau, 1998; Reddick & Pritchett, 2015). However, while participants may have reported lack of access to individuals who shared their identities, they did
Continued Desire to Mentor

This study did not intend to explore the specific outcomes of mentorship, but rather the processes which help elicit reported beneficial outcomes. However, participants discussed several positive outcomes of the mentoring relationship in depth throughout their interviews, and these outcomes became a significant addition to the emergent theory proposed. Participants associated positive outcomes that were unique to both the mentor and mentee roles, as well as a universal outcome: The desire to mentor. Findings revealed that female counselor educators who experienced effective mentorship subsequently felt the desire to “pay it forward”, or mentor others who could benefit from it. While literature suggests that mentors may experience benefits from mentoring such as a sense of increased career satisfaction and networking opportunities, fulfilling collaborations, and increased self-confidence (Gibson, 2016; Kram, 1985; 1988; McKibben, et al., 2018), these studies do not address the desire to mentor as a noteworthy outcome. Findings from this study suggest that mentorship has the potential to become cyclical in nature, that being part of an effective mentoring relationship motivates individuals to continue to mentor. While participants reported paying forward mentorship to others as a factor that elicited their desire to mentor, they also indicated that continued mentoring provided a sense of fulfillment that was an incentive to continue the process indefinitely and take on additional mentees. This is additive to studies such as Limberg et al. (2013), Owens & Neale-McFall (2014) and Rheineck & Roland (2008) who focused on professional identity development as the general outcome from mentoring relationships.
Further discussion of findings in this chapter are organized by the research questions that guided this research. The three primary research questions along with their secondary research questions presented in this study were:

1. What activities and interventions occurring in mentoring relationships are associated with positive outcomes for the mentee?
   a. How do these activities and interventions produce positive outcomes?

2. How are the career development and psychosocial functions of mentorship carried out by mentors?
   a. How do mentors oscillate between the mentorship functions?
   b. What factors influence mentors to oscillate between mentorship functions?

3. Are there characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators that are unique to this population, and if so, what are they?

**Research Question #1: What activities and interventions occurring in mentoring relationships are associated with positive outcomes for the mentee?**

Findings from this study revealed an array of potential activities and interventions that mentors utilize which mentees associated with positive outcomes. Interventions ranged across personal and professional functions (Boswell et al., 2015). Participants associated positive outcomes such as doctoral program completion, with instances in which mentors demonstrated encouragement and verbally communicated confidence in mentees. This expands on Protivnak and Foss’ (2009) study regarding contributing factors to doctoral program completion. Another common positive outcome for mentees was the obtainment of their first counselor education faculty position. This outcome is additive to the literature base. Participants associated this positive outcome with several mentor interventions such as their mentors reviewing their application
materials, writing them letters of recommendations, and demystifying the on-campus interview process (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Many participants also reported that they were able to develop stronger professional networks within the field because their mentors took the time to connect them with their colleagues at professional conferences (Casto et al., 2005). Further, participants reported other mentor interventions seen throughout the literature, such as, invitations to co-author publications (Borders et al., 2012; Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008) or nominations for professional leadership opportunities in organizations such as Chi Sigma Iota or state-level American Counseling Association branches (Casto et al., 2005; Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Borders et al., 2012; Gibson, 2016).

A key finding from this research was that of the mentor facilitating the creation of a safe holding space within the relationship. This was found to be essential for producing positive outcomes for mentees, which aligns with Cannon et al.’s (2021) relational strategies for female research mentorship. Participants also reported that mentors who helped their mentee navigate their respective system, such as their doctoral program or academic department, helped facilitate positive outcomes for the mentee, which is similar to the theme in Maccombs and Bhat’s (2020) Women’s Inclusive Mentoring Framework (WIMF) concerning department politics. This finding is also supported by historical literature in business administration journals (Kram, 1986, Levinson, 1979). As a special consideration, participants noted that it was especially important to help minoritized mentees navigate academic systems to promote equity among students and junior faculty in counselor education programs (Cannon et al, 2020; Cartwright et al., 2021; Haskins et al., 2016; Vaishnav, 2020). Findings suggest that mentors should actively reflect on how their mentees’ varying identities impact their experience of their respective programs and departments.
Overall, the process of helping mentees navigate these systems increase the likelihood that mentees will experience positive outcome as a result of the mentoring relationship.

**How interventions produce positive outcomes**

One reason that the mentoring relationship produces positive outcomes is related to the mentor’s awareness of the mentee as a whole person. A key finding from this study was the importance that participants placed on mentor/ees’ attention to humanness of both parties. When both individuals approach each other this way, the mentoring relationship becomes a safe environment to grow, learn and develop. With this humanistic foundation, interventions chosen by the mentor are more likely to be valued and trusted by the mentee, and thus produce beneficial outcomes. Further, participants from this study noted that how a mentor facilitated an intervention was just as important as what intervention was selected. Mentors demonstrated authenticity, vulnerability, respect, and care toward their mentees while simultaneously engaging in interventions appropriate for the mentee’s needs and goals. These findings are supported by Casto et al. (2005), who established mentoring guidelines for female counselor educators based upon review of higher education mentoring literature and the anecdotal experiences of the authors involved.

**Research Question #2: How are the career development and psychosocial functions of mentorship carried out by mentors?**

A major gap in the counselor education literature is related to how the career and psychosocial functions of mentorship are enacted. This study begins to fill those gaps. The findings from this study related to the career and psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship are aligned with previous research (Chandler, 1996; Kram, 1985; 1988), however participants generally used *personal* to refer to psychosocial functions and *professional* to refer to career
functions. This aligns with older research conducted by Rheineck and Roland (2008). In creating one of the first mentorship models in the counseling field, the Rheineck Mentoring Model, they discussed that participant asserted the importance of having both personal and professional characteristics within the mentoring relationship to elicit growth and development in mentees.

Personal and professional functions of the mentoring relationship were carried out by mentors through tangible interventions as well as the creation of a safe space within the relationship. Participants reported that various interventions such as co-authoring with their mentor, being nominated for a leadership position in a professional organization or having them proofread their application materials were ways that mentors carried out the professional functions of mentorship. Other examples included being invited to co-present at a conference or introduced to their mentor’s professional network. The interventions used to carry out the professional functions of mentorship are like findings of previous studies (Baltrinic et al., 2018; Casto et al., 2005; Protivnak & Foss, 2009; Borders et al., 2012; Gibson, 2006; Gibson, 2016). The ACES research mentorship guidelines (Borders et al., 2012) outline several instrumental tasks which provide guidance and instruction regarding the research process, such as sharing their knowledge of the research process with their mentees. Many participants in this study indicated that their mentors collaborated with them throughout their research not only by co-authoring but by helping with methodological decision-making processes. Some participants also described the ways in which their mentors provided them feedback about their teaching abilities, in line with Baltrinic et al.’s (2018) Q methodology regarding teaching mentorship styles. This study expands on Gibson’s (2016) work that compares the parallels of professional and leadership identity development for counselor educators by explicitly naming intervention that can help elicit professional identity development such as nominating mentees for professional
service opportunities, helping them reflect on how they want to enact their counselor educator personas and encouraging them to get involved in leadership opportunities in organizations such as Chi Sigma Iota (CSI).

