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Examination of How Attraction Dimensions Predict Collaborative Mentoring Relationships in College Students.

Ashlee Lorraine Poppo
East Tennessee State University

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Ashlee L. Poppo

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Dr. Carrie Oliveira, Chair

Dr. Kelly Dorgan

Dr. Karin Bartoszuk

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ABSTRACT

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Research has identified that one limitation of traditional mentoring occurs when there is a mismatch between the mentor and the protégé in work styles and personalities. Further, most of the literature on mentoring has not examined the informal mentoring that occurs between college students. Recent research has identified this type of peer mentoring as collaborative mentoring. The purpose of this study was to examine the role of interpersonal attraction in the development and success of collaborative mentoring relationships and to further examine which attraction dimension was the best predictor of the success of the relationship. Multiple regression analysis showed task attraction was the best predictor of the overall success of a collaborative mentoring relationship. This work is significant because it shows a person's perceived level of competence directly influences the success of a collaborative mentoring relationship more than likeability or physical appearance.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Students receive personal and professional guidance from many different sources while in college. Both undergraduates and graduates seek out help and advice from other students and they act as mentors for each other. Recent research has identified this type of peer mentoring as collaborative mentoring (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Rymer, 2002).

The mentoring of students in prior research examined two forms of mentoring: traditional mentoring and peer mentoring. Traditional mentoring is mentoring between a superior and a subordinate, whereas peer mentoring is mentoring between two peers. Peer mentoring may develop either formally or informally.

A formal peer mentoring relationship is a relationship where partners are assigned to one another (Ragins & Cotton, 1998). Further, formal peer mentoring does not focus on the friendship aspect between the two participants and friendship appears to be a preferred and important aspect of successful mentoring. Informal peer mentoring relationships are mentoring relationships not formed by a third party but develop naturally from two people being interpersonally attracted to one another. Although informal mentoring relationships develop more naturally than formal mentoring relationships, there continues to be a distinction between mentor and protégé. The emphasis on status differences between the mentor and protégé inhibits friendship from developing in an informal mentoring relationship. In addition, the majority of research on mentoring in general places emphasis on differences in power, status, and age between

the mentor and the protégé (Blackwell, 1989; Buelle, 2004; Fagenson, 1989; Kogler-Hill, Bahniuk, Dobos, & Rouner, 1989; Moore & Amey, 1988).

Collaborative mentoring, a form of peer mentoring, differs greatly from what has been examined as typifying mentoring relationships in previous mentoring literature. The fundamental difference between collaborative mentoring and other forms of mentoring is that the line between mentor and protégé become blurred in collaborative mentoring because the roles change during this relationship. Research on collaborative mentoring relationships does not focus on one person, the mentor, helping the protégé. Because two people may have different experiences and skill sets, the helping is mutual. Another major difference between collaborative mentoring and traditional mentoring is that usually the mentor is of a higher position or status, often a teacher or a professor and the mentor is usually older than the protégé. Collaborative mentoring allows the two people involved in the relationship to be equals in status and age. Also, participants can have more than one collaborative mentor at a time. Therefore, a collaborative mentoring relationship is a helping relationship between two people who have developed a friendship informally due to interpersonal attraction where both partners are able to contribute to one another's personal and professional development.

Rymer (2002) defines collaborative mentoring as a mutual mentorship of a pair of close, collegial friends committed to helping each other's development. Friendship is an important component of collaborative mentoring relationships because it may be friendship that brings the two partners together initially or a friendship develops shortly thereafter. However, while friendship is integral to a collaborative mentoring relationship, it is the task at hand or a number of obstacles together that form the basis of

a collaborative mentoring relationship. Applying this type of mentoring to college students describes a student who seeks out advice from another particular student because they may develop a liking for one another, provide important counseling and advice to each other along the way, and develop a friendship. Collaborative mentoring friendships are distinct from other kinds of friendships because of the coaching and professional development that happens in conjunction with friendships in collaborative mentoring relationships but not in other friendships. The major difference between a collaborative mentoring partnership and a friendship is that a collaborative mentoring partnership is a helping relationship with someone in the same area of interest or field. The same area of interest may be at a job or college career.

Importance of the Study

Researching collaborative mentoring in college students could reveal benefits for students during their college careers such as help with information seeking and counseling. More research on collaborative mentoring is needed because research in this area is very limited and it only focuses on collaborative mentoring between teachers helping each other (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Rymer, 2002). Therefore, it has not been examined between college students and has not looked at how these relationships form through interpersonal attraction. Accounts describing teachers' collaborative mentoring relationships could easily describe relationships between two or more college students. It is important to realize that students receive beneficial help and guidance from people other than teachers and advisors. This peer help and guidance may provide benefits that improve success as a college student. What mentoring literature has shown is that students have needs while they are in college such as emotional support and

informational needs. This research examines the fulfillment of those needs by peers whom college students have chosen on their own and what led them to make that particular peer selection.

Mentoring research indicates there are functions and tasks mentors should fulfill in the relationship in order for both the protégé and mentor to find it successful (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Golian & Galbraith, 1996). The fulfillment of mentoring functions and tasks for the protégé is largely due to choosing the right mentor (Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000; Kajs, 2002; Parkay, 2001). Collaborative mentoring allows both members of the relationship to have a choice as to who they want to work with because the relationship develops naturally from normal social interaction. Berscheid (1985) explains attraction is a motivational state that causes someone to think, feel, and act in a positive manner towards someone else. McCroskey and McCain (1974) divide attraction into the dimensions of social, physical, and task attraction. Research is needed to examine collaborative mentoring that focuses on attraction because it is initial and lasting attraction that keeps the two participants interacting in their interpersonal relationship. Therefore, when examining the success of a mentoring relationship it is important for research to examine the attraction the partners share that may have lead to choosing the right person for them and thus increasing the possibility of having important mentoring functions fulfilled.

Research Goal

The goal of this study is to understand the role of interpersonal attraction in the development and success of collaborative mentoring relationships. To determine whether or not the collaborative mentoring relationship was a success depends on the completion

of both psychosocial and career-related mentoring functions in the relationship. Using Noe's (1988) mentoring functions and McCroskey and McCain's (1974) measure of social, physical, and task attraction, this research examines which attraction dimension is the best predictor of the success of a collaborative mentoring relationship amongst college students.

CHAPTER 2

MENTORING AND ATTRACTION LITERATURE

Traditional Mentoring

There are many different definitions of mentoring and what mentoring entails with regards to the function of mentors and the role of mentoring relationships (Blackwell, 1989; Buelle, 2004; Fagenson, 1989; Kogler-Hill et al., 1989; Moore & Amey, 1988). While there is no one widely accepted definition of mentoring, many of the definitions exhibit strong agreement about the components that characterize mentoring (Jacobi, 1991). First, mentoring relationships are helping relationships typically focused on the accomplishment of longer, broader goals like promotions or graduation. Second, mentoring encompasses some or all of three broad components, emotional and psychological support, direct assistance with career and professional development, and role modeling. Third, mentoring relationships are reciprocal relationships where the mentor as well as the protégé receive benefits from the relationship. Fourth, mentoring relationships are personal and require direct communication between the mentor and the protégé. Last, mentors show greater experience, influence, and achievement within a specific organization or environment compared to their protégé.

