MARGINAL MENTORING: THE EFFECTS OF TYPE OF MENTOR, QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP, AND PROGRAM DESIGN ON WORK AND CAREER ATTITUDES

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Employing a national sample of 1,162 employees, we examined the relationship between job and career attitudes and the presence of a mentor, the mentor's type (formal or informal), the quality of the mentoring relationship, and the perceived effectiveness and design of a formal mentoring program. Satisfaction with a mentoring relationship had a stronger impact on attitudes than the presence of a mentor, whether the relationship was formal or informal, or the design of a formal mentoring program.

Mentoring has been the focus of much research and discussion over the past decade. Comparisons of nonmentored and mentored individuals yield consistent results: compared to nonmentored individuals, individuals with informal mentors report greater career satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989), career commitment (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990), and career mobility (Scandura, 1992). Informal protégés also report more positive job attitudes than nonmentored individuals (cf. Dreher & Ash, 1990; Koberg, Boss, Chappell, & Ringer, 1994; Mobley, Jaret, Marsh, & Lim, 1994; Scandura, 1997).

Many organizations have attempted to replicate the benefits of informal mentoring by developing formal mentoring programs (Burke & McKeen, 1989). Formal mentoring relationships develop with organizational assistance or intervention, which is usually in the form of matching mentors and protégés. A third of the nation's major companies apparently have formal mentoring programs (Bragg, 1989), and formal mentoring has been identified as an emerging trend in the new millennium (Tyler, 1998).

Three questions come to mind when viewing these emerging trends. First, are all mentoring relationships created equal? Existing studies imply this assumption by comparing mentored and non-mentored individuals without examining within-group differences in the quality of mentoring relationships. Like other work relationships, informal mentoring relationships can vary along a continuum: some relationships may be highly satisfying, and others may be marginally satisfying or even dissatisfying. Existing studies may have masked this effect by combining individuals with satisfying and dissatisfying relationships and comparing this group to those with no mentoring relationships. It may be possible that individuals in dissatisfying relationships gain little from the relationships and that findings of significant differences between informally mentored and nonmentored individuals reflect group averages skewed by highly satisfying relationships.

The second, and related, question is: Is informal mentoring associated with more positive work and career attitudes than formal mentoring? Even more to the point: Are formal relationships more effective than no relationships at all? Despite their popularity, little is known about the impact of formal mentoring programs on employee attitudes. An important related question is whether the quality of a mentoring relationship is more important than its type. Are informal mentoring relationships more effective than formal relationships, irrespective of the level of quality or satisfaction with the relationships? Or are highly satisfying formal mentoring relationships more effective than dissatisfying informal relationships?

Finally, in addition to indicating variations in the quality of formal mentoring relationships, case

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studies indicate that there may also be substantial variations in the design and overall effectiveness of formal mentoring programs (Douglas, 1997; Gibb & Megginson, 1993). The third set of questions is thus: To what extent does the design of a formal mentoring program affect job and career attitudes? What types of program characteristics are associated with program effectiveness and satisfying mentoring relationships?

Given the burgeoning popularity of formal mentoring programs, these questions have particular relevance for organizations entering the new millennium. The first purpose of this study, therefore, was to compare career and job attitudes among individuals with formal mentors, informal mentors, and no mentors while controlling for and investigating the degree of satisfaction obtained from the mentoring relationships. The second purpose of this study was to examine the effects of the design and the quality of mentoring programs on career and work attitudes and on the satisfaction obtained from mentoring relationships. This study provides needed guidance for organizations developing mentoring programs and, by building upon early mentorship theory, provides an important empirical foundation for the development of new theory in this emerging area.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mentoring in the Workplace

Mentoring and work attitudes. Mentors are generally defined as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and career support to their protégés (Kram, 1985). Existing theory predicts that effective mentoring should be associated with positive career and job attitudes (Kram, 1985) and, as reviewed earlier, empirical studies have supported this proposition. Although these studies support theory linking the presence of a mentor and work attitudes, they have only assessed the impact of informal mentors. The impact of formal mentoring and the relation between formal and informal mentoring has received little attention. Moreover, by grouping both satisfying and dissatisfying relationships together, these studies have not been able to examine relationships that are only marginally satisfying.

Marginal mentoring. Mentoring researchers are beginning to recognize that there may be considerable variation in the level of satisfaction obtained from mentoring relationships (cf. Allen & Poteet, 1999; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). Like other work relationships, mentoring relationships fall along a continuum, and although many mentoring relationships are highly satisfying, some may be marginally satisfying, dissatisfying, or even, at the very extreme end of the continuum, dysfunctional or harmful (Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000; Scandura, 1998). Although the proportion of dysfunctional or harmful relationships has been found to be relatively low (Ragins & Scandura, 1997), in part because people can terminate destructive relationships, a substantial proportion of mentors may simply be “marginal.” As defined here, these marginal mentors may be limited in the scope or degree of mentoring functions provided. Marginal mentors may disappoint their protégés or may not meet some or even most of the protégés’ developmental needs. These mentors fall midway on a continuum anchored with highly satisfying relationships on one end and highly dissatisfying relationships on the other end.

Existing mentorship theory supports the idea of a continuum and the construct of marginal mentoring. For example, Kram theorized that “[mentoring] relationships are dynamic and changing; while enhancing at one time, a relationship can become less satisfying and even destructive” (1985: 13). The concept of differing degrees of satisfaction with the relationship is also reflected in the work of Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, and McKee (1978). Levinson and colleagues observed that “[mentoring] relationships vary tremendously in the degree and form of mentoring involved. Mentoring is not a simple, all-or-none matter” (1978: 100). These authors went on to distinguish between “good mentors,” “bad mentors,” and “good enough mentors,” those who are limited but still have value. We call good enough mentors marginal mentors here.