While participants communicated how mentors carried out the professional functions of mentorship, there was special attention given to how mentors carried out the personal functions of the relationship. Taken collectively, findings demonstrate that mentors attended to the personal function of the relationship through interventions such as texting or emailing a mentee to check in regarding personal matters, normalizing and validating the mentee’s experiences, and allowing time and space in meetings to discuss personal matters that may be impacting the mentee in their professional setting. Beyond these interventions, participants also reported that certain interpersonal factors influenced how mentors carried out the personal function of the relationship. Mentors demonstrated care and intentional commitment to their mentees and engaged authentically and with genuine interest in their mentee’s personhood. Similarly, Kram (1986) named several functions necessary to fulfill the psychosocial needs of the mentee, which indicate some overlap with findings from this study: (a) role modeling, (b) counseling, (c) acceptance and confirmation, and (d) friendship.

**Oscillation between mentorship functions**

Related to the second research question in this study, the researcher investigated how mentors oscillate between the personal and professional functions of the relationship as well as what factors may influence the oscillation process. Findings suggest that mentors oscillated between functions of the relationship based on their mentee’s unique needs and goals. Mentors facilitated both personally- and professionally oriented interventions that were in line with what needs and goals their mentees were communicating. This is supported by Purgason et al. (2018)’s
research that provides a framework for effective mentoring based on the Discrimination Model (Bernard, 1997). In Purgason et al.’s (2018) framework, mentors oscillate between roles such as coach, guide, role model, and supporter to meet mentee needs. Participants in this study did not identify any distinct roles that mentors may fulfill. However, findings from this study introduce a new concept to the literature. At times, mentors may need to oscillate from the professional function to the personal function if a mentee is experiencing something personally that is interfering with their ability to attend to a professional goal. For instance, a mentee that has experienced an event that is personally distressing (e.g., grief, loss, or a traumatic event), the mentor may need to tend to these personal matters for the mentee to be able to focus on a professionally related task.

**Research Question #3: Are there characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators that are unique to this population, and if so, what are they?**

Participants speculated several unique characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators. One such characteristic was that female counselor educators simultaneously experience being minoritized in counselor education while being the majority population in the field. Participants reported experiencing more instances of inequities than their male peers, and that their male peers were afforded more positions of leadership. They also discussed that the presence of certain societal expectations of female-identifying individuals make mentorship unique among female counselor educators. These expectations included having to balance demands such as raising children and caring for older family members, running a household and being a good spouse in addition to being an effective faculty member. This is consistent with the small body of work which investigates inequities experienced by this population (Avent Harris, et al., 2019; Hill et al., 2005; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). Participants reported difficulty balancing
caregiving and maternal responsibilities such as becoming a mother while navigating tenure, similar to participants in Trepal and Stinchfield’s (2012) phenomenological study. Findings also suggest that participants experienced pay inequities compared to their male peers which echoes Avent Harris et al.’s (2019) findings. This study’s findings expand upon Hill et al.’s (2005) research which explored professional satisfaction and quality of life among female faculty members. While participants reported that these inequities had negative impacts on their professional satisfaction and quality of life, they also reported that mentorship between female counselor educators had the ability to help build a sense of community and allow for mutual commiseration and support, thus helping to combat potential lack of satisfaction (Chandler, 1996; Grant, 2012; Hill et al., 2005; Joseph-Collins, 2017; Rheineck & Roland, 2008).

Participants in this study universally underscored the importance of the personal function of the mentoring relationship and the role in its effectiveness. They also stated that this psychosocial emphasis was unique to female counselor educators, and that their male counterparts may be more task-oriented in their mentoring approach. These findings expand on Hammer et al.’s (2014) conceptual publication suggesting the use of RCT in implementing relational strategies for mentoring female faculty members. Some participants argued that male and female differences in mentoring approaches were due to the gendered socialization women face related to being nurturing, sensitive and more emotionally focused than men. Chandler (1996) discussed how the differences in socialization between male and female genders may impact mentorship, and findings from this study expand upon this postulation.

An unexpected finding in this study is how participants approached their female identities when discussing the process of effective mentorship for female counselor educators. While participants spoke about how their female identities impacted their experiences and processes
related to mentorship, they placed greater emphasis on what factors, behaviors, and interventions make the mentoring relationship most effective. As was statedly previously in this chapter, some studies exploring identity in mentorship illustrate mixed perspectives about the importance of the practice (Boswell et al., 2015; Cartwright et al., 2021; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Given that FST argues that the social location of any given woman plays a role in shaping what she knows and how limited she is in being able to obtain knowledge, perhaps the participants’ standpoints influenced their conceptualizations of what might be unique to female counselor educators in the mentoring relationship (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). It is possible that because this is an initial inquiry into mentoring experiences of female counselor educators, more questions than answers were revealed regarding the uniqueness of their participants’ experiences. This need not be viewed as a limitation in findings but an opportunity to continue to develop the marginalized dialogue that female counselor educators can provide as a counter perspective to the dominant culture in our profession (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987).

**Limitations**

The current study utilized several methods to promote credibility, validity, and rigor to promote trustworthiness. The primary researcher practiced reflexivity through continuous memoing during data collection and analysis. Each participant interview was coded by the primary researcher as well as two of four research assistants as a form of investigator triangulation. Further, each participant was invited to member check their individual interviews to provide feedback and was invited to participate in a focus group in which the primary researcher discussed the emergent theory. Two peer debriefers were utilized in the creation of the final model for female mentorship, one of which has several peer-reviewed publications concerning female mentorship in the field of counselor education.
As with all research, the current study is not without limitations. CGT requires constant engagement with the methodological process, as well as continuous reflection on how the data collection and analysis processes are facilitating the creation of an emergent theory that is meaningful and portrays participant voices authentically (Charmaz, 2014; Hussein et al., 2014). Some critics of grounded theory methodologies argue that very few grounded theory studies actually yield an emergent theory; that findings from these studies instead resemble storytelling (Charmaz, 2008). While some expert grounded theorists agree with this critique, they also emphasize that grounded theory studies can produce an analytical foundation of a specific experience, and thus pave the way for future studies (Charmaz, 2008). Specific to this study, the first three interviews completed during data collection yielded data that elicited dialogue about participant experiences as opposed to processes within the mentoring relationship. To remedy this, the researcher revisited the initial script for the semi-structured interview questions and added in places for targeted follow-up questions that elicited more process-oriented responses from participants in subsequent interviews.