Mentoring can take many different forms including mentoring between students, teaching as mentoring, or taking part in a professional situation (Sundli, 2007). While mentoring can take on many different forms, one influential factor as to what form a mentoring relationship takes depends on whether it developed formally or informally. Ragins and Cotton (1998) explain that formal mentoring relationships usually occur through an assignment or matching process initiated by a third party. One example of a

formal mentoring relationship is one in which a teacher is assigned to work with a student, not by choice, but because that student needs a supervisor in his or her same particular field of study. In addition, formal mentoring relationships are typically of a shorter duration than informal mentoring (Ragins & Cotton). In contrast, informal mentoring evolves unexpectedly through a process of mutual interpersonal attraction. An example of an informal mentoring relationship is one in which a student has many different teachers to choose from, but chooses to seek the advice and school counseling from one in particular because he or she likes that person. However, informal mentoring still involves a student working with an educational advisor, professor, or teacher, suggesting that there is a difference in age and status between the protégé and the mentor. Once mentoring relationships are formed they can provide many benefits for both members of the mentoring relationship as mentoring functions are completed.

Functions of Mentoring Relationships

As stated previously, mentoring is a helping relationship between a mentor who has greater experience in the area of interest and a less experienced protégé, requires direct communication between the mentor and the protégé, and is formed with the intention of accomplishing broad goals for the protégé (Jacobi, 1991). In addition, mentoring relationships are formed either formally, meaning protégés are assigned mentors, or informally, protégés and mentors form a relationship gradually and naturally (Ragins & Cotton, 1998).

Mentoring relationships are designed to be beneficial, particularly to the protégé. Mentoring relationships accomplish many much needed functions for success. Mentoring provides career and personal development benefits for the protégé through teaching,

advising, and counseling in a life-cycle framework (Rymer, 2002). Kram's (1983) research from in-depth interviews with 15 managers found two major functions of mentoring were career-related functions and psychosocial functions. Career-related functions include providing coaching, protection, and exposure that may directly affect the protégé's career advancement. Coaching on the job may include a mentor pulling a protégé aside to give him or her pointers on how to do a job better. An example of protection may be a mentor advising a protégé that a change to another position in the company offered might not be the best fit for him or her. Lastly, exposure may involve a mentor introducing a protégé to someone in the company who might be able to influence career advancement. Psychosocial functions include role modeling, acceptance, counseling, and friendship that, in turn, influence the protégé's self-image and perception of his or her competence. A protégé may try to imitate the work behavior of a mentor, thus the mentor acts as a role model for him or her. A mentor may help the protégé to interact socially in the office with his or her colleagues thus increasing the level of acceptance the protégé feels. An example of counseling may be the mentor offering a listening ear for the protégé to vent frustrations and concerns about the company. Friendship may include the mentor and protégé disclosing personal information about each other to one another or the mentor and the protégé going out socially. Lasley (1996) found mentoring to be one of the most effective methods for helping young people to increase their self-esteem and to reach their potential.

Mentoring not only prepares students for the workforce but also fulfills important functions after employment has been secured. Mentoring is considered critical to successful socialization into organizational life and research has shown executives find

mentoring important (Frazee, 1997). Frazee discovered when 150 senior executives of the United States' largest companies were surveyed about the importance of mentoring junior employees, 57% answered that it was "extremely important" and another 39% replied "somewhat important." Fagenson (1989) found people who had been mentored reported higher levels of job satisfaction, career mobility, and an increased rate of promotion in contrast with people who were not mentored. A survey by Dreher and Ash (1990) found business school graduates in high- and low-level positions with prevalent mentorship relationships reported more promotions and higher incomes and were more satisfied with their pay and benefits than others with less experience with mentors.

While research has shown a number of positive outcomes for protégés in mentoring relationships, those acting as mentors may benefit from a mentoring relationship for a number of reasons. They may decide to help because of cultural or group expectations, internal driving forces like altruism or the need to help others, or the need for an apprentice or devotee (Kalbfleisch, 2002). For the mentor, Ragins and Scandura's (1999) research on the benefits of being a mentor found that being a mentor has a rejuvenating effect on the mentor's ability and innovation.

What Defines Successful Mentoring?

Once a person enters into a mentoring relationship, there are several criteria that define the success of that relationship. What defines successful mentoring depends on what needs the protégés want to be met from their mentor. Anderson and Shannon (1988) outlined five crucial attributes of successful mentoring: nurturing, serving as a role model, performing specific functions, focusing on professional and personal development, and developing an ongoing caring relationship. The specific mentor

functions included teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending a protégé. Golian and Galbraith (1996) also identified essential elements of mentoring that overlapped with Anderson and Shannon; however, they continued by adding mentoring entails a relationship that is "social and reciprocal," between a more knowledgeable and experienced individual and a less experienced person, taking place within a particular context and providing personal, professional, and psychological development resulting in an "identity transformation for both mentor and protégé," (Golian & Galbraith, p.100). They added to earlier research by placing importance on the relationship being reciprocal and beneficial for both parties.

Maynard's (2000) study of mentored student teachers shed light for what protégés are looking for in a mentorship. For instance, they are looking for mentors who make their expectations clear and straightforward. The students stressed that good mentoring happens through teamwork. However, there is a fine line between being overly critical and destructive and not providing enough constructive criticism. In their comments about "good mentoring" the student teachers referred to the need for space including physical, personal, and professional space. Other aspects of good mentoring were being made to feel welcome, included, supported in their learning and in their efforts to develop their own identities (Maynard). Therefore, considering the attributes of both the mentor and the protégé, the needs of the protégé, as well as the accomplishment of mentoring goals may indicate whether the mentoring relationship is a success for those involved. Because one of the criteria for success in a mentoring relationship is picking the right mentor with the right attributes, it is important to examine what people look for when choosing a mentor.

What do People Look for in a Mentor?

A protégé generally looks for certain attributes in a mentor when choosing to enter a mentoring relationship. When considering the attributes of the mentor, the protégé places high value on similarity between the mentor and himself or herself. Mentoring represents a dyad for which learning is the primary goal (Hirschfeld, Thomas, & Lankau, 2006). Research has shown mentor-protégé congruence on cognitive learning styles may be particularly important for vocational outcomes (Godshalk & Sosik, 2003). In their research, Godshalk and Sosik explain when mentors and protégés had similarly high levels of a "shared interest in learning" or learning goal orientation, the protégés revealed greater psychosocial support, career development, and other positive career-directed attitudes.

Further research in the education of teachers has stressed congruence between mentors and protégés. Kajs (2002) discusses the Situational Mentoring Framework for developing a successful mentoring program. He explains that a systematic selection process should occur for prospective mentors through collaboration of educators to match mentors with novice teachers who demonstrate a similar thinking style and who are 'on the same wavelength' (Parkay, 2001). Making sure mentors and protégés are compatible increases the likelihood of caring and understanding to take place in order to build a relationship of trust (Kajs, 2002). Looking for compatibility is not only on the protégé's mind but the mentor's as well. Chao, Walz, and Gardner (1992) discuss mentors often select protégés with whom they can identify and to whom they are willing to devote attention.