It is critical to gain an understanding of how the full range of mentoring relationships affects career and job attitudes. Protégés with highly satisfying mentors may display positive work attitudes, but there may be few differences between nonprotégés and protégés with marginally satisfying or dissatisfying mentors. As mentioned earlier, studies that simply compare mentored and nonmentored individuals are based on group averages that may mask differences in relationship satisfaction. Moreover, since mentoring relationships, particularly informal relationships, are voluntary, there may be a lower base rate of dissatisfying relationships because people may simply end dissatisfying relationships. Low base rates of dissatisfying mentoring relationships may result in a negative skew when data are averaged across relationship satisfaction. These issues become even more salient when we consider formally assigned mentoring relationships, as discussed below.
Formal and Informal Mentoring Theory

Formal and informal mentoring relationships vary on a number of dimensions that may influence the satisfaction obtained from a relationship and the protégé's work attitudes (cf. Ragins & Cotton, 1999). An informal relationship is often driven by developmental needs (Kram, 1985); the relationship helps the mentor address midlife issues and provides a sense of "generativity," or of making a contribution to future generations (Erickson, 1963). The relationship also meets the protégé's early career needs for guidance, support, and affirmation (Levinson et al., 1978). Informal relationships develop by mutual identification: mentors choose protégés whom they view as younger versions of themselves, and protégés select mentors whom they view as role models. This mutual identification contributes to the often-cited closeness and intimacy of the mentoring relationship (Kram, 1985). Members of informal relationships report that mutual attraction or chemistry sparked their development (Kram, 1985).

In contrast, formal mentoring relationships usually develop through the assignment of members to the relationships by a third party; in some cases, the mentor and protégé have not even met before the match is made (Murray, 1991). Informal mentors are motivated to enter the relationships by mutual identification and developmental needs, but formal mentors may enter them to meet organizational expectations or to be good organizational citizens. Although formal mentors in some programs can receive more explicit organizational recognition than informal mentors (Poldre, 1994), they may also be less likely to receive the intrinsic rewards related to their developmental life stage. Formal mentors may therefore be less intrinsically motivated to be in the relationships and may be less personally invested in their protégés' development than informal mentors.

Formal and informal mentoring relationships also differ in their length and structure. Informal relationships are unstructured; the relationship partners meet as often as desired or needed over the course of the relationships, which usually last between three and six years (Kram, 1985). In contrast, formal mentoring relationships are usually contracted to last between six months and one year, and the mode, frequency, and location of contact may be sporadic or may be specified in a relationship contract signed by both parties (Murray, 1991; Poldre, 1994). The shorter duration of a formal mentoring relationship may reduce the opportunity for the mentor to influence the protégé's career and work attitudes.

Another difference between formal and informal relationships is their purpose. Informal relationships are often focused on helping the protégés achieve long-term career goals (Kram, 1985). Because they are shepherded into positions necessary for achieving these goals, protégés may be more satisfied with their current jobs and careers, which represent progress toward achieving long-term goals. In contrast, formal mentors are often contracted to focus on career goals that are short-term and applicable only to the protégés' current positions (Geiger-DuMond & Boyle, 1995; Murray, 1991). Since formal mentoring relationships are public relationships that are monitored by program coordinators who are sensitive to charges of favoritism, a formal mentor may be less likely than an informal mentor to intervene on a protégé's behalf, even if the protégé is not happy with his or her current job or career path. Finally, some formal mentoring programs are not focused on the protégés' career goals at all, but are directed toward orienting new employees or providing on-the-job training (Murray, 1991). Combined, these factors may limit a formal mentor's ability to shape the work and career attitudes of his or her protégé.

Research on Formal and Informal Mentoring

Although the relationship between informal mentoring and work attitudes has been firmly established in the literature, there has been very little research comparing work attitudes among protégés in formal and informal mentoring relationships, and there have been no studies that controlled for the quality or satisfaction with the mentoring relationship when comparing informal and formal mentoring. Fagenson-Eland, Marks, and Amendola (1997) found that protégés in informal relationships reported that their mentors provided more psychosocial functions than protégés in formal relationships, but their study did not examine attitudes or control for relationship satisfaction. Seibert (1999) found that formally mentored employees reported greater job satisfaction than nonmentored employees, but the groups did not differ on organizational commitment, work role stress, or self-esteem at work. However, his study did not include informally mentored employees, and the impacts of mentor type and relationship satisfaction on job attitudes were not assessed. In the context of a large-scale investigation of gender effects in mentoring relationships, the sample in the present study was used to examine the effects of gender on mentoring functions, compensation, promotions, and satisfaction with formal and informal mentoring relationships (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). One of
the interesting findings of that study was that when used as a dependent variable, relationship satisfaction was lower in formal than in informal relationships. Protégés with formal mentors also received less compensation and reported that their mentors performed fewer mentoring functions than informal protégés. However, the effects of relationship satisfaction, type of mentor, and the presence of a mentor on job and career attitudes were not examined in that study, nor was the impact of the design of a mentoring program on program effectiveness and relationship satisfaction. The present study provides a more complete picture by examining the effects of these variables on work attitudes.

To date, only one study has investigated the relationship between type of mentor and job attitudes but, like other studies, this study did not examine or control for relationship satisfaction. Chao, Walz, and Gardner (1992) hypothesized that informal protégés would report higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational socialization than formal protégés, who would in turn report higher levels than nonmentored individuals. Using a sample of 212 informal and 53 formal protégés, the authors found that although the mean scores were in the predicted direction, formal and informally mentored individuals did not significantly differ in reports of job satisfaction or organizational socialization. The authors also found that although informally mentored protégés reported more job satisfaction than nonmentored individuals, formal protégés did not significantly differ from nonmentored individuals in job satisfaction; however, the formal protégés and nonmentored individuals did differ on three of the six organizational socialization scales used in the study.

Although Chao and colleagues' (1992) study took an important first step toward comparing attitudinal differences in formal and informal relationships, we sought to take the next step by exploring how the range of satisfaction in mentoring relationships influences work and career attitudes among formally mentored, informally mentored, and nonmentored individuals. A finer-grained analysis can reveal important insights regarding the nature of the mentoring relationship. For example, will protégés in satisfying formal relationships report more positive work attitudes than protégés in dissatisfying informal relationships? Does a protégé's satisfaction with a mentor account for more of the variance in work attitudes than the type of mentor? Does the design of a formal mentoring program affect work attitudes? Our study is an attempt to address this gap in the literature by answering these as well as other questions. We also extended Chao's work by investigating six additional dependent attitudinal variables and by controlling for a number of critical control variables that are theoretically linked to mentoring and job attitudes.