Relatedly, one limitation of this study was that individual interviews with participants acted as the main method of data collection. This is a common pitfall in grounded theory studies and can lead to a lack of conceptual depth in the findings (Hussein et al., 2014). In the case of this study, participants discussed mentorship within the contexts of both their doctoral program experiences and their professoriate experiences. It is possible that had participants been directed to focus solely on one of these contexts that, findings would have been richer and added depth to the emergent theory. However, the current study attempted to buffer this pitfall by incorporating a focus group with the majority of participants to discuss and receive feedback on the emergent theory, once it was clear that data saturation was occurring. The researcher also implemented several methods of
trustworthiness to strengthen the rigor of the study, one such method being the use of peer debriefers. One of the peer debriefers utilized in this study has published several peer-reviewed articles which concern effective mentorship for women in counselor education. While this peer debriefer was selected based on her expertise in the mentorship field, it is possible that this peer debriefer may have introduced additional bias regarding her own beliefs about best mentorship practices with female-identifying individuals. In addition to utilizing peer debriefers, the researcher consistently memoed throughout the research process, engaged in triangulation of data with several research assistants, practiced member checking, and utilized thick description when discussing findings.

Best practices for CGT methodology, suggest a large range for the necessary number of participants needed to reach data saturation. Commonly, researchers are advised to conduct between 20 and 60 interviews to achieve sufficient data saturation (Creswell, 2013). However, Guest et al. (2006) assert that data saturation can occur within the first 12 interviews with participants. Charmaz (2006; 2014) also described several CGT studies which conducted interviews with only 8 to 12 participants. This study recruited 15 participants, which resulted in saturation of data related to the research questions associated with the study. Saturation was reached once individual interviews were not eliciting data considered new or divergent by the research team. However, the smaller sample size of this study may impact the applicability of findings to contexts outside of CACREP-accredited counselor education programs. Further, participants represented mentoring relationships within the contexts of student/faculty dyads and junior faculty/senior faculty dyads. Potentially this variation in participants could have impacted the conceptual depth of the resulting theory given that multiple roles and contexts were explored. Additionally, participants were invited to participate in snowball sampling, and this resulted in two
participants speaking about their experiences with a shared mentor. It is possible that this may have impacted some of the findings, though these individuals did not share divergent perspectives or disagree with one another when responding to questions and sharing their experiences. Data collection and analysis also occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic, and some participants reported that this impacted their ability to mentor as often as they would have liked. This factor may have influenced how some participants viewed their abilities as mentors and thus they spoke more to their past experiences as mentees.

Given the crucial role that I played as the primary researcher in research process, I sought to claim my positionality, experiences, and previously obtained knowledge about female mentorship transparently, as this helped to build my awareness around my biases and assumptions (Hunt, 2011; Kline, 2008; Morrow, 2005). However, in CGT, it can be especially difficult to separate participant and researcher roles, as both are seen as co-investigators within the study (Charmaz, 2014). Given this, subjectivity was unavoidable in this study, and it is possible that researcher biases, assumptions, and power dynamics emerged throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2011; Morrow, 2005). Specifically, I entered this research process with biases and assumptions related to my own experiences as both a mentee and a mentor while in a CACREP counselor education doctoral program. However, through memoing, member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing, I addressed my biases by making sure that the emergent theory tied directly to data gathered from participants and not my past experiences.

Lastly, while the findings from this study have begun to provide a richer understanding of effective mentorship for female counselor educators, these findings need to be assessed for transferability to a larger sample of female counselor educators. For example, the majority of participants identified as pre-tenure or non-tenure track professors. It is possible that tenured
female counselor educators have divergent perspectives that would diversify the collected data. This could also help assess the credibility of the current research. Future researchers could utilize the findings from this study to create a larger scale study that tests these findings using mixed methods or quantitative methodology.

**Implications for Counselor Educators**

FST provided a foundation for conceptualizing the implications of this study. FST theorists are critical of how societal and systemic structures create a hierarchical social order which influence access to knowledge based on an individual’s identities such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, ability, etc. (Collins, 1990; Harding 1987; 1991; Smith, 1987). Given this, implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs are presented in a way that frames mentorship as a vessel for equitable access to information, resources, support, and professional opportunities among potential mentees that is delivered by mentors in a caring and responsible way. Implications will also be discussed within the FST context that necessitates that marginalized groups—in this case, female counselor educators—have the power to enact social change within their programs to shift hierarchical dynamics within a cisgender male-, straight and white-dominated field because they possess the unique standpoint to bear witness to how the dominant group functions while experiencing their own marginalized positionality. The following section is organized by several factors that are pertinent to the work of counselor educators in considering effective mentoring practices for female-identifying counselor educators. These include attention to mentee as a whole person, promoting equity for female counselor educators, and positive outcomes for both mentors and mentees.

**Attention to the Whole Person**
This study suggests that one essential quality of effective mentorship is related to how the mentor acknowledges the mentee as a whole person. In line with tenets of FST, mentors provide mentees with guidance, knowledge and support from a frame that prioritizes care and responsibility. This attention to humanness assists the mentoring relationship in becoming a safe space for the mentee to learn and develop. Counselor educators who wish to engage in effective mentorship should consider the humanistic foundation presented in this framework given that participants often used humanistic tenets such as genuineness, authenticity, and unconditional positive regard to describe an effective mentoring relationship (Rogers, 1957). Findings suggest that interventions chosen by the mentor are more likely to be valued and trusted by the mentee when facilitated within this humanizing frame, and thus more likely to produce beneficial outcomes. This expands upon some of the current literature base which currently suggests the use of Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) as a potential framework for mentoring women in counselor education (Cannon et al., 2020; Hammer et al., 2014; Portman & Garrett, 2005). Potential mentors can attend to their mentees within a humanistic frame by practicing the aforementioned tenets of client-centered counseling such as unconditional positive regard towards their mentees, empathetic understanding, and authenticity of the mentor (Rogers, 1957). Further, this research adds to current scholarship by suggesting that mentors can make an intentional effort to role model vulnerability with their mentees. They can also use various interventions which align with the WIMF (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020) and the Rheineck Mentoring Model (Rheineck & Roland, 2008) such as informal check-in’s periodically to communicate a sense of care, discussions that promote self-understanding, appropriate use of self-disclosure, creative activities that promote bonding, and engaging in self-care together. These interventions help to communicate that there is space within
the relationship for the mentor to hold the personal needs of their mentee that are a result of their unique standpoint.