Limitations of Traditional Mentoring

While there are benefits to traditional mentoring, there are also limitations to this type of helping relationship. One of the major limitations of traditional mentoring is that some protégés may feel their choices of mentors are limited or there is no choice given to them in the selection of their mentor. In traditional formal mentorships, the mentor and the protégé may be required to participate in the mentorship program as a function of their positions and thus may entail a degree of pressure to work with one another. This may mean pressure on the protégé to have a mentor and pressure on the mentor to be a mentor (Choa, Walz, & Gardner, 1992).

The most significant point of failure of a traditional mentoring relationship is a mismatch between a protégé and a mentor who were assigned to one another. Eby et al. (2000) studied narrative accounts of 84 protégés' most negative mentoring experiences and found that the most common complaint was a "mismatch within the dyad," which reflects perceived mismatches between the mentor and protégé in terms of values, work styles, and personality. For example, the previously mentioned Situational Mentoring Framework uses the DISC (Director, Influencer, Steadfast, and Conscientious) Personal Profile System in the matching process to provide initial information about the prospective mentors' and protégés' dispositions in working with others as one component of their formal matching process (Kajs, 2002). However, the limitation with traditional formal mentoring is that it involves a formal matching process not examining natural congruence that happens when people socialize with each other. What may look good on paper, might not work when the two participants come together. In addition, with traditional informal mentoring the limitation lies in the assumption that the best advice

still should come from the mentor and the mentor is the primary source of guidance. The protégé may hesitate in seeking advice from others due to not wanting to break the loyalty between himself or herself and the mentor and also not wanting to branch out from the assigned mentor.

Even though protégés are in a position to gain valuable insight and experience from their mentors, mentors in traditional mentoring relationships have many costs to consider before entering into a mentoring relationship (Kalbfleisch, 2002). Research has found concerns such as the loss of time used coaching a protégé, vulnerability through sharing techniques and secrets that took either time or great effort to learn for the mentor, and possibly developing difficulties in one's personal and professional life because of a relationship with the protégé (Kalbfleisch, 2000; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1993).

Lastly, most traditional mentoring definitions claim mentoring is between a superior and a less experienced person, who is usually older, and within that relationship there is a clear mentor and a clear protégé (Blackwell, 1989; Kogler-Hill et al., 1989; Kram, 1985; Lester & Johnson, 1981; Moore & Amey, 1988). However, what traditional mentoring does not take into consideration is that in mentoring relationships both the mentor and the protégé could be considered equals at the same level in workplace position, educational degree, and in age.

Collaborative Mentoring

Recent research has shown that mentoring can involve a mutual relationship less influenced by power between a more experienced, older individual as the mentor and a less experienced, younger individual as a protégé. Rather, both participants can be at the same age or professional rank. Mentoring does occur between equals in a professional

situation whereby they both become mentors for each other (Jipson & Paley, 2000; Mullen, 2000; Mullen, Cox, Boettcher, & Adoue, 1997; Rymer, 2002). Rymer defines collaborative mentoring as a mutual mentorship of a pair of close, collegial friends committed to helping each other's development. Collaborative mentoring relationships include friendship, trust, and caring for the other (Rymer). Collaborative or co-mentoring differs sharply from traditional mentoring because "equality replaces hierarchy" in the relationship (Rymer, p.345). Mullen (2000) defines collaborative mentoring as an "opportunity for professionals to become directly involved in each other's learning and to provide feedback while developing along an agreed path" (p.4-5).

Collaborative mentoring differs sharply from traditional mentoring because in traditional mentoring there is always a clear mentor and a clear protégé in a mentoring relationship. Jipson and Paley (2000), influenced by the work of Mullen et al. (1997), describe collaborative mentoring as "a process whereby each [partner] supports, encourages, and mentors the other across multiple personal and professional situations," (p.42). The implication of this research is that no longer is a mentoring relationship solely between an older, more advanced person and a younger, less experienced person. It can occur between people who are the same age but one might have more information to contribute to a certain area then the other. For example, one student may be able to provide the mentor guidance on a class they have already taken while receiving guidance in a class they are both taking currently. In addition, each can help play a role in providing personal or professional information for the other. Therefore, each person in the collaborative mentoring relationship becomes a mentor and a protégé at different points in their mentoring relationship.

What Defines Successful Collaborative Mentoring?

Research has shown the protégé's perceptions of the relationship also determine the success of the relationship. This research sheds new light on what protégés are looking for in their mentoring relationships. Zimmerman and Paul (2007) conducted a 2-semester study. During the first semester, they surveyed English majors concerning their experiences with mentoring. The following semester, they conducted an ethnography by interviewing and observing students in two upper-division Telecommunication classes at Brigham Young University. In both the survey and the interviews, students revealed that they wanted a mutually beneficial relationship. In the survey, students noted, "Someone with more experience helping someone who's learning so it becomes a mutual exchange," "symbiotic relationship," based on "mutual interest." In one student's interview, he or she insisted that "the relationship should be equal. It's easier to work together and get along if the two are on equal footing and the mentee isn't far below the mentor," (Zimmerman & Paul, p.191). This research appears to indicate "equal footing" may mean equality in the sense of there being a lack of reward or punishment power between the two peers. Collaborative mentoring allows for power to shift back and forth as a give and take between the two partners because while one partner may have expertise in one area, the other partner may have greater skill in another. Both participants become the mentor and the protégé at different times during their relationship. Therefore, successful mentoring no longer depends on "a more experienced (usually older) individual [acting] as a guide, role model, teacher and patron of a less experienced (often younger) protégé," collaborative mentoring allows for mutual

exchange because the two participants in the relationship are of equal status because both are students (Moore & Amy, 1988, p.45).

Successful mentoring also lies in participants' satisfaction with the relationship itself through the development of trust and connecting emotionally at the personal level (Kram, 1985; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2001). Research in collaborative mentoring shows mutual trust forms the basis for all collaborative mentoring relationships (Rymer, 2002). Mentoring is not only about career development because mentors and protégés often talk about many other aspects of their lives. Mentorships may result in the development of close feelings over time (Rymer). Successful mentorships represent strong "ties" that develop from high levels of trust and caring where successful mentors are motivated to help their partners (Granovetter, 1973; Krackhardt, 1992). Due to the strong emotional ties and motivation to help each other, emergent collaborative mentoring research places mutual benefits for both participants as the utmost importance in mentoring relationships.

Benefits of Collaborative Mentoring

While considering the benefits that traditional mentoring can bring, collaborative mentoring can be valuable because individuals can benefit from multiple mentoring relationships with close collegial friends who provide both career and psychosocial mentoring (Rymer, 2002). By developing several complementary mentorships from a range of backgrounds, an individual can form a small "development network" potentially representing a fruitful range of perspectives rather than the limited view offered by the traditional mentor (Higgins & Kram, 2001). Peers carry out a variety of mentoring duties across all stages of life. Moreover, peer mentors often match or surpass the effectiveness

of senior mentors (Kram, 1985, 1986; Kram & Isabella, 1985). Many mentoring pairs can collaborate to become equal colearners or "co-mentors" in the environment of a group, partners teaching and learning together to fulfill the constantly changing needs throughout their lives, not just at the start of their careers (Rymer). Co-mentoring practice creates a resourceful, democratic space for the creation of insights and understandings that help both partners create opportunities to mutually discuss and advance interests, needs, and issues that have individual and shared importance such as an exam taken for the same class or the obstacles of writing a thesis (Jipson & Paley, 2000).