HYPOTHESES

Mentoring Relationships: Type, Presence, and Satisfaction

The first hypothesis investigates the relationship between the level of satisfaction reported in mentoring relationships and work attitudes. As discussed earlier, this hypothesis is based on the theory that there is a range of satisfaction in mentoring relationships.

Hypothesis 1. Protégés who report highly satisfying informal or formal mentoring will report more positive job and career attitudes than protégés who are marginally satisfied or dissatisfied with their informal or formal mentors.

The second hypothesis involves a comparison of the job attitudes of formally mentored, informally mentored, and nonmentored individuals. As discussed earlier, according to existing theory values on variables will be ranged in the following hierarchical relationship: informally mentored, highest; formally mentored, midlevel; nonmentored, lowest. We take this examination to the next level by comparing formally mentored, informally mentored, and nonmentored individuals' job and career attitudes across levels of high, marginal, and low mentor satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2. Within a given level of reported satisfaction, protégés with informal mentors will report more positive job and career attitudes than protégés with formal mentors, who in turn will report more positive attitudes than nonmentored individuals.

Hypothesis 2 essentially compares type and presence of mentor while the degree of satisfaction with the relationship is controlled for and examined. It is also important to directly examine whether type of mentoring relationship accounts for more of the variance in attitudes than relationship satisfaction. For example, will protégés in a highly satisfying formal mentoring relationship report more positive attitudes than protégés in a dissatisfying or even marginally satisfying informal relationship? Will protégés in a dissatisfying relationship report more positive job attitudes than nonmentored individuals? Since these relationships are exploratory, we examined them using the following research question:
Research Question 1. Does the type or the presence of a mentoring relationship account for more of the incremental variance in job and career attitudes than the level of satisfaction with the mentoring relationship?

Design and Characteristics of Formal Program

Our study also breaks new ground by examining the relationship between the characteristics and design of a formal mentoring program and the effectiveness and outcomes associated with it. Case reports indicate that formal mentoring programs vary considerably with respect to structure, purpose, and quality (cf. Gibb & Megginson, 1993). It is therefore reasonable to expect a positive relationship between the effectiveness of a mentoring program, work and career attitudes, and relationship satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3. Formal proteges who report being in effective mentoring programs will have more positive career and job attitudes and report greater satisfaction with their mentoring relationships than proteges who report being in less effective mentoring programs.

Mentorship theorists have suggested that formal programs that are designed to be similar to informal relationships should be more effective than programs that are dissimilar to informal relationships (Burke & McKeen, 1989). For example, mentoring programs that are voluntary, allow members choice in the matching process, and focus on the proteges' career development should have a stronger relationship to work attitudes than mandatory programs with third-party matching that provide just general job orientation.

Hypothesis 4. Proteges in formal programs that involve voluntary participation will view the programs as more effective and will have more positive career and job attitudes than proteges in mandatory programs.

Hypothesis 5. Proteges in formal programs that involve participation in matching will view the programs as more effective and will have more positive career and job attitudes than proteges in programs that assign members to one another.

Hypothesis 6. Proteges in formal programs aimed at career development will view the programs as more effective and will have more positive career and job attitudes than proteges in programs aimed at providing general job orientation.

Mentoring programs may also differ on other structural characteristics that may approximate informal mentoring. As discussed earlier, because formal mentors may not have the same motivation to mentor as informal mentors, they may spend less time with their proteges. Another potential difference is that informal mentors report that they receive peer recognition for selecting and polishing "diamonds in the rough" (Ragins & Scandura, 1999), but formal mentors may not receive the same type of peer recognition for their assigned relationships. Attempting to address these issues, the designers of some formal programs offer members guidelines for the frequency of interaction (Geiger-DuMond & Boyle, 1995) and offer formal recognition to the mentors for volunteering in the program (Douglas, 1997).

Hypothesis 7. Proteges in formal programs that offer guidelines for frequency of meetings and recognition for the mentors will view the programs as more effective and will have more positive career and job attitudes than proteges in programs lacking such features.

Finally, formal mentoring programs also vary on mentors' organizational positions. Some programs select mentors who are direct supervisors of the proteges, whereas other programs select mentors who are at higher ranks or even in different departments than the proteges (Murray, 1991). There is similar variation among informal mentoring relationships; informal mentors may or may not be in the same department or organization as their proteges (Kram, 1985). Because of these variations in formal relationships, we investigated this variable as a research question:

Research Question 2. Does the rank or department of a formal mentor affect a protege's report of program effectiveness or the protege's career and job attitudes?

METHODS

Procedures and Participants

For our larger study on gender effects in mentoring relationships, a national random sample was obtained using mailing lists of professional associations representing social workers, engineers, and journalists. In order to obtain a gender-balanced sample, we randomly selected equal numbers of male and female names from each mailing list. A total of 3,000 surveys were mailed, with 1,000 (500 to men, 500 to women) sent to people in each of the three occupations. Follow-up surveys and reminder letters were sent according to a modified
version of the Dillman mail survey method (Dillman, 1978). A total of 1,258 surveys were returned, for an initial response rate of 42 percent. Self-employed and retired employees were excluded from analyses. Relatively complete data for analyses were available for 1,162 respondents, resulting in a final response rate of 39 percent. Respondents consisted of 654 women and 500 men; 8 respondents did not report their gender. The occupational breakdown of the respondents was as follows: 362 journalists (31.2%), 414 social workers (35.6%), and 386 engineers (33.2%).

We used an established definition of mentor (Ragins, 1989) in our survey: “A mentor is generally defined as a higher-ranking, influential individual in your work environment who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and support to your career. Your mentor may or may not be in your organization and s/he may or may not be your immediate supervisor.” Formal mentoring was defined in the survey for the present study as follows: “In order to assist individuals in their development and advancement, some organizations have established formal mentoring programs, where protegés and mentors are linked in some way. This may be accomplished by assigning mentors or by just providing formal opportunities aimed at developing the relationship. To recap: Formal mentoring relationships are developed with organizational assistance. Informal mentoring relationships are developed spontaneously, without organizational assistance.”