**Promoting Equity for Female Counselor Educators**

This study suggests that mentorship between female counselor educators is unique because this population is simultaneously minoritized in counselor education while being the majority population in the field (Hill, et al., 2005; Shillingford, et al., 2013; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). According to FST, this would suggest that female counselor educators hold a standpoint that is opportune for facilitating systemic change within the profession. Female counselor educators can use their marginalized experiences to further develop approaches in the field that may not currently represent other viewpoints outside of the dominant culture (Collins, 1990). FST suggests that gendered socialization is unique to this population as well, as it plays a role in emphasizing the personal function of the relationship (Chandler, 1996; Collins, 1990). Given that participants reported experiencing more inequities and discrimination than their male peers, it would be important for those mentoring female counselor educators to broach the subject of these inequities often (Haskins et al., 2016; Hermann, et al., 2013; Hill, et al., 2005; Holm et al., 2015; Shillingford et al., 2013). By discussing these inequities, mentors may be able to situate themselves as advocates for their mentees by providing resources about bringing these instances of inequities to various institution leadership or reporting bodies such as Title IX (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Oller & Teeling, 2021). Beyond advocacy, mentors can also provide a safe holding space to discuss these discriminatory experiences so that mentees can feel validated, heard, and understood. Participants in this study also noted that their male peers were afforded more positions of leadership than they were in departmental, institutional, and professional organization settings, thus continuing to influence the dominant culture in the field (McKibben et al., 2018). This may
indicate that counselor educators need to assess for equitable representation within these contexts to give greater opportunities to women, especially when considering the underrepresentation of BIPOC women (Cartwright et al., 2021; Oller & Teeling, 2021; Vaishnav, 2020).

While this study illustrates that these inequities had negative impacts on participants, it also shows that mentoring among female counselor educators can result in a greater sense of community and allow for mutual commiseration and support among the population given the marginalized standpoints they occupy. This was especially true for participants who identified as mothers and caregivers (Haskins et al., Hermann et al., 2013). Various professional organizations could address this by creating robust networking initiatives in addition to those already offered that give female counselor educators candid spaces to connect, get support and guidance, and vent their frustrations in a context that is perhaps less consequential than in a departmental context (Haskins et al., 2016; Hermann, et al., 2013; Hill, et al., 2005; Holm et al., 2015; Shillingford et al., 2013). Further, counselor educators could advocate for support groups at their institution that tackle issues related to being an academic mother and managing imposter syndrome as a female doctoral student (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020).

Outcomes for Both Mentors and Mentees

While this research did not intend to explicitly explore outcomes of mentorship, participants noted a multitude of positive outcomes as a result in being engaged in effective mentorship. Further, it yielded outcomes associated with mentors and mentees, which is significant given that the majority of research focuses on benefits of mentoring for mentees (Gibson, 2016; Kram, 1985; 1988; McKibben, et al., 2018; Purgason et al., 2018).

Overall, findings suggest that being engaged in an effective mentoring relationship as a mentee can help mitigate stressors associated with being a female doctoral student or counselor
educator, as was suggested as a possibility for future research by Avent Harris et al. (2019), and a common finding in this literature base (Avent Harris, et al., 2019; Cannon et al., 2017; Cartwright et al., 2021; Hill et al., 2005; Trepal & Stinchfield, 2012). Due to their unique standpoints, female counselor educators who experience forms of inequity related to pay gaps, lack of recognition or discrimination in their departments can help alleviate these stressors through connecting with an effective mentor with whom they can share their frustrations and concerns. This research adds to findings from previous decades that associate doctoral program completion and preparation for entering faculty roles with receiving effective mentorship (Lazovsky & Shimoni, 2007; Protivnak & Foss, 2009). Findings also support that effective mentorship can be helpful in increasing research productivity, presentation skills and teaching confidence (Borders et al., 2012; Briggs & Perhsson, 2008; Hall & Hulse, 2010; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Okech, et al., 2006). While some previous literature has strongly suggested a link between female leadership and mentorship, participants in this study did not produce significant findings regarding the impact of mentorship on leadership involvement (Alderfer, 2014; Eagly & Carli, 2003; Eagly, et al., 2003; Yoder, 2001). Findings from this study also found that mentors may experience positive outcomes from mentorship as well. Participants reported feeling a sense of fulfillment from mentoring as well as a continued desire to mentor. These outcomes suggest that those who mentor may be intrinsically motivated to mentor others despite the amount of time and energy effective mentoring takes.

Implications For Counselor Education Programs

Within CACREP doctoral standards (2016), mentorship is highlighted as an activity which plays a role in teaching identity development, and CACREP (2016) also defines individual, triadic and group supervision as types of mentoring relationships. However, very few empirically based mentoring frameworks exist within the literature. This study begins to provide counselor educators
with a framework for effective mentorship of female counselor educators and helps address several program related considerations. The following section is organized into several parts that explore counselor education program-related considerations such as access to mentors, department culture and environment, professional organization implications, mentor development programs and online programs.

**Access to Mentors**

Findings from this study suggest that counselor education programs consider which individuals in their programs have access to mentors and who may not. A significant finding from this study was that mentors reported purposefully seeking out mentees with whom they shared minoritized identities to help them overcome identity-specific barriers. This is similar to Casto et al. (2005), who asserted that female mentors *catch female students on the edge*, those students who seem less involved and engaged than their peers. Mentors involved with this study discussed how they purposefully would seek out students who they perceived as on the fringe to engage them. This suggests that even when quality mentorship might be available, that some students may not understand how or be able to access a potential mentor (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Though participants did not find formal mentoring programs to be the most helpful type of mentoring, counselor education programs could counter this through developing mentor matching initiatives within their departments for students, and by explaining how mentorship functions during program orientations (Boswell et al., 2015; Casto et al., 2005; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Mentor matching programs such as this may also be helpful for junior faculty/senior faculty dyads if facilitated in a way that promotes relationship building, care and cultural responsiveness (Borders et al., 2011).

While mentors in this study noted that mentoring is something they are intrinsically motivated to do, they also acknowledged the time and commitment effective mentorship takes,
and how it can often compete with other faculty obligations, especially those related to obtaining tenure. To promote faculty engagement, department chairs could incentivize individuals who engage in effective mentorship through financial compensation, course releases, and could also advocate for faculty who want to consider it a form of institutional service (Borders et al., 2011; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020).

Department Culture & Environment

Some of the participants, especially those who identified as BIPOC women, reported struggling with feeling minoritized based on their female and non-white identities within their respective academic spaces. While this experience may be common across marginalized identities in counselor education, this finding was specific to BIPOC participants. Examples included being nominated for diversity committee work without permission, being tokenized, discriminated against, or taking on mentees in addition to their advising loads without compensation because they observed these students struggling. Previous literature supports these findings (Canon et al., 2020; Hammer et al., 2014; Hill et al., 2005; Hill & Wheat, 2017; McKibben et al., 2018). Further, this study suggests that many female counselor educators and doctoral students have had negative experiences with politics, relational history and unspoken expectations related to their department and program culture. Taken together, these findings illustrate the need for counselor education programs to assess the climate of their programs from both student and faculty perspectives. This could be done through anonymous climate surveys, town hall-style forums, as well as engaging in cultural competence trainings.