Mentoring between students may provide further benefits because of the equality in status and power. For example, Bullough Jr. et al. (2003) compared two models of teaching: the traditional model of placing one student teacher with a mentor teacher and a peer teaching model in which the two student teachers work together to educate a class. When asked about their peer teaching experience, the student teacher discussed how it was nice to have someone [another student teacher] to confide in and who "understands exactly what you're going through…I have somebody that knows my situation, that is there every day, that I can discuss issues with," (Bullough Jr. et al., p.66). Fugate, Jaramillo, and Preuhs (2001) argue although traditional mentoring socializes students into the discipline well, graduate students should also examine that many individuals can guide them in their professional development. Particularly, fellow students can be helpful sources of information on how to successfully navigate the steps a faculty advisor directs students to take like making sure a fellow student has filed paper work during the same time they did or discussing what classes are required for graduation. While the

authors' main focus was on graduate students, this advice could be useful for undergraduate college students as well.

What do People Look for in a Co-Mentor?

Research in collaborative mentoring has shown participants may start out as friends or develop a friendship with this person that they have started to seek advice from (Rymer, 2002). Many people choose friends based on whether or not they feel an emotional or social connection. Monge and Contractor (2001) explain it is our natural inclination to form close bonds with those like ourselves, predominantly in such matters as gender and race.

Likewise, when examining mentoring relationships, research has shown protégés often choose a mentor based on similar qualities to themselves. Studies show potential difficulty in mentoring of highly dissimilar partners and some explicitly support "bonding" relationships between partners from the same group, especially for women and for members of minority groups (Kalbfleisch & Keyton, 1995; Luna & Cullen, 1995; Okawa, 2002). In collaborative mentoring relationships participants may form a bond based on similar work styles or personal interests (Rymer, 2002). Hardcastle (2001) stresses the importance of similar personal styles and mutual interests for setting the stage for developing a significant mentorship. A significant mentoring relationship is generally not restricted to work-related matter but can include the protégé's personal and spiritual life as well.

Collaborative mentoring relationships form informally and arise over time, although the length of time is not specific. While research has shown that unsuccessful mentoring relationships occur when the two people are so different that it affects the

protégé's professional development, collaborative mentoring relationships would prevent such occurrences because the two participants are choosing to come together based on a developing a friendship as well as achieving professional goals. They are taking into consideration criteria like the work ethic, likeability, and skill set of their chosen collaborative mentor. Thus, when people are free to choose their mentoring partner, they are able to choose a perfect fit for them.

Attraction

What collaborative mentoring research has not identified is what may cause a person to choose another in hopes of forming a co-mentoring relationship. Attraction research has examined attraction in relation to mate selection (Burleson, Kunkel, & Birch, 1994; Buss, 1989; Feingold, 1990; Garcia, Stinson, Ickes, Bissonnette, & Briggs, 1991; Klohnen & Luo, 2003), and while attraction impacts mate selection, it may also influence platonic partner selection. Attraction is one of the reasons why people talk to one another. Duran and Kelly (1988) explain the importance of studying attraction because of how it influences perceptions such that people who are thought to be attractive are perceived as having many socially desirable characteristics and the more people are attracted to one another, the more they will try to communicate with each other. Therefore, when considering how attraction relates to the study of collaborative mentoring relationships it is important to think about what characteristics or attributes attracted one co-mentor to another.

A general definition of attraction comes from Newcomb (1961) who refers to attraction as any direct orientation from one person to another that can be described in terms of a + or – sign and level of intensity. This definition has been employed by

researchers examining attraction (McCroskey, Larson, & Knapp, 1971; Sutherland & Insko, 1973). However, research (Byrne, Clore, & Smeaton, 1986; Byrne et al., 1971; Byrne & Nelson, 1965; Chen & Kenrick, 2002; Lehr & Geher, 2006; McGarva & Warner, 2003; Tan & Singh, 1995) on attraction has focused on liking which can be reflected in Berscheid's (1985) definition of attraction as a motivational state that causes someone to think, feel, and behave in a positive manner toward another person. Initial phases in interpersonal attraction are dependent on the kinds of judgments we make about those around us (McCroskey, Larson, & Knapp, 1971). It is important to remember that if a person sees someone as having positive characteristics, the attribution of these characteristics to the other person rather than the question of whether they actually possess these characteristics is what really matter in terms of someone's attraction toward someone else (McCroskey, Larson, & Knapp). Therefore, in the forming of collaborative mentorships individuals think of each other as having positive characteristics and that is what attracts them to one another. Specifically, examples of positive characteristics may include a person believing another to have high intelligence or of he or she being adept at a subject like math or science. Another positive characteristic would include finding another person very likable socially because he or she seems easy to talk to or may share some of the same friends.

Types of Attraction

McCroskey and McCain (1974) discuss interpersonal attraction as a multidimensional concept and specified social attraction, physical attraction, and task attraction as the dimensions. Social attraction refers to a personal liking property, physical attraction is based on dress and physical features, and task attraction is related to

how easy or worthwhile working with someone is or would be (McCroskey & McCain). Due to attraction's role in the development and choosing of a mate in interpersonal relationships and thus its role in mentor selection, this research will examine the dimensions of attraction as they relate to the fulfillment of collaborative mentoring functions. It is important to recognize whether social, task, or physical attraction is the most significant predictor for accomplishing both psychosocial and career-related mentoring functions in collaborative mentoring relationships, because it is the completion of these functions that determines the overall success of the collaborative mentoring relationship.

Social Attraction. The measurement of social attraction refers to a personal liking property or to what degree a person feels he or she can be friends with someone else. Social skills and the way people communicate with one another are important because they may determine how well and to what degree social interaction occurs. When collaborative mentors first meet each other they may be attracted to one another socially. For example, one collaborative mentor may meet the other through a mutual friend. They may belong to the same social group and believe each other to be on equal terms with friends and social style. For example, both of them may be outgoing socially and may talk to each other more or may want to attend social outings together. The degree to which each of them was personable may have contributed to whether or not they wanted to socialize with each other from the first encounter on.

Social skill similarities may make it easier for two collaborative mentors to interact during the first encounter, leading to a possible friendship. Burleson and Samter's (1996) research investigated how similarities in levels of social-cognitive and

communication skills affected friendship choices by young adults. Participants consisted of 208 college students who completed tasks providing assessments of one social-cognitive skill and five communication skills. Social-cognitive skills were assessed by measuring cognitive complexity. Cognitive complexity measured the number and quality of cognitive structures through which people understand the thoughts, behaviors, and emotional states of others (Burleson & Waltman, 1988). Individuals who are highly differentiated consider "people and relationships in more abstract and psychological ways than individuals who are less highly differentiated" (Burleson & Samter, p.135). Functional communication skills are the tools through which people accomplish practical targets such as comforting, persuading, and informing others. Results indicated that participants were attracted to peers having social skill levels similar to their own. The research of Burleson and Samter concurs with Dweck (1981) with the finding suggesting similarity in level of social-cognitive development appears to significantly influence who people perceive as desirable social companions. Research has shown that protégés are looking for mentors on "equal footing" to them and that the "relationship should be equal," suggesting how important social attraction is to collaborative mentoring relationships (Zimmerman & Paul, 2007). This study expects social attractiveness should predict success of psychosocial related functions in a collaborative mentoring relationship. Friendship is an important component in collaborative mentoring relationships and the degree that a person feels he or she can be friends with someone else is integral to the accomplishment of psychosocial goals.