In order to ensure that respondents had a clear understanding of the distinction between formal and informal mentors, we asked them to describe their formal mentoring programs immediately after asking them to identify their mentors as formal or informal. Only individuals who currently had mentors were used in the subsequent analyses. Of the respondents, 510 (43.9%) reported having informal mentors, 104 (9%) reported having formal mentors, and 548 (47.2%) reported having no mentors. The mentored sample was composed of these 614 protégés, of whom 352 were women, 257 were men, and 5 did not report their gender. The protégé sample had 348 (57.1%) individuals who were in same-gender mentoring relationships and 261 (42.9%) who were in cross-gender relationships. The median length of the current mentoring relationship was 4.0 years, and the average length was 6.7 years. Fifty-three percent of the protégés reported that their mentors were also their supervisors. The average age of the protégés was 46 years old; 92 percent were Caucasian, and most had completed (63%) or pursued (12%) graduate degrees.

Measures

Career and job attitudes. We used established instruments to measure all career and job attitudes. Seven attitudes were assessed: career commitment, job satisfaction, satisfaction with opportunities for promotion, organizational commitment, procedural justice, organization-based self-esteem, and intentions to quit. All measures had acceptable coefficient alphas (see Table 1 below). Career commitment was measured with Blau’s (1985) Career Commitment Scale. Job satisfaction was measured with the Quinn and Staines (1979) measure of job satisfaction. Satisfaction with opportunities for promotion was appraised with the promotion subscale of the Job Description Index (Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969). Organizational commitment was measured with Mowday, Steers, and Porter’s (1979) scale. Procedural justice was measured with the extended version of McFarlin and Sweeney’s (1992) procedural justice scale. Organization-based self-esteem was measured with Pierce, Gardner, Cummings, and Dunham’s (1989) scale. Intentions to quit (turnover intentions) were measured using a two-item scale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Nadler, Jenkins, Cammann, & Lawler, 1975).

Relationship satisfaction. A protégé’s satisfaction with a relationship was measured by a four-item scale labeled “Satisfaction with Mentor” (Ragins & Cotton, 1999), given in Appendix A. The scale used a seven-point Likert response format (1, strongly disagree, to 7, strongly agree). Higher values represent greater satisfaction with the mentoring relationship. The coefficient alpha for the scale was .83, and the mean was relatively high at 5.95. When this continuous scale needed to be transformed to a categorical variable for statistical analyses or hypothesis testing, we used percentile splits. Specifically, the upper third, middle third, and lower third were coded “highly satisfying” (3), “marginally satisfying” (2), and “dissatisfying” (1).

Perceived effectiveness of formal mentoring program. A six-item instrument, displayed in Appendix B, was used to assess formal protégés’ perception of the effectiveness of their formal mentoring programs. The instrument used a seven-point Likert scale with responses ranging from 1, “strongly disagree” to 7, “strongly agree,” with 4 indicating neither agree nor disagree. The coefficient alpha for the six-item instrument was .79, and the mean was 4.35.

Design of formal mentoring programs. The design of the formal program was assessed by direct questions. Appendix B gives the questions and the responses.
Control variables. We controlled for a number of variables that are theoretically linked to mentoring and job attitudes (Ragins, 1999a) and have also been regularly employed as control variables in other mentoring research. For example, because formal relationships are shorter in duration than informal relationships, and contact may shape attitudes, the length of a mentoring relationship is an important control variable that should be included in comparisons of formal and informal mentoring (Chao et al., 1992). A number of other control variables may affect the relationship between mentoring and job attitudes, such as organizational tenure (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990), rank and age (Koberg et al., 1994), and organization size (Dreher & Ash, 1990). For example, large organizations may be more likely to have formal programs and may have more resources to devote to their programs than small organizations (Douglas, 1997). Additionally, because higher-ranking, older, and tenured individuals may have more positive job attitudes than lower-ranking, younger individuals who are newer to an organization, it is also important to hold these variables constant when investigating the relationship between mentoring and job attitudes.

We started with a large list of two sets of control variables: organizational/demographic variables and mentoring variables. We considered these ten organizational/demographic variables as potential covariates: occupation, age, race, education, marital status, number of career interruptions, organizational rank, size of organization, tenure in position, and tenure in organization. We also considered four mentoring variables that have been found to be related to mentoring outcomes in other studies (Chao et al., 1992; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). These variables included whether the mentor was the protégé's supervisor, the number of prior mentoring relationships, the length of the mentoring relationship, and the protégé's socioeconomic background.

In order to preserve power, we selected covariates that had significant correlations with the dependent variables of work and career attitudes but low intercorrelations. We used independent variable interaction terms to test for homogeneity of the regression assumptions fundamental to covariance analyses. On the basis of these criteria, existing theory, and prior research (Ragins, 1999a), six control variables were employed in the present study: protégé's rank, defined as number of levels between the protégé and the top of the organization (Fagenson-Eland et al., 1997; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), protégé's age (Colarelli & Bishop, 1990; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), protégé's occupation (Dreher & Ash, 1990), protégé's tenure in organization (Fagenson-Eland et al., 1997), the size of the organization (number of employees; Dreher & Ash, 1990), and the duration of the current mentoring relationship (Chao et al., 1992; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990).

RESULTS

Relationship Type, Presence, and Satisfaction

The correlations, means, standard deviations, and alphas for the study variables are displayed in Table 1. Since the attitudinal dependent variables had moderately high intercorrelations, we used multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) to test Hypothesis 1, which predicts a positive relationship between satisfaction with a mentoring relationship and career and job attitudes. This hypothesis received strong support ($\lambda$ [Wilk's lambda] = .90, $F_{2, 451} = 3.38, p < .001). When controlling for the protégé's rank, age, occupation and tenure in the organization, size of the organization, and the duration of the current mentoring relationship, we found that protégés who reported highly satisfying informal or formal mentoring relationships reported greater job satisfaction ($F_{2, 451} = 11.17, p < .001), organizational commitment ($F_{2, 451} = 7.74, p < .001), satisfaction with opportunities for promotion ($F_{2, 451} = 9.11, p < .001), career commitment ($F_{2, 451} = 14.65, p < .001), organization-based self-esteem ($F_{2, 451} = 7.17, p = .001), and procedural justice ($F_{2, 451} = 9.13, p < .001) and lower intentions to quit ($F_{2, 451} = 7.08, p = .001) than protégés who reported marginal or dissatisfying mentoring relationships.