Organizational Implications

Findings from this study support previous research regarding the development of informal mentoring relationships. This study found that the majority of mentoring relationships begin
informally, or organically, when the mentor or the mentee seek the other out to engage in a relationship and are intentional in sustaining the quality of the relationship (Borders et al., 2011; Boswell et al., 2015; Burke & McKeen, 1990; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). However, professional organizations such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors (ACES) or Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) have formal mentoring programs in place such as Emerging Leaders, ACES Fellows, Edwin L. Herr Fellowship, and Leadership Fellows and Interns (LFIs) in which mentors and mentees are assigned systemically (Borders et al., 2012). These programs could alter their approach to mentor/ee pairing by having mentees describe their ideal mentors based on characteristics such as personality, identities, research interests and career trajectories instead of random assignment (Boswell et al., 2015). These programs could also look to affinity group mentorship, such as race-based mentorship programs like Academics for Black Lives to better incorporate cultural responsiveness into programs that engage in random assignment to address the need some mentees may have to be paired with a mentor who is racially similar to them.

Given CSI’s commitment to mentorship as one of their core principles and their important role as a student organization at a departmental level, it could be advantageous for CSI to also consider the positive impact that informal mentoring may have when developing programming and opportunities for mentorship for students specifically (Boswell et al., 2015). CSI can act as a structure that could be a natural fit for mentorship programming at the department level given its historical success in implementing leadership development and training for counselor trainees and future counselor educators (Storlie & Wood, 2014; Wahesh & Myers, 2014). Further, given the reach of CSI across the profession, providing trainings of effective mentoring rooted in this emergent theory could assist in training potential mentors at a profession level.
Findings from this study support informal mentoring relationships over formal relationships, therefore it is important to consider the implications for peer mentorship, networking and group mentorship opportunities provided by professional organizations. To promote organic beginnings of mentoring relationships in these contexts, professional organizations can provide opportunities at professional conferences, or in online groups via listservs such as CESnet and CounsGrads for individuals wanting to explore mentoring opportunities to connect (Borders et al., 2011; Boswell et al., 2015). The events could be structured as meet-ups, happy hours, mentor/ee “speed-dating” tables, information sessions or more structured activities that focus on matching mentors/ees based on, shared identities, varying experiences, career goals, or research interests (Boswell et al., 2015).

**Mentor Development Programs**

Findings from this study found that mentors may experience positive outcomes from mentorship. Participants reported feeling a sense of fulfillment from mentoring as well as a continued desire to mentor. However, some participants who identified as newer faculty members struggled to feel confident in being a mentor for others due to internal feelings of inadequacy and the fear of not being perceived as competent by others (Kalaitzi et al., 2017; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020). Counselor education programs could utilize this framework for quality mentorship in developing mentor training programs at their institutions and within professional organizations (Border et al., 2011; Boswell et al., 2015). By investing in mentor training and development programs, we can increase consistency across opportunities for quality mentorship within the field (Borders et al., 2012; Cannon et al., 2020; Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Rheineck & Roland). Further we could potentially increase the amount of quality mentors available who would not have otherwise pursued mentoring due to lack of confidence in their abilities.
Considerations for Online Programs

Previous research listed several factors which promote barriers to faculty providing effective mentoring. Obligations such as publishing, securing research funding, professional service and institutional committee work were noted in the literature (Borders et al., 2011; Chan et al., 2015; Gibson, 2006; Hill et al., 2005). Findings from this study suggest that teaching remotely in online programs is another potential barrier for faculty who may want to act as a mentor to others. Counselor education programs with fully remote instructors can set up structures and events in virtual spaces to promote more opportunities for mentor/ees to connect. One such way could be to set up virtual “happy hours” for students and faculty to connect and engage in bonding activities.

Future Research

The model that was yielded from this study lends itself to benefitting from further refinement and testing to assess for its generalizability in a larger sample of female counselor educators, as well as transferability to other populations and settings. It is possible that findings from this study could apply to other female educators in fields different from counselor education. It is worth noting that though one of the questions the current study sought to explore was related to the unique characteristics of mentorship between female counselor educators, findings pertaining to this question yielded less than the other two research questions. An additional qualitative study that addresses this phenomenon solely and specifically could assist in adding to the mentorship literature base. It is also possible that findings could apply to other identities represented in the field. A future quantitative study using multiple linear regression could further test the relationship between the developmental factors and interpersonal factors of the relationship and how they may contribute to the positive outcomes discussed by participants. Further,
additional studies could be constructed that study the applicability of this model to other marginalized populations in counselor education such as BIPOC individuals, first generation students, and those who identify as LGBTQIAA+.

In discussing their experiences with mentorship, many participants gave more focus to their experiences as mentees as opposed to how they currently mentor. While the current study made great efforts to move seamlessly between presenting findings specific to both the mentor and mentee roles, future research should more critically investigate beneficial outcomes for individuals satisfying the mentor role. Findings from this study also suggest that each mentee enters the mentoring relationship with a unique set of needs. Future researchers could utilize findings from this study as well as other mentoring frameworks (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020) in the field to develop an empirically based mentee needs assessment using exploratory factor analysis. Boswell et al. (2015) also suggested the development of mentee needs scale previously.

Future research should continue to analyze mentorship within a multicultural context given the importance participants placed on cultural responsiveness in mentors. This suggestion for future research aligns with other scholars in the field (Cartwright et al., 2021; Purgason et al., 2018). Future research should also seek to assess this model’s generalizability to a larger sample of female counselor educators so that we can begin to analyze its efficacy and use it to inform more standardized guidelines at a larger systemic level (Maccombs & Bhat, 2020; Oller & Teeling, 2021).

Lastly, while the majority of participants reported that they were engaged in female-to-female mentoring dyads, some participants reported positive experiences of mentorship with male mentors and male mentees. Future research for this consideration is twofold: Future studies should indicate more specific criteria for participants in that they need to identify as being a part of a
female-to-female pair. Further, future studies could investigate differing levels of satisfaction with mentorship based on different/shared identities within the relationship.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this study was to investigate and define the processes throughout the mentoring relationship as experienced by female counselor educators. This study yielded a model for effective mentorship for female counselor educators over the course of their academic and career trajectories. Similar to historical definitions of mentorship, participants in this study defined mentorship as a unique relationship in which the mentor provides guidance, support and encouragement to the mentee across personal needs and professional goals (Burke & McKeen, 1990; Chandler, 1996; Gallacher, 1997; Kram, 1985; 1988; Levinson, 1979; Noe 1988). The findings from this study indicate that effective mentorship is a beneficial practice that can assist female counselor educators and doctoral students in developing more confidence in their abilities as counselor educators, increase likelihood of doctoral program completion, and increase research productivity.
Appendix A: Semi-structured Interview Guide

2. Tell me about your past/present mentoring relationships
   1. As a mentee
   2. As a mentor

3. What was the context of the mentorship?
   1. How long did this relationship last?

4. How did these relationships form?

5. How would you describe these relationships?

6. What were some strengths and challenges within the relationship?

7. In what ways were your identities (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, ability) implicitly and explicitly operative?