Task Attraction. Task attraction refers to how easy or valuable working with someone is or would be. Students are motivated to communicate with one another for a

number of reasons and this communication may influence the selection of a collaborative mentor. One major reason students may communicate is to accomplish a task. Task attraction deals with the perceived ability to work with another person. When choosing a co-mentor, individuals may think about what it might be like to work with a certain person and whether or not he or she will help them complete the task at hand. Research has shown in peer organizational settings, task attraction is considered to be a more relevant source of influence than social or physical attraction, meaning someone would rather work with someone else whom they find will help them complete the task because of the skill set they possess (Wheeless & Reichel, 1990). For instance, someone might get chosen to be in a collaborative mentoring relationship based on his or her high grades in classes and a perceived sense of skill with college classes.

However, research in this area is conflicting. Casciaro and Sousa-Lobo (2005) explain people choose work partners based on two things, the person's competence on the job or whether they know what they are doing, and whether the person is likeable or examining whether this person is enjoyable to work with. Their research examined four organizations where they asked about the employees' work related interactions with other people in the organization. What they found from the employees themselves was interesting. Likeability was proven to be more important than perceived competence on the job. The researchers add a little added likeability goes a longer way than a little spare competence in making someone attractive to work with (Casciaro & Sousa-Lobo).

Choosing a work partner may be different in college. When it comes to grades and completing assignments, students may be more inclined to choose a partner they feel is competent in the area being studied. Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt, and Wholey's (2000)

research dealt specifically with group member choices in the college setting. Thirty-three software development groups with three to seven members were examined and data ware collected over 4 years of undergraduate students. In their junior year students were required to work in an assigned group and the groups were disbanded and reassigned in the senior year. Results suggested that people rely on indicators of competence when choosing future group members, especially on those indicators that provide information about competence in specific areas of expertise considered necessary for the task at hand. People like to work with others who work hard and are successful in similar projects. When choosing a group member, people also value a strong work ethic in potential group members (Hinds et al., 2000). A competent individual displays behavioral flexibility and interaction management skills, allowing both participants to achieve their interactional goals. These abilities are apt to increase the partner's perceptions of other's task attractiveness (Wiemann, 1977). Task attraction measures the perception someone has of another's level of competence and competence relates to how skillful someone is at a given task. Therefore, task attraction would be an indicator of whether career-related mentoring functions are being completed because career-related mentoring functions relate to functions such as the mentor's help with an assignment and teaching new skills. Thus, it is expected task attraction will predict the success of career-related functions in a collaborative mentoring relationship for this study.

Physical Attraction. Physical attractiveness refers to interpersonal attraction based on the dress or physical features of another. An individual's level of physical attractiveness influences perks others may assign to him or her in addition to her or him already being thought of as being physically attractive. In the case of selecting a co-

mentor partner, one collaborator may have chosen to work with the other simply because he or she was physically attractive, or it was that initial physical attraction that led to the first conversation. Therefore, physical attraction may have led to the developing of a work-related partnership.

Physical attractiveness influences a person's social life. A person's level of attractiveness may affect how much he or she socializes with others. Reis, Nezlek, and Wheeler (1980) found attractive individuals spend more of their time socializing than do unattractive individuals. They conducted research with 35 males and 36 females and interactions lasting 10 minutes or longer were recorded during four 10-day periods. In addition, 96 members of a psychology class at another university rated the attractiveness of the photographs taken of the participants. Results indicated that physically attractive males participated in more social interactions and more interactions with females than did unattractive males. Dion, Berscheid, and Walster (1972) investigated the influence of perceived physical attractiveness on perceptions of happiness, marital competence, and personality characteristics. Participants in the study reported physically attractive individuals were thought to have more socially desirable personalities, superior professional prospects, and better marital partners and be happier in general than physically unattractive individuals. Therefore, someone perceived as being physically attractive would lead the other person to assume desirable qualities.

Physical attraction may not only determine favorable opinions of someone but also whether or not someone wants to work with him or her. Kowner (2001) explains the assessment of another's appearance is often preceded by an instantaneous and almost unconscious comparison with one's own physical attractiveness through biological and

evolutionary considerations. Kowner's research examined the roles of several factors in the choice of partners during a first group encounter, when only information on the group members' physical attractiveness was available. Following receiving false feedback about their own attractiveness rank in a newly formed group, 99 Japanese students were asked to choose a partner for a task. The research showed the participants associated beauty with ability and selected others to work with whom they believed would be compatible with their own level of ability after taking into consideration the feedback they themselves received. The results align with previous findings that people with similar levels of physical attractiveness tend to associate (Cash & Derlega, 1978; Korthase & Trenholme, 1982; Stroebe, Insko, Thompson, & Layton, 1971). This research may help to explain why as Reis et al. (1980) explain physically attractive people socialize more and why someone might initially strike up a conversation with someone else deemed compatible with their own level of physical attraction. This could also explain how a person's own perceived level of physical attractiveness may influence his or her level of sociability. While this study does not focus on the degree of sameness in levels of physical attractiveness between collaborative mentors, the research above does stress how important physical attractiveness is in the choosing of partners.

There is a link between each type of attraction and the development of mentoring relationships. For instance, it is social attraction that influences how likable a person finds his or her mentor to be. How skilled in the area of interest he or she finds a mentor comes from task attraction. Lastly, physical attraction is concerned with how visually appealing a person finds his or her mentor to be. Visual appeal can be related to physical characteristics such as one's face or body, or it can be related to the way the mentor

dresses. These different types of attraction influence a person's choice. This research aims to examine what leads someone to choose another as his or her collaborative mentor and whether that attraction influenced the success of the collaborative mentoring relationship. Therefore, this study expects that physical attraction will predict collaborative mentoring success.

Conclusion

After comparing collaborative mentoring to traditional mentoring, collaborative mentoring allows individuals in the mentoring relationship to be equal in power, status, and age. Therefore, students can start to think of each other as mentors. In addition, another major attribute of collaborative mentoring is people are free to choose who their collaborative mentor may be. In instances with traditional mentoring, pairing up with the wrong mentor may cause an unsuccessful mentoring relationship. This freedom of choice can influence the success of the mentoring relationship. Because collaborative mentoring provides for choice and attraction is one of the major reasons people choose someone over someone else, it is important to examine the choosing of a collaborative mentoring partner and in doing so using attraction is fundamental to that examination. By examining what people look for in a collaborative mentor, it conveys how important choosing the right collaborative mentor is to having crucial mentoring functions fulfilled. Thus, making the right choice of a collaborative mentor is very important to having a successful collaborative mentoring relationship.

Research Question and Hypotheses

There currently exists limited information on collaborative mentoring in general and no research using attraction to investigate collaborative mentoring relationships. Further, there is no information specifically examining what attraction dimension influences a college student choosing his or her collaborative mentor and how that attraction influences the success of their collaborative mentoring relationship. This research aims to investigate that area. While we believe all of the attraction dimensions will predict success of the collaborative mentoring relationship, we do not expect them to predict each type of collaborative mentoring functions equally.

All of the attraction dimensions are expected to be important in successful mentoring. However, because successful mentoring achieves both career-related and psychosocial functions, it is unclear which dimension of attraction will best predict the overall success of collaborative mentoring.