The next step in our analyses was to investigate differences between formally mentored, informally mentored, and nonmentored individuals' work attitudes across levels of mentor satisfaction. Specifically, Hypothesis 2 predicts that within a given level of reported satisfaction, protégés with informal mentors will report more positive job and career attitudes than protégés with formal mentors, who in turn will report more positive attitudes than nonmentored individuals. We used Duncan's multiple range test to assess these contrasted effects.

The adjusted means, displayed in Table 2, indicate that the relationships are far more complex and intriguing than originally hypothesized. We first compared job attitudes among nonmentored and mentored individuals at varying levels of mentor satisfaction. As expected, nonmentored individuals reported significantly less job satisfaction, satisfaction with opportunities for promotion, organizational commitment, career commitment, organization-based self-esteem, and procedural justice.
perceptions than protégés in highly satisfying informal mentoring relationships. However, these differences were not found for informal protégés in less satisfying relationships. Protégés in dissatisfying informal relationships did not report more positive levels than nonprotégés for any of the attitudes studied; in fact, they reported significantly lower procedural justice perceptions than nonmentored individuals. Moreover, informal protégés in marginally satisfying relationships differed from
nonmentored individuals on only two of the seven attitudes studied, satisfaction with opportunities for promotion and career commitment. This pattern was even more pronounced for the formal relationships. Formally mentored individuals reported more positive levels than nonmentored individuals on only three of the seven attitudes studied (career commitment, organizational commitment, and organization-based self-esteem), and those differences were only found among those in highly
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>No Mentor (n = 365)</th>
<th>Low Satisfaction (n = 30)</th>
<th>Marginal Satisfaction (n = 24)</th>
<th>High Satisfaction (n = 22)</th>
<th>Low Satisfaction (n = 123)</th>
<th>Marginal Satisfaction (n = 161)</th>
<th>High Satisfaction (n = 130)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Career commitment</td>
<td>25.29&lt;sup&gt;b, c&lt;/sup&gt; (6.58)</td>
<td>23.33&lt;sup&gt;b, i&lt;/sup&gt; (7.09)</td>
<td>26.67 (6.44)</td>
<td>29.50&lt;sup&gt;g, i&lt;/sup&gt; (5.53)</td>
<td>24.87&lt;sup&gt;d, a, f&lt;/sup&gt; (6.32)</td>
<td>26.85&lt;sup&gt;b, d, s&lt;/sup&gt; (5.58)</td>
<td>28.56&lt;sup&gt;b, a, h&lt;/sup&gt; (5.78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>12.84&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; (2.72)</td>
<td>12.00&lt;sup&gt;c, a&lt;/sup&gt; (3.16)</td>
<td>12.58 (2.51)</td>
<td>13.81&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt; (3.12)</td>
<td>12.38&lt;sup&gt;b, d&lt;/sup&gt; (2.62)</td>
<td>13.38&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt; (2.48)</td>
<td>13.76&lt;sup&gt;b, c&lt;/sup&gt; (2.52)</td>
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<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td>71.73&lt;sup&gt;b, f&lt;/sup&gt; (18.13)</td>
<td>67.17&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt; (19.72)</td>
<td>71.12 (15.78)</td>
<td>81.41&lt;sup&gt;b, c, d&lt;/sup&gt; (22.43)</td>
<td>69.44&lt;sup&gt;d, e&lt;/sup&gt; (17.49)</td>
<td>74.17&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (17.37)</td>
<td>77.57&lt;sup&gt;e, f&lt;/sup&gt; (19.57)</td>
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<td>Organization-based self-esteem</td>
<td>41.26&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (6.52)</td>
<td>40.43&lt;sup&gt;c, d&lt;/sup&gt; (6.60)</td>
<td>40.50 (6.05)</td>
<td>43.86&lt;sup&gt;b, d, f&lt;/sup&gt; (6.78)</td>
<td>40.81&lt;sup&gt;e, f&lt;/sup&gt; (6.03)</td>
<td>42.33&lt;sup&gt;e&lt;/sup&gt; (6.08)</td>
<td>43.58&lt;sup&gt;c, e, g&lt;/sup&gt; (6.05)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceived opportunities for promotion</td>
<td>11.81&lt;sup&gt;b, h&lt;/sup&gt; (8.40)</td>
<td>11.90 (8.43)</td>
<td>12.50 (9.09)</td>
<td>16.23 (9.91)</td>
<td>11.12&lt;sup&gt;c, d&lt;/sup&gt; (8.74)</td>
<td>15.43&lt;sup&gt;e, c&lt;/sup&gt; (9.02)</td>
<td>15.18&lt;sup&gt;b, d&lt;/sup&gt; (9.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions to quit</td>
<td>5.56&lt;sup&gt;g&lt;/sup&gt; (3.92)</td>
<td>7.77&lt;sup&gt;b, c, d&lt;/sup&gt; (4.44)</td>
<td>5.46 (3.99)</td>
<td>4.18&lt;sup&gt;d, e&lt;/sup&gt; (3.92)</td>
<td>6.14&lt;sup&gt;e, f&lt;/sup&gt; (3.65)</td>
<td>5.52&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt; (3.79)</td>
<td>4.88&lt;sup&gt;c, f&lt;/sup&gt; (3.59)</td>
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<td>Procedural justice</td>
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<td>22.93&lt;sup&gt;c, e&lt;/sup&gt; (5.61)</td>
<td>22.87 (4.68)</td>
<td>24.59 (6.74)</td>
<td>21.96&lt;sup&gt;b, d, f&lt;/sup&gt; (5.37)</td>
<td>24.06&lt;sup&gt;e, f&lt;/sup&gt; (5.29)</td>
<td>25.07&lt;sup&gt;e, f, s&lt;/sup&gt; (6.06)</td>
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*Means are adjusted for covariates. Values in parentheses are standard deviations. Means having the same superscript differ at \( p < .05 \).

*All variables were measured for protégés.
satisfying formal relationships. No significant differences were found between nonmentored individuals and formally mentored individuals with marginal mentor satisfaction. In fact, protégés in dissatisfying formal relationships reported significantly greater intentions to quit than nonmentored individuals. In short, the positive attitudes that were associated with the presence of a mentor occurred primarily when the relationship was highly satisfying. Marginal or ineffective mentoring was generally unrelated to positive work and career attitudes.