8. In what activities did you engage within the process of the mentoring relationship?

9. What were the outcomes of this relationship?
   1. How were these outcomes related to the psychosocial and/or career functions of the mentoring relationship?

10. What activities do you think produced these outcomes?

11. What are things you wished your mentor did that they did not do?

12. How does your experience with mentoring influence how you currently mentor?
Appendix B: Focus Group Guide

1. How do you think the mentoring relationship differs from other essential relationships in counseling such as the supervisory relationship and advisory relationship?

2. How do individuals know that they are involved in a mentoring relationship?

3. Discuss the importance of compatibility between a mentor and mentee:
   a) How does compatibility influence the mentoring relationship?

4. What does mentorship look like at its most effective?

5. Describe how you came to think of yourself as a mentor and/or mentee.
Appendix C: Informed Consent

Counseling and Human Services Department
440 Sims Hall
130 College Place
Syracuse, NY 13244
315-443-2266

Protocol Title: The Mentoring Relationship as Experienced by Female Counselor Educators.

Principal Investigator/Key Personnel:

**Doctoral Candidate Researcher**
Kellin Cavanaugh
kcavanau@syr.edu
802-236-9057

**Principal Investigator**
Dr. Melissa Luke
mmluke@syr.edu
315-443-5265

The purpose of this form is to provide you with information about participation in a research study and offer you the opportunity to decide whether you wish to participate. You can take as much time as you wish to decide and can ask any questions you may have now, during or after the research is complete by contacting the researchers at kcavanau@syr.edu or mmluke@syr.edu. Your participation is voluntary.

The purpose for this research is to learn more about how female counselor educators experience the mentoring relationship process, and how their various identities implicitly and explicitly impact this process.

As a potential participant, you will be asked to engage in one semi-structured interview with me, Kellin for approximately 60 to 90-minutes as well as one focus group with me for 90-minutes. I am requesting that you allow me to video record your interview and the subsequent focus group. It will be used for data analysis purposes only.

The possible risks of participation in this research:

There are possible risks of participation in this research study, though they are minimal. It is possible that some of your stories may be painful to discuss, however, this study is actually focused on obtaining positive experiences of mentorship. If feelings of
discomfort should occur, I can refer you to community counseling resources in your area for appropriate services. By participating in the focus group, you may feel some pressure to reveal feelings or experiences to the group. If by chance you professionally or personally know another participant in the focus group, you may also feel vulnerable during or after the group due to sharing your experiences within a space where you know others.

The possible benefits of participation in this research:

Potential benefits to the participants in this study include a) the opportunity to learn and process more about their experiences, b) a potential satisfaction from contributing to scholarship on mentorship and mentoring frameworks for female counselor educators and c) a possible sense of empowerment through informing processes that can result in the betterment of mentorship education and programming for female counselor educators.

Your data will be maintained to ensure privacy and confidentiality by:

All information that I gather from your interview and the focus group will be kept confidential within the research team to the best of our abilities. Given that this research is being conducted remotely via Zoom and involves the use of a focus group, it prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. You will select a pseudonym for your interview and only my dissertation chair, Dr. Melissa Luke, and I will have the key that indicates which pseudonym belongs to which participant. For the focus group, you will also be referred to using your chosen pseudonym. Reports of study findings will not include any identifying information.

The information you may share with us if you participate in this study will be kept completely confidential to the full extent of the law. Participants will be asked not to use any names during the focus group discussion. Please be advised that although the researchers will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researcher will remind participants to respect the privacy of fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the focus group to others. Participants’ information collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used, or distributed for future research studies.

Recordings

We will be using video recordings to collect data for this study. The purpose of using video recordings is to record interviews and focus groups for this study remotely. The data that will be collected with a HIPAA-compliant Zoom license via the Counseling and Human Services at Syracuse University department and immediately transferred and stored only on a Corsair password-protected, encrypted flashdrive. Please note that whenever one works with e-mail or the Internet there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality and/or anonymity. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the
degree permitted by the technology being used. It is important for you to understand that no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by third parties. Once obtained, the Zoom recording will then be deleted from the computer to which it was downloaded. The researchers listed above: Kellin Cavanaugh, and Dr. Melissa Luke, as well as 1 of 3 of our research assistants will have access to the data. Research assistants will not have access to any participant’s identifiable information. Once the study is complete, the recordings will be destroyed.

Your rights as a research participant are as follows:

- Your participation is voluntary.
- You may skip and/or refuse to answer any question for any reason.
- You are free to withdraw from this research study at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions now, during, or after the research is complete:

- For questions, concerns or more information regarding this research you may contact Dr. Melissa Luke at mmluke@syr.edu or Kellin Cavanaugh at kcavanau@syr.edu.
- If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Syracuse University Institutional Review Board at (315) 443-3013.

Do you have any questions?
Are you between 18 – 64 years of age?
Do you agree to participate in both one individual interview and one focus group?
Do you agree to be video recorded for both the individual interview and focus group?
How can I provide you with a copy of this consent script?
Appendix D: Recruitment Email

Counseling and Human Services Department
440 Sims Hall
130 College Place
Syracuse, NY 13244
315-443-2266

Greetings,

My name is Kellin Cavanaugh, and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education program at Syracuse University. Under the guidance of Dr. Melissa Luke, I am currently writing my dissertation. The working title of my dissertation is, The Mentoring Relationship as Experienced by Female Counselor Educators. Using Constructivist Grounded Theory as a methodological approach and Feminist Standpoint Theory as a theoretical framework, this study will examine and define the processes that occur over the course of mentoring relationships as experienced by female counselor educators. This study has the potential to fill critical gaps in the counselor education literature regarding effective mentoring practices for female-identifying counselor educators. **I am looking for female-identifying individuals to discuss mentoring experiences they have had that have led to positive outcomes.**

Participant inclusion criteria:

a) 18 years of age or older
b) identify as female,
c) have completed a CACREP-accredited, doctoral-level degree in counselor education, counseling and counselor education, or counselor education and supervision
d) and identify as having participated in a mentoring relationship during their career in counselor education which led to positive outcomes.

Participants who meet the above criterion and consent to participate will take part in one 60 to 90-minute semi-structured interview, as well as one subsequent focus group. Both will be video-recorded using a HIPAA-compliant Zoom license via the Counseling & Human Services department at Syracuse University and transcribed using a HIPAA-compliant transcription service such as Rev.com. Upon completion of the transcription, recordings will be destroyed, and a participant pseudonym will be used. The research team will make every effort to maintain
confidentiality of each participant by removing identifying information and institutional affiliation(s) from any article or presentation in which data is presented. All data obtained from participants, including recordings and transcriptions will be securely stored in a locked location in the researcher’s office on a passcode-encrypted flash drive.