RQ1: Which attraction dimension (physical, social, task) will be the most significant in determining the success of a collaborative mentoring relationship?

Attraction and psychosocial mentoring functions will be related because attraction plays a large part in the choosing of a collaborative mentor. Because psychosocial mentoring functions include tasks such as counseling, coaching, and friendship, it is expected social attraction will predict the completion of these functions due to social attraction being the degree to which someone wants a friendship with another.

This research predicts relations between attraction and psychosocial mentoring functions.

H1a - There will be a positive linear association between task attraction and psychosocial mentoring functions.

H1b - There will be a positive linear association between social attraction and psychosocial mentoring functions.

H1c - There will be a positive linear association between physical attraction and psychosocial mentoring functions.

H1d - All three dimensions of attraction will individually predict significant amounts of variance in psychosocial mentoring functions.

H1e - The three dimensions of attraction will predict unequal amounts of variance in psychosocial mentoring functions. The attraction dimensions are expected to predict variance in psychosocial mentoring functions in the following order: social attraction, task attraction, physical attraction.

Attraction and career-related mentoring functions will also be related because attraction influences the choosing of a collaborative mentor. Career-related mentoring functions include tasks such as protection that may include help with assignments and providing challenging assignments like teaching a new skill to the collaborative mentor. Therefore, task attraction will predict the completion of career-related mentoring functions because task attraction measures the degree of perceived competence of a collaborative mentor and this is closely related with career-related mentoring functions. This research predicts relations between attraction and career-related mentoring functions.

H2a - There will be a positive linear association between task attraction and career-related mentoring functions.

H2b - There will be a positive linear association between social attraction and career-related mentoring functions.

H2c - There will be a positive linear association between physical attraction and career-related mentoring functions.

H2d - All three dimensions of attraction will individually predict significant amounts of variance in career-related mentoring functions.

H2e - The three dimensions of attraction will predict unequal amounts of variance in career-related mentoring functions. The attraction dimensions are expected to predict variance in career-related mentoring functions in the following order: task attraction, social attraction, physical attraction.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participant Recruitment

Participants were recruited from communication and education classes at a Southeastern university. The researcher spoke to individual classes to describe the study and recruit participants. The participants did not receive compensation. All participants volunteered their time and information using the online survey provided. The sampling method, survey, and informed consent form were approved by the university's Institutional Review Board prior to participant recruitment.

Procedure

Data collection for this nonexperimental study occurred via online survey. The survey was retrieved by participants through a link provided to prospective participants. Prior to answering questions in the survey, the participants were first presented the online informed consent form that the participants read and acknowledged before proceeding with the survey. Upon accessing the link and consenting to participate, participants were told to think of a person with whom they had a collaborative mentoring relationship during their time in college. The definition for a collaborative mentoring relationship was provided. Questions asked participants about their experiences with different functions of a collaborative mentor relationship and different motivators for choosing their specific collaborative mentor.

Instrumentation

The following is a presentation of descriptions of the scales used in assessing attraction motivators in collaborative mentoring relationships. Instructions were provided

on the survey in order for the participant to respond to the scales regarding his or her collaborative mentoring relationship.

Collaborative Mentoring Scale

This scale examined collaborative mentoring functions based on two factors, psychosocial mentoring functions and mentoring functions related to the protégé's career (Noe, 1988). The scale consisted of 25 Likert-type items with a seven-point response format, where high scores indicated greater degrees of collaborative mentoring functions being fulfilled. This scale measures career-related functions and psychosocial functions of mentoring. The scale was modified to be applicable to collaborative mentoring relationships. The word mentor was replaced with co-mentor, the word job in reference to a professional workplace was replaced with college career, and lastly the word supervisors was replaced with professors to make it more suitable for college students discussing their time in college. In addition, four items were removed from the scale because they dealt specifically with the teaching profession and could not be modified without compromising the integrity of the question. Please see the Appendix for the actual survey questions used. The scale produced a Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$ for the career-related functions and a Cronbach's $\alpha = .90$ for psychosocial functions. The reliability for the entire scale comprised of all of the items measuring both psychosocial and career-related functions was .91. A review of the estimates of the scale reliability with each item deleted indicated that the removal of one item in the Acceptance and Confirmation psychosocial mentoring functions dimension would improve the scale's overall reliability, and so that item was dropped from the scale. Scale reliabilities and descriptive statistics are provided below in Table 1.

Table 1

Scale Reliabilities and Descriptive Statistics for Mentoring Functions and Attraction

Items	α	M	s^2
Acceptance & Confirmation	.69	5.88	.35
Role Model	.84	5.55	.46
Counseling	.78	5.68	.30
Coaching	.82	5.73	.20
Friendship	.88	5.77	.14
Protection**	-	4.92	1.47
Exposure & Visibility**	-	5.32	1.39
Challenging Assignments	.72	5.44	.14
Task	.93	5.85	.14
Social	.91	5.98	.14
Physical	.93	4.90	.44

**Scale reliability could not be calculated because it was comprised of a single item

Attraction Scale

This scale measures three dimensions of interpersonal attraction (McCroskey & McCain, 1974). The scale is comprised of 38 Likert-type items with a seven-point response format, with high scores indicating greater degrees of attractiveness. The scale measured the three dimensions physical, social, and task of attraction motivators. This scale was modified to be applicable to collaborative mentoring relationships. Him or her and he or she was replaced with my co-mentor to make it more applicable to this study. Please see the Appendix for the actual survey questions used. The internal reliability for

this scale was estimated for each dimension. Task attraction produced α=.93, social attraction produced α=.91, and physical attraction produced α=.93. Please see Table 1 above for the descriptive statistics for each subscale.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Participant Characteristics

Of the 325 people who accessed the online survey, we were able to obtain useable data from 309. Upon examining the data, 16 participants failed to provide useable data by either failing to complete the survey or by providing dishonest responses. The participants were 68.8% female. The majority of the participants were 18 to 22 years of age with their collaborative mentors being aged 19 to 25 predominantly.

Tests of Linear Associations Between Mentoring Functions and Attraction

Hypotheses 1a through hypothesis 1c predicted that all three dimensions of attraction would be positively related to and predict psychosocial mentoring functions. The calculation of the Pearson product-moment correlation indicates a substantial and statistically significant positive linear association between psychosocial mentoring functions and all of the dimensions of attraction. See Table 2 for the bivariate correlations. Further, the calculation of a multiple regression analysis indicated that all three dimensions of attraction accounted for a substantial and statistically significant proportion of the variance in psychosocial mentoring functions ($F(3, 305) = 82.95$, $p<.01$, adjusted $R^2=.44$). Table 2 provides the correlation matrix between psychosocial mentoring functions and each of the predictor variables.

H1e further predicted that social attraction would be the strongest predictor of the completion of psychosocial mentoring functions, followed by task, followed by physical attraction. This hypothesis was partially supported as task attraction emerged as the best predictor of psychosocial functions (B=.27, β=.35), followed by social attraction at

(B=.26, β=.33), and physical attraction with (B=.09, β=.13). Table 3 provides the summary of simultaneous regression analysis between psychosocial mentoring functions and each of the predictor variables.