A similar pattern of results emerged in comparisons of formally and informally mentored protégés at varying levels of mentor satisfaction. As displayed in Table 2, compared to protégés with dissatisfying informal mentors, protégés with highly satisfying formal relationships reported more positive attitudes on all of the attitudes except perceived opportunities for promotion. In addition, formal protégés who were highly satisfied with their mentors reported more organizational commitment than informal protégés who had marginal informal mentors. In sum, the view that informal mentoring relationships will automatically be more beneficial than formal mentoring relationships is apparently too simplistic; the level of satisfaction in a relationship appears to be the key variable.

Research Question 1 directly addresses this issue by assessing whether the type or the presence of a mentoring relationship accounts for more incremental variance in job and career attitudes than the level of satisfaction with the relationship. We used hierarchical regression analyses to test the significance of changes in the multiple squared correlation coefficient ($R^2$) associated with satisfaction with a mentor, as compared to the type and the presence of a mentoring relationship. In the first set of analyses, the covariates were entered in the first step, followed by either the type of mentor (formal vs. informal) or relationship satisfaction. As shown in Table 3, satisfaction with the relationship was significantly related to all of the attitudinal variables when entered either before or after the presence of a mentor. However, an inspection of the incremental $R^2$ changes in Table 3 shows that satisfaction with a mentor still accounted for more of the variance in work attitudes than the presence of a mentor.

### Design and Characteristics of Formal Mentoring Program

We predicted in Hypothesis 3 that formal protégés who reported being in effective mentoring programs would have more positive career and job attitudes and would be more satisfied with their mentors than formal protégés who reported being in less effective mentoring programs. MANCOVA analyses were used as tests of the relationship between the perceived effectiveness of a program and work attitudes. The perceived effectiveness of a mentoring program was dichotomized for this analysis with a median split (high effectiveness = 1, low effectiveness = 0). Hypothesis 3 was supported: when we controlled for age, rank, occupation, length of mentoring relationship, organizational tenure, and organization size, formal protégés who reported being in highly effective mentoring programs reported more positive career and job attitudes than formal protégés who reported being in less effective programs ($\lambda = .81, F_{1, 70} = 2.35, p < .05$). Follow-up univariate analyses (ANOVAs) revealed significant univariate effects for job satisfaction ($F_{1, 76} = 9.81, p < .01$), organizational commitment ($F_{1, 76} = 4.06, p < .05$), career commitment ($F_{1, 76} = 9.91, p < .01$), and procedural justice ($F_{1, 76} = 5.32, p < .05$). Satisfaction with opportunities for promotion ($F_{1, 76} = 2.18, p = .14$) and intentions to quit ($F_{1, 76} = 2.17, p = .14$) approached significance, and organization-based self-esteem was not significantly related to the perceived effectiveness of a mentoring program ($F_{1, 76} = 1.33, n.s.$). The relationship between perceived program effectiveness and satisfaction with a mentor was assessed with an ANCOVA analysis. The results indicated that protégés in effective formal mentoring programs reported more satisfying mentoring relationships than protégés in ineffective programs ($F_{1, 79} = 18.67, p < .001$).

Although the perceived effectiveness of a formal mentoring program affected career and job atti-
TABLE 3
Results of Regression Analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
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<td>.18***</td>
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<td>.05***</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.02**</td>
<td>.02**</td>
</tr>
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<td>Job satisfaction</td>
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<td>.05***</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>.001</td>
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<td>.01*</td>
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<td>Organizational commitment</td>
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<td>.03***</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.006</td>
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<td>Organization-based self-esteem</td>
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<td>.02***</td>
<td>.01**</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.01*</td>
<td>.01*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion opportunities</td>
<td>.05***</td>
<td>.03***</td>
<td>.03***</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.008</td>
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<td>Intentions to quit</td>
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<td>.04***</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
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<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural justice</td>
<td>.11***</td>
<td>.04***</td>
<td>.03***</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Values are changes in $R^2$ unless otherwise identified. All the attitudinal variables were measured for protégés.

** Control variables included protégé's age, rank, tenure in organization, size of organization, and occupation, and, for analyses involving mentored individuals, the duration of the mentoring relationship. Values in this column are $R^2$'s.

* Value reflects change in $R^2$ when satisfaction with mentor was entered either before (step 2) or after (step 3) type of mentor. A parallel set of analyses was done with satisfaction with mentor entered either before (step 2) or after (step 3) presence of mentor. Satisfaction with mentor had the same rounded $R^2$ values for both sets of analyses, with the exception of the values in parentheses, which reflect the satisfaction with mentor $R^2$ when it was entered before and after the presence of mentor.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

All two-tailed tests.

tudes, we found limited support for the hypothesis that formal mentoring programs designed to be similar to informal relationships would be viewed as more effective and would have a stronger relationship with work attitudes than programs that were dissimilar from informal relationships. We used independent multivariate analyses of covariance to test the relationships between program characteristics and work and career attitudes and simple analyses of covariance (ANCOVAs) to test the relationships between program characteristics and reported program effectiveness. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.

One characteristic of formal mentoring programs that affected some work attitudes was program purpose. In partial support of Hypothesis 6, the MANCOVAs revealed that programs whose purpose was to promote protégés' careers had a significantly stronger relationship with attitudes than programs whose purpose was to orient new employees. Follow-up univariate analyses indicated that protégés in programs designed to promote their careers reported significantly greater ($p = .01$) satisfaction with opportunities for promotion and marginally greater ($p = .08$) procedural justice perceptions than protégés in programs designed for general orientation. However, a program's purpose was not significantly related to protégés' perceptions of its overall effectiveness.

The structure of a program had a limited effect on reported program effectiveness. In partial support of Hypothesis 7, protégés in programs that offered guidelines for the frequency of meetings reported that the programs were more effective than protégés who were in programs lacking such guidelines. However, meeting guidelines were not significantly related to work attitudes and, in contrast to the second part of Hypothesis 7, mentor recognition was not significant. Whether the formal mentor received recognition in performance appraisals or other types of organizational rewards was unrelated to attitudes or reports of program effectiveness.