Participation in this research is voluntary, and you may choose to participate or not. You may also choose to withdraw your status as a participant in this study at any time without consequence.

If you have interest in participating in this study, or know someone who may be interested, please contact me at kcavanau@syr.edu

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, you may also contact Dr. Melissa Luke, mmluke@syr.edu

or Syracuse University’s IRB at

http://researchintegrity.syr.edu/aboutorip/report-a-concern/

Thank you for taking the time to consider being involved in this important research.

Warm Regards,

Kellin Murphy Cavanaugh, M.A., P-LMHC
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education and Supervision | Sims Hall

T 315.443.4715    F 315.443.4276
kcavanau@syr.edu

200 Walnut Place, Syracuse, NY 13244
syracuse.edu

Syracuse University
## Appendix E: Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Affectional Orientation</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Ability Status</th>
<th>First Gen Student</th>
<th>Occupation(s):</th>
<th>Doctoral Degree Completion:</th>
<th>Work Setting(s):</th>
<th>Level(s) of Students Taught:</th>
<th>Tenure Status:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Theo</td>
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<td>American</td>
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<td>2020</td>
<td>R3 institution</td>
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<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<td>Leslie</td>
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<td>Bisexual</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Lecturer (f/t); clinician</td>
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<td>Masters</td>
<td>Non-tenure track</td>
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<td>Mary</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>R2 institution</td>
<td>Masters; doctoral</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<td>Maggie</td>
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<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>Venezuelan/American</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Private, R2</td>
<td>Masters; undergraduates</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<td>American</td>
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<td>Masters; undergraduates</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>R1, public</td>
<td>Masters; undergraduates</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savannah</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>American</td>
<td>Medical disability</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>R1, public</td>
<td>Masters; undergraduates</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>R1, public</td>
<td>Masters; doctoral</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>Member of LGBTQ community</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>R1, public</td>
<td>Masters; doctoral</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<td>Michelle</td>
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<td>Latina/Mexican</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Professor, private practice clinician</td>
<td>2016</td>
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<td>Masters; doctoral</td>
<td>Non-tenure track</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lulu</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>White/Middle Eastern</td>
<td>Heterosexual</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Instructor/clinical coordinator for master’s internships</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>R4, public</td>
<td>Undergraduate, masters and doctoral</td>
<td>Non-tenure track</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clara</td>
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<td>Asian/Korean</td>
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<td>American</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>R2, public</td>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>Pre-tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
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<td>Race/Country of Origin</td>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>Institution Type</td>
<td>Institution Level</td>
<td>Tenure Status</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvin</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>White/Turkish</td>
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<td>Turkish/American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>associate professor</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>R2, public</td>
<td>masters; doctoral</td>
<td>tenured</td>
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<tr>
<td>Justine</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>poly/open</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>first gen phd</td>
<td>assistant clinical professor</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>R2, public</td>
<td>masters; doctoral; undergraduate</td>
<td>non-tenure track</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keisha</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>heterosexual</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Assistant Professor</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>R2, public</td>
<td>masters</td>
<td>pre-tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sydney</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>heterosexual</td>
<td>Venezuelan/American</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Assistant Professor; private practice clinician</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>private, teaching institution</td>
<td>undergraduate and masters</td>
<td>pre-tenure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix F: Mentor Interventions

Give permission
Demystify the process
Build competency
Spearhead processes
Tack their name on it
Create safe space
Give validation
Check-in

Provide opportunities for processing events
Walking through applying for jobs
Teach self-advocacy skills
Foster sense of self-efficacy
Honor mentee's work
Connect counselor educator preparation and future practice
Provided motivation for program completion
Provided templates
Provided reassurance
Reach out to connect
Act as role model
Hold space for mentee

Act as a confidant

Act as a friend

Utilize counseling skills
Provide resources
Build mentee autonomy
Give mentee a ride home
Ensure safety for the mentee
Leverage power to benefit mentee
Talk up mentee to colleagues
Promote understanding of P&T process

Acknowledge own limitations as a mentor
Provide structure for meetings
Provide historical knowledge of counseling in their state
Increase representation of women in the department
Discuss code switching
Help first generation students
Set realistic expectations
Normalize experience of mentee
Demonstrate recognition of mentee successes
Provide salary negotiation help
Advice giving
Acknowledgment of mentee process
Engaged in authentic conversations
Allowed mentee to complain
Process work environment with mentee
Offer perspective to mentee
Review of tenure packets

Introduce to other doctoral students
Handle disagreements well
Use self-disclosure
Establish growth plan
Discuss strategic career decision making processes
Review of mentee C.V.
Demonstrate understanding of mentee goals
Nominate for executive board positions
Frame feedback positively
Write letters of recommendations
Build rapport
Afterword

This study has illuminated an emergent theory that the field of counselor education can utilize to promote effective mentorship for womxn. However, the process of beginning to uncover the experiences of womxn in counselor education has provided further confirmation of how problematic societal and historical influences still impact the experiences of womxn related to whether or not they have palatable identities (white, cisgender, heterosexual), or threatening identities (BIPOC, low SES, first generation student). Throughout my journey, I was challenged to realize how my palatable identities as a white womxn who may pass as straight, may pass as upper middle class, and is able-bodied influenced my approach to this work. In my own effort to further my knowledge, I realized that there were missed opportunities to disrupt these societal and historical influences. One example is regarding my lack of knowledge around how the “nurturing” stereotype of womxn in the mentoring literature is more applicable to white womxn. There are different assumptions and expectations for Black womxn, such as the “Mammy” or “Jezebel” stereotypes for instance (Collins, 1990). Further, while I tried to approach the definitions of “female-identifying” and “womxn” from a socially constructed instead of biological identity, I did not take the opportunity to disrupt how this research may reinforce gender binary norms.

The missed opportunities to disrupt the gender binary, or more fully represent systemic oppression faced by BIPOC participants are further complicated by the concept of white, cisgender womxn being the “majority/minority” in counselor education. Perhaps even my decision to use the term “womxn” to be inclusive could potentially collapse the rich uniqueness among individuals who identify with various aspects of womanhood, femaleness, femininity.
References


Ammirati, R. J., & Kaslow, N. J. (2017). All supervisors have the potential to be harmful. *The Clinical Supervisor, 36*(1), 116-123. https://doi.org/10.1080/07325223.2017.1298071


students. *Counselor Education and Supervision, 56*(2), 130-144. https://doi.org/10.1002/ceas.12067


Reddick, R. J., & Pritchett, K. O. (2015). I don't want to work in a world of Whiteness”: White faculty and their mentoring relationships with Black students. *Journal of the Professoriate, 8*(1), 54-84.