Table 2

Bivariate Correlation Matrix for Attraction Dimensions and Mentoring Functions

	Physical	Social	Task
Career-related Mentoring Functions	.22**	.27**	.29**
Psychosocial Mentoring Functions	.33**	.62**	.60**

**Indicates that the correlation is significant at the .01 level

Table 3

Summary of Simultaneous Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychosocial Mentoring Functions (N=309)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Task	.27	.05	.35	5.81	.00
Social	.26	.05	.33	5.16	.00
Physical	.09	.03	.13	2.70	.01

Model: $F(3, 305) = 82.95$, $p<.01$; $R^2 = .45$, Adjusted $R^2 = .44$

Hypotheses 2a through hypothesis 2c predicted that all three dimensions of attraction would be positively related to and predict career-related mentoring functions. This hypothesis was partially supported. The calculation of the Pearson product-moment

correlation indicates a substantial and statistically significant positive linear association between career-related mentoring functions and all three dimensions of attraction. See table 2 for the bivariate correlations. Further, the calculation of a multiple regression analysis indicated that task and physical dimensions of attraction accounted for a substantial and statistically significant proportion of the variance in career-related mentoring functions ($F(3, 305) = 12.46$, $p<.01$, adjusted $R^2=.10$). Social attraction was not found to be statistically significant. Table 2 on the previous page provides the correlation matrix between career-related mentoring functions and each of the predictor variables.

H2e further predicted that task attraction would be the strongest predictor of the completion of career-related mentoring functions, followed by social, followed by physical attraction. This hypothesis was partially supported as task attraction emerged as the best predictor of career-related functions (B=.22, β=.20), followed by physical attraction at (B=.13, β=.14), and social attraction with (B=.09, β=.08). Table 4 provides the summary of simultaneous regression analysis between career-related mentoring functions and each of the predictor variables.

Table 4

Summary of Simultaneous Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Career-related Mentoring Functions (N=309)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Task	.22	.08	.20	2.66	.01
Social	.09	.09	.08	.97	.34
Physical	.13	.06	.14	2.38	.02

Model: $F(3, 305) = 12.46$, $p<.01$; $R^2 = .11$, Adjusted $R^2 = .10$

Research Question

A multiple regression analysis was calculated with the dimensions of attraction as predictor variables and the combined psychosocial and career-related mentoring items as an index of overall mentoring success as the dependent variable. Results indicate that all three dimensions of attraction account for a substantial and statistically significant proportion of the variance in overall mentoring ($F(3, 305) = 74.93$, $p<.01$, adjusted $R^2=.42$). Further, task attraction emerged as the best predictor of overall mentoring success (B=.32, β=.45). Table 5 provides the summary of simultaneous regression analysis between all of the mentoring functions and all three of the predictor variables.

Table 5

Summary of Simultaneous Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting All Mentoring Functions (N=309)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
Task	.32	.04	.45	7.32	.00
Social	.14	.05	.19	2.95	.00
Physical	.09	.03	.14	3.04	.00

Model: $F(3, 305) = 74.93$, $p<.01$; $R^2 = .42$, Adjusted $R^2 = .42$

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Results

This research contributes to the limited amount of research examining collaborative mentoring because it provides valuable insight into what drives collaborative mentors to working with one another, specifically showing attraction dimensions do play a fundamental role in the choosing of a collaborative mentor. Overall, this research also indicates that collaborative mentoring does exist between college students.

This research adds to overall mentoring literature because it further shows that the choice of a mentor or protégé directly contributes to the ultimate success of the mentoring relationship. As previously mentioned, one major limitation of traditional mentoring comes from too many differences between mentors and protégés. The study of attraction and mentoring is important because with informal mentoring it is the initial attraction that brings the two partners together, possibly preventing a mismatch between the two partners in the relationship. What the data show is that there is a link between attraction and the overall success of mentoring relationships. By choosing the right person, the desired functions of mentoring are more likely to be completed which provides for the overall success of the relationship.

The results suggest that task attraction proved is the best predictor of the completion of both career-related and psychosocial mentoring functions separately. Overall, task attraction appears to be the best predictor of the completion of all mentoring functions. Due to the results showing task attraction to be the best predictor, this may

indicate that the task or overall obstacle that brought the two partners together may be the reason the collaborative mentoring relationship develops and continues to last over time. Thus, showing that without a problem, task, or obstacle to seek help for, there would be no reason to develop or sustain a collaborative mentoring relationship. Further, it may be the task that keeps a collaborative mentor going back to his or her partner.

In the completion of career-related functions physical attraction was the second strongest predictor. Physical attraction was shown to be a better predictor of career-related functions being completed than social attraction. In congruence with the research of Dion, Berscheid, and Walster (1972), this may indicate that if someone looks appealing he or she may be assigned more favorable opinions of his or her competence level. For instance, a student dressed very professionally may draw the attention of another student and that student may want to work with him or her because the student may assume that his or her dress may indicate a professional work style or an added skill set, which could aid in the task at hand.

Although the results showed social attraction was a much smaller contributor to overall collaborative mentoring success, it is still rather strongly associated with psychosocial mentoring functions. To be called a collaborative mentoring relationship and for it to be successful there needs to be a friendship between the two partners. Providing friendship is a psychosocial mentoring function and because friendship is integral to a collaborative mentoring relationship, it is paramount that there is social attraction between the two partners. Without social attraction, friendship would not exist between the two participants. Therefore, along with finding a collaborative mentor

competent, it is also important for people to select someone they like in order for psychosocial aspects of the relationship to be fulfilled.

However, social attraction did prove to be very interesting in the results. With career-related mentoring functions, likeability was of less importance. Showing that with career-related mentoring functions like teaching someone a new task or helping someone finish an assignment, skill and a perceived sense of competence was of the utmost importance. Thus showing that during times of career-related functions it is most important to be able to accomplish the task than just to find a collaborative mentor likeable. In times of career needs, for a person to choose someone as his or her collaborative mentor, he or she must be able to accomplish the task and contribute the necessary information or skill set needed.

Casciaro and Sousa-Lobo's (2005) research found people would rather work with someone they found likeable than those they perceived as competent in an organizational setting. The data from this study show that in a college setting competence is of the utmost importance when choosing a work partner. This further substantiates the earlier claim that students value competence over likeability in work partners. While a person's physical characteristics and his or her likeability do show to be important from the data, a collaborative mentor's perception of his or her partner's competence is what ultimately leads to the success of the collaborative mentoring relationship. Therefore, the perception of skills and abilities that the two parties bring to the relationship are very important to the success of the relationship. This further explains the possibility that even though a partner may be likable and easy to talk to, this may not be the sole reason a person is called upon for advice or to work on a project with another.

Limitations

There were limitations to this study. No collaborative mentoring scale was found to be used to measure collaborative mentoring functions so a mentoring scale was modified. It is possible that there may be more collaborative mentoring functions not factored into the modified scale. For example, the scale only asked two questions dealing with friendship. One question asked about going out to eat and another asked about interacting socially. With friendship being so paramount to a collaborative mentoring relationship, it may prove beneficial to ask more in-depth questions dealing with the friendship between the two peers.