Whether mentor or protégé had a choice about joining the mentoring program was not significantly related to work or career attitudes, nor was the method used in matching mentor and protégé. Specifically, in contrast to Hypothesis 4, protégés in voluntary programs did not have more positive work attitudes than protégés in mandatory programs. A marginal effect ($p = .08$), however, was found for reported program effectiveness: protégés who were in programs where the mentor voluntarily entered the program reported that the programs were marginally more effective than protégés in programs with mandatory participation among mentors. However, whether a protégé had a choice about joining a program was not significantly related to reported program effectiveness. We also found no support for Hypothesis 5; programs that
allowed mentors and protégés to participate in the matching process did not yield more positive attitudes and were not viewed as more effective than programs that assigned members to one another.

A test of Research Question 2 revealed some interesting results. This research question concerns the effects on protégé attitudes and reports of program effectiveness of the number of organizational levels between a formal mentor and a protégé (mentor rank) and whether the mentor was in the same department as the protégé. Although the mentor’s rank did not affect these outcomes, whether the mentor was in the same department as the protégé affected protégé attitudes. As indicated in Table 3, although the multivariate effect was marginal (p = .06), follow-up univariate analyses revealed significant effects for organizational commitment and intentions to quit and effects for career commitment (p = .06) and job satisfaction (p = .09) that approached significance. A review of the adjusted means showed that protégés in programs that used mentors who were in the same departments as the protégés expressed marginally more negative career and job attitudes than protégés in programs that used mentors from different departments.

We conducted post hoc analyses that assessed the impact of these various program characteristics on protégé satisfaction with the mentoring relationship. As displayed in Table 4, the only program variable that significantly affected mentor satisfaction was the department of the mentor. In line with the previous findings, protégés in programs that used mentors who were in the same departments as the protégés were expressed significantly less satisfaction with the mentoring relationship than protégés in programs that used mentors from other departments.

**Post Hoc Analyses of Gender Effects**

An important question that arises is whether these findings hold for both women and men. The impact of protégé gender and the combination of mentor and protégé gender on the dependent variables in the study were assessed, and some of the
key findings that emerged from these analyses are discussed below.

MANCOVA analyses indicated that the gender composition of a mentoring relationship did not interact with type of mentor to affect job and career attitudes (\(P_{illais} = .06, F_{21, 1,275} = 1.36, \text{n.s.}\)). As in other research (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1989), gender did not interact with the presence of an informal mentor (\(P_{illais} = .01, F_{7, 760} = .85, \text{n.s.}\)), indicating that both men and women reported equivalent attitudinal benefits from the presence of an informal mentor. However, it was of particular interest that a significant interaction was found between the presence of a formal mentor and gender (\(P_{illais} = .03, F_{7, 427} = 2.07, p < .05\)), and follow-up univariate analysis revealed a significant effect for career commitment (\(F_{1, 433} = 7.18, p < .01\)). An inspection of the adjusted means indicated that although nonmentored men and women reported equivalent career commitment (men, \(\bar{x} = 25.54\), women, \(\bar{x} = 25.08\)), men with formal mentors reported significantly more career commitment (\(\bar{x} = 28.37\)) than women with formal mentors (\(\bar{x} = 23.46\)). In fact, women with formal mentors reported significantly less career commitment than both the men and women who were not mentored.

Additional analyses of covariance revealed that although formally mentored men and women did not significantly differ in their satisfaction with their mentoring relationships (\(F_{1, 75} = 2.11, \text{n.s.}\)), men were more likely than women to report that their formal mentoring program was effective (\(F_{1, 75} = 3.58, p = .06\)). Specifically, male protégés with male mentors (\(\bar{x} = 27.38\)) or female mentors (\(\bar{x} = 29.44\)) reported that their mentoring program was more effective than female protégés with male mentors (\(\bar{x} = 23.25\)).

**DISCUSSION**

This study addressed two questions that have particular relevance for organizations entering the new millennium. First, we tested the assumption that all mentoring relationships are created equal and used the construct of marginal mentoring to examine differences between individuals with formal and informal mentors, and nonmentored individuals. Second, we examined whether the design of a formal mentoring program affected participants’ work attitudes, their perception of the effectiveness of the mentoring program, and their satisfaction with the mentoring relationship.

The results of our study support Levinson and colleagues’ (1978) theory that mentoring is not a simple, all-or-none matter but falls along a continuum of effectiveness. Individuals in highly satisfying mentoring relationships reported more positive attitudes than nonmentored individuals, but the attitudes of those in dissatisfying or marginally satisfying relationships were equivalent to those of nonmentored individuals. In some cases nonmentored individuals expressed more positive attitudes than protégés in dissatisfying relationships.

The degree of satisfaction with the mentoring relationship also accounted for more of the unique variance in work attitudes than the type of relationship. Although formal mentors are more likely than informal mentors to be viewed as marginal, protégés in satisfying formal relationships still reported more positive work and career attitudes than protégés in dissatisfying informal relationships. Taken together, these results indicate that satisfaction with the mentoring relationship accounted for more of the variance in job and career attitudes than the type of mentor or even the presence of a mentoring relationship.

One implication of these results is that studies that have shown a significant relationship between the presence of a mentor and positive work attitudes may not have captured the full range of mentoring relationships and may therefore be a bit misleading. The results of our study indicate that the presence of a mentor alone does not automatically lead to positive work outcomes; the outcomes may depend on the quality of the mentoring relationship. Comparisons of formally and informally mentored protégés may be too simplistic. Future research needs to consider within-group differences in mentoring effectiveness and the quality of the mentoring relationship when comparing formal and informal relationships.

Although it is clear that good mentoring may lead to positive outcomes, bad mentoring may be destructive (Scandura, 1998) and, in some cases, as our study revealed, it may be worse than no mentoring at all. Although truly dysfunctional mentoring relationships are likely to terminate (Ragins & Scandura, 1997), relationships that are marginally effective may simply endure. Perhaps these relationships endure because the protégés receive limited career help from the mentor, or because the protégé does not want to risk negative repercussions from terminating the relationship. Perhaps these marginal relationships serve needs that are simply dysfunctional; some individuals may seek dysfunctional work relationships just as they seek dysfunctional home relationships (Ragins, 1999b). Marginal, dependent, or even abusive relationships are not restricted by organizational boundaries; they occur within work settings as well as outside of them, and dysfunctional needs may actually spill over from the nonwork to the work domain.
There should therefore be future research investigating the causes and consequences of these marginal mentoring relationships. How do marginal relationships develop? What functions do they serve? At what point does the mediocrity of a relationship overcome its functionality and the relationship end? Longitudinal research could be used to gain a deeper understanding of this gray area of mediocre mentoring and dysfunctional work relationships.

In addition, longitudinal research could also clarify the direction of the relationship between satisfying mentoring and positive work attitudes; does high-quality mentoring lead to more positive work attitudes, or are individuals with positive work attitudes more likely to be selected for or enter into high-quality mentoring relationships? Although this selection argument could explain our finding a relationship between attitudes and quality among informally mentored proteges, it does not explain why we also found this association in formally assigned mentoring relationships in which the members did not select one another. This observation supports the theory that high-quality mentoring relationships have a positive impact on proteges’ job and career attitudes (Kram, 1985).

Although there has been much discussion in the popular literature about the pros and cons of various design features of formal mentoring programs (Murray, 1991), the eight design features we examined had relatively limited impacts on attitudes and on degree of satisfaction with a mentoring relationship. One interesting exception was that programs that used mentors from the same departments as their proteges had less satisfying mentoring relationships and were marginally associated with more negative job attitudes than programs that used mentors from other departments. One explanation for this finding is that restricting selection of mentors to a given department may also restrict the range of quality of the mentor pool. In addition, mentors from other departments may provide fresher insights, a broader organizational perspective, and more effective support for their proteges than do mentors from the same departments as their proteges.

Taken together, these findings suggest that the degree of satisfaction with a mentoring relationship may overshadow any particular design feature of a formal mentoring program. In other words, even the “best-designed” program may not compensate for a pool of marginal mentors. Future studies could therefore focus on how mentoring programs can develop motivated and skilled mentors. These studies could compare programs with various degrees of stringency in selecting, screening, and training mentors, as well as variations in the monitoring and evaluation of mentor performance. A better understanding and measurement of the motivation to mentor (cf. Ragins & Cotton, 1993) may lead to a fruitful diagnostic technique for selecting formal mentors. Our study takes a first step toward understanding the relationship between the design of formal programs and desired outcomes. However, the results of this study also suggest that design elements should not be discussed in a vacuum; design is significant only to the extent that it facilitates the development of satisfying mentoring relationships.

Finally, our post hoc analyses revealed that although men and women apparently received equivalent attitudinal benefits from the presence of informal mentors and expressed equivalent satisfaction with their relationships, women with formal mentors were less satisfied with their formal mentoring programs than their male counterparts, and these women reported less career commitment than formally mentored men and nonmentored men and women. Although many mentoring programs are developed for women (Burke & McKeen, 1989), these findings suggest that formal programs may be less effective for women than men. The selection of effective mentors is important for all programs, but it may be critical for programs aimed at women.

Study Limitations

Several limitations of this study need to be noted. This study relied on cross-sectional data, which limits our ability to determine the direction of the relationship between mentoring and work attitudes. It is clear that longitudinal research is needed in this area, despite the difficulties involved with discovering informal relationships at their inception and following them over time. In addition, the generalizability of our study was limited by our highly educated, older, and primarily Caucasian sample.

As in most survey studies, common method variance may have biased the assessment of some of the variables in this study. In order to lessen this effect, we separated the items assessing the effectiveness of formal mentoring programs, work attitudes, and satisfaction with mentors, placing them in different sections of the 15-page survey. Moreover, the independent variables measuring the presence of a mentoring relationship and the type of relationship should be relatively free of this bias; these variables were essentially held constant across reports of career and job attitudes. The finding that some design characteristics of formal programs were associated with reported program effectiveness (that is, department of mentor)
whereas others were not (voluntary nature and method of matching) suggests that common method bias was not a pressing concern for this variable either. Satisfaction with a mentoring relationship was significantly related to the reported effectiveness of a mentoring program \( r = .46, p < .01 \) but, as shown in Table 1, the correlation was lower than many of the correlations among the variables. Moreover, common method bias could not account for the fact that the pattern of results in this study consistently differed for satisfaction with the relationship and reported program effectiveness.

Another limitation is that the program characteristic questions may be open to self-report bias. Questions about whether matching was a mutual decision may reflect true mutuality or subtle compulsion; for instance, one partner in a mentoring relationship might be pressured into the relationship by a sense of obligation or a fear of insulting the other partner but still report the relationship as a mutual choice. Moreover, although we asked respondents whether the primary purpose of their formal program was to promote their careers or to orient them to their jobs, some programs may have had dual, equally weighted purposes. In the future researchers could disentangle these effects by using case analyses and by asking more probing questions regarding the purpose of a program, the method of matching, and whether participation was truly voluntary. Finally, although we asked protégés about the effectiveness of their mentoring programs, we did not directly assess the programs’ quality. Future research could provide a more in-depth examination of both the quality and effectiveness of formal programs.

In conclusion, a formal program is only as good as the mentor it produces. Formal programs may therefore be effective to the extent that they recruit skilled and motivated mentors, train the participants, and create an organizational environment that fosters the development of satisfying mentoring relationships.

REFERENCES


**APPENDIX A**

**Scales Developed for This Study**

Items are given verbatim. Both scales used a seven-point response format ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

**Satisfaction with Mentor**

\[ \alpha = .83 \]

My mentor:

- is someone I am satisfied with.
- has been effective in his/her role.
- fails to meet my needs. (reversed)
- disappoints me. (reversed)

**Perceived Program Effectiveness**

\[ \alpha = .79 \]

The formal mentoring program in my organization is effective.

The formal mentoring program allows me access to mentors who otherwise would have been unattainable.

I am satisfied with the formal mentoring program.

The formal mentoring program smoothed the way for me to get a mentor.

I would be unable to get a mentor if not for the formal mentoring program.

The formal mentoring program is a waste of time.

(REversed)

**APPENDIX B**

**Formal Mentoring Program Design Items and Responses**

**Voluntary Program**

For mentors: “Is the participation in the program voluntary for mentors?”

- Yes 34.4%
- No 50.0
- Don’t know 15.6

For protégés: “Is the participation in the program voluntary for protégés?”

- Yes 23.6%
- No 65.4
- Don’t know 11.0

**Method of Matching**

“We are interested in how mentors and protégés are
matched or connected. Please check the one answer that best describes the matching process."

Mentors and protégés are assigned to each other 63.2%
The mentor chooses the