Kellin M. Cavanaugh, Ph.D., LPC, NCC

EDUCATION

Ph.D.  Counseling and Counselor Education  May 2022
Syracuse University, CACREP Accredited
Cognate: Individual Differences in Clinical Settings
Research Apprenticeship Project: Impact of Societally Enforced Gender Roles on
Transgender College Students: A Narratological Study
Dissertation: Female Experiences of The Mentoring Relationship in Counselor Education (Chair: Dr. Melissa Luke)

M.A.  Clinical Mental Health Counseling  December 2015
University of Saint Joseph, CACREP Accredited

B.A.  Liberal Arts  June 2011
Bennington College; Bennington, VT
Concentration: Learning the Individual through Creative Composition

LICENSES & CERTIFICATIONS

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), Connecticut  No. 005209
National Certified Counselor (NCC)  No. 884460

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer & CMHC Internship Coordinator  2021 – Present
University of New Haven
COUN 6690: Counseling Practicum
COUN 6691: Counseling Internship I
COUN 6692: Counseling Internship II
COUN 6632: Group Counseling
COUN 6650: Crisis & Trauma
PSYC 2271: Adolescent Development

Director of Student Engagement
Washington & Jefferson College
2019 – 2021
Changemaker Series: Ethical Leadership; Exploring Your Identity; Advocacy & Allyship (Online)
Creator and Instructor

Co-Instructor & Graduate Teaching Associate
Syracuse University
2016 – 2019
COU 642: Career Development
COU 600: School Counseling for College Access (Online)
COU 645: Counseling Prepracticum II: Advanced Multicultural Skills
COU 950: Internship in Counseling
COU 614: Group Working Counseling

Co-Instructor
Loomis Chaffee School
2015 – 2016
9100: Fitness & Wellness

---

LEADERSHIP & SERVICE APPOINTMENTS

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship Coordinator
University of New Haven
2021 – Present
- Plans, develops, implements, and evaluates field placements for CMHC graduate students utilizing CACREP 2016 standards
- Monitors, assesses, and guides field placements and provides consultation to students and site supervisors
- Recruits, evaluates, and retains sites ensuring responsiveness to the missions of the University and Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

Director of Student Engagement
Washington and Jefferson College, Washington, PA
2019 - 2021
- Provide leadership and supervision in areas of diversity and inclusion, student activities and community engagement
- Coordinate the execution of the Magellan Project, an international research and travel grant for undergraduates
- Advance campus initiatives and Student Life division goals by enhancing education and outreach experiences, promoting student wellness and resiliency, and delivering high-quality student-focused services
American Counseling Association of New York, Secretary 2018 - 2019

*State Branch*
- Maintains and distributes minutes of executive committee meetings
- Represents ACA-NY at local and state-wide functions with purpose of advocating for the counseling profession

Counselors for Social Justice, President, Past-President 2017 – 2020

*Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY*
- Founding president responsible for initiating the development of this student organization
- Supervised the creation of the Social Justice Counseling Symposium at SU in which students submit social justice-oriented projects in a conference proposal submission style

Chi Sigma Iota Executive Committee, Vice President, Secretary 2017 – 2019

*Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY*
- Executed related duties pertaining to the office as assigned by the executive committee such as maintenance and distribution of executive committee meeting minutes

Chi Sigma Iota Awards Committee Member 2014 – 2015

*University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT*
- Reviewed and selected Chi Sigma Iota members who were nominated for recognition in their service, research, and academic achievements

MFT Graduate Student Organization Student Facilitator 2013 – 2014

*University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT*
- Worked collaboratively to facilitate events each semester to provide professional development opportunities for graduate students

PUBLICATIONS

Walsh, M., Cavanaugh, K.M. (In preparation) *Predictors of suicidality among LGBTQ+ individuals in the Deep South*. University of New Haven. West Haven, CT.


---

**CLINICAL EXPERIENCE**

**Staff Therapist**  
**Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY**

- Provided individual and group therapy prevention, outreach and crisis services to an undergraduate student body of about 2,200
- Collaborated with an interdisciplinary team to promote accessible and effective student services
- Planned and executed mental health outreach programming campus-wide
- Served as the interim Title IX liaison counselor in order to provide coordinated sexual and relationship violence services

**Doctoral Supervisor**  
**Jan. 2017 - May 2019**  
**Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY**

- Provided individual and group supervision to master’s level students in clinical mental health, school, and student affairs counseling tracks in the prepracticum, practicum and internship stages.
- Reviewed student case notes and session recordings on a weekly basis to provide developmentally appropriate feedback
- Engaged in supervision of supervision to promote professional growth as a clinical supervisor
- Assisted in student evaluation and gatekeeping procedures

**Options Graduate Assistant, University Counseling Center**  
**Aug. 2016 - Dec. 2018**  
**Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY**
- Provided counseling, prevention, outreach and harm reduction services regarding substance abuse to undergraduate and graduate students
- Coordinated data collection of post-treatment, workshop and group assessments as part of the Options program evaluation process
- Facilitated alcohol and marijuana psychoeducation workshops and skills groups with the goal of providing harm reduction education

**Counselor, per diem**

*Loomis Chaffee School, Windsor, CT*

- Continued to provide individual and group counseling services to the Loomis Chaffee student community on a per diem basis in a post-graduate capacity after successfully completing a clinical internship
- Collaborated with colleagues to supervise and support the gay-straight alliance on campus
- Coordinated a safe space for LGBTQ+ support in the forms of individual and group counseling alongside another mental health clinician

---

**CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS**


**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (9/2018) *Cyberbullying: Considerations for a new generation of counselor educators and supervisors*. North Atlantic Region Association for Counselor Educators and Supervisors, Burlington, VT.

**Cavanaugh, K. M. & Peters, H. C.** (4/2018) *Born this way: Queer adolescent dating*. American Counseling Association, Atlanta, GA.

Peters, H. C. & **Cavanaugh, K. M.** (10/2017) *Queruing queer males couples counseling*. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Chicago, IL.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (6/2017) *Humanistic Approach to Counseling Transgender Individuals: A Case Example*. Association for Humanistic Counseling, Syracuse, NY.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (Submitted 12/2016) *Cyberbullying: A Vicious Cycle for a New Era*. Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, Chicago, IL.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (7/2017) *Cyberbullying: Potential Trauma in Adolescent Female Development*. American Counseling Association’s Children and Adolescent Division, Arlington, VA.

**INVITED PRESENTATIONS**

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (10/24/17; 4/6/18) *Dating and relationship violence on college campuses*. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (August 7, 2017) *Identifying and diagnosing eating disorders*. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (July 31, 2017) *Mental health issues in transgender college students*. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (March 27, 2017) *Dating and relationship violence on college campuses*. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

**Cavanaugh, K. M.** (November 10, 2016) *Sex, sexuality, and intimacy in the college setting*. Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY.

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

American College Counseling Association
Counselors for Social Justice
American Counseling Association
Chi Sigma Iota Honors Society
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision
North Atlantic Region for Counselor Education and Supervision