Participants used in this study were overwhelmingly female at 68.8%. This may have influenced the results for a number of reasons. Females may look for other traits in their collaborative mentors or may interpret those traits differently from males. It may be hypothesized that females may place more value on communication competence in order to perceive someone as skilled in a particular area, or possibly males may be less inclined to seek help or guidance from another male. Lastly, people may make strategic choices about the sex of the person they choose to adopt as a collaborative mentor. Ultimately, the data should be more balanced. While the results may not change if there were to be more of a balance of male and female participants in the study, it would give more insight into what males are looking for in a collaborative mentoring relationship.

This study used students from a Southeastern college that has a smaller number of ethnic minority students. Therefore, this study may have overwhelmingly received feedback from Caucasian students and may have left out valuable data that minority students could have contributed. Having more data from minority students may have

affected the results. This may have affected psychosocial mentoring functions data. It may be hypothesized that minority collaborative mentors may first meet socially out of the classroom, possibly due to having the same circle of friends or an increased similarity between the two partners. In addition, minority students may want something different from their collaborative mentors than the ethnic majority like increased emotional support about their ethnic standpoint.

Lastly, this study was only able to examine college students from one university. While this study did measure the data of 309 participants, this may not represent every college student in other colleges and universities. Participants overwhelmingly came from education and communication majors that may influence the development of collaborative mentoring relationships. Other majors may formally pair students up or form formal study groups for students thus eliminating the role interpersonal attraction has on partner selection.

Directions for Future Research

As a result of attraction being an important predictor of the completion of co-mentoring functions, future research should examine the similarity between the two collaborative mentoring partners. As explained previously, attraction research shows that similarity in partners is important and may influence the selection of a partner. Surveying both partners and examining for similarity may prove to what degree similarity plays in collaborative mentor selection and what role similarity has on the overall success of the relationship.

It would also be important to examine surveys taken by both collaborative mentoring partners item by item to notice any differences in how they answer. For

example, physical attraction may turn out to be higher for one of the participants possibly indicating a major motivator for this helping relationship is the chance of a romantic relationship.

Surveying collaborative mentoring partners of different ethnicities may provide insight on different attraction motivators between ethnicities. Also, examining the different attraction motivators for collaborative mentors between males and females may provide results that indicate males may value social attraction more than females.

In addition, examining the differences in attraction to collaborative mentors between majors may provide valuable insight. For example, an art student may want something totally different from his or her collaborative mentor than a law student.

In addition, a longitudinal study may indicate whether people have an explicit set of expectations or desires of their collaborative mentors. A follow-up study would also indicate whether these expectations were met.

Conclusion

There are many instances where guidance is needed during a student's college career like choosing the right classes or problems with school work. Peers may provide helpful guidance to other students as collaborative mentors providing coaching and professional development. The selection of a collaborative mentor is due to the interpersonal attraction between the two peers.

This research examined the role interpersonal attraction plays on the formation and success of collaborative mentoring relationships. The results showed both task and social attraction to be significant predictors of successful collaborative mentoring relationships. Overall, task attraction proved to be the best predictor out of the three

attraction dimensions. Therefore, along with finding a collaborative mentor competent, it is also important for people to select someone they like in order for psychosocial and career-related mentoring functions of the relationship to be fulfilled and thus allow the relationship to be a success. This research shows college students don't just go to any other student to discuss personal and professional problems, they go to someone they think is both knowledgeable and easy to talk to.

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APPENDIX

Collaborative Mentoring Survey

Collaborative Mentoring Scale Items and Dimensions

Mentoring Psychosocial Functions

Acceptance & Confirmation
Co-mentor has encouraged me to try new ways of behaving in my college career. **
My co-mentor has asked me for suggestions concerning problems she/he has encountered at school.
My co-mentor has conveyed feelings of respect for me as an individual.

Role Model
I try to imitate the work behavior of my co-mentor.
I agree with my co-mentor's attitudes and values regarding education.
I respect and admire my co-mentor.
I will try to be like my co-mentor when I read a similar position in my college career.

Counseling
My co-mentor has demonstrated good listening skills in our conversations.
My co-mentor has discussed my questions or concerns regarding feelings of competence, commitment to advancement, relationships with peers and professors or work/family conflicts.
My co-mentor has shared personal experiences as an alternative perspective to my problems.
My co-mentor has encouraged me to talk openly about anxiety and fears that detract from my work.
My co-mentor has conveyed empathy for the concerns and feelings I have discussed with him/her.
My co-mentor has kept feelings and doubts I shared with him/her in strict confidence.

Coaching
Co-mentor suggested specific strategies for achieving your college career goals.
Co-mentor shared ideas with you.
Co-mentor suggested specific strategies for accomplishing school work objectives.
Co-mentor gave you feedback regarding your performance in school.
Co-mentor has shared history of his/her college career with you.
Co-mentor has encouraged you to prepare for advancement.

Friendship
My co-mentor has invited me to join him/her for lunch.
My co-mentor has interacted with me socially outside of school.

Mentoring Career-related Functions

Protection
My co-mentor has helped me finish assignments/tasks or meet deadlines that otherwise would have been difficult to complete.

Exposure and Visibility
My co-mentor helped me meet new colleagues or students.

Challenging Assignments
My co-mentor presented opportunities to learn new skills.
My co-mentor provided me with support and feedback regarding my performance as a student.

Attraction Scale Items and Dimensions

Task Attraction
If I wanted to get things done, I could probably depend on my co-mentor.
My co-mentor would be a poor problem solver.*
I couldn't get anything accomplished with my co-mentor.*
I have confidence in my co-mentor's ability to get the job done.
My co-mentor is a typical goof-off when assigned a job to do.*
I would enjoy working on a task with my co-mentor.
My co-mentor is lazy when it comes to working on a task.*
My co-mentor would be an asset in any task situation.
I would recommend my co-mentor as a work partner.
I could rely on my co-mentor to get the job done.
My co-mentor takes his/her work seriously.
My co-mentor is an unreliable work partner.*
I could not count on my co-mentor to get the job done.*
I could not recommend my co-mentor as a work partner.*

Social Attraction
I think my co-mentor could be a friend of mine.
I would like to have a friendly chat with my co-mentor.
It would be difficult to meet and talk with my co-mentor.*
We could never establish a personal friendship with each other.*
My co-mentor just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends.*
My co-mentor would be pleasant to be with.
My co-mentor is sociable with me.
I would not like to spend time socializing with my co-mentor.
I could become close friends with my co-mentor.
My co-mentor is easy to get along with.
My co-mentor is unpleasant to be around.*
My co-mentor is not very friendly.*

Physical Attraction
I think my co-mentor is handsome/pretty.
My co-mentor is sexy looking.
I don't like the way my co-mentor looks.*
My co-mentor is ugly.*
I find my co-mentor attractive physically.
My co-mentor is not good looking.*
This person looks appealing.
I don't like the way my co-mentor looks.*
My co-mentor is nice looking.
My co-mentor has an attractive face.
My co-mentor is not physically attractive.*
My co-mentor is good looking.

**Indicates item removed to increase scale reliability
*Indicates item was reverse coded

VITA

ASHLEE L. POPPO

Education:	B.A. Organizational Communication, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida 2004 M.A. Professional Communication, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee 2008
Professional Experience:	Sales Manager, WonderWorks and Magical Midway, Orlando, Florida 2001-2005 Graduate Assistant, East Tennessee State University, College of Arts and Sciences, 2006-2008
Service:	CEO and Mentor, Helping Teachers Help Kids, community service project which raised $4,000 for Northside Elementary School, 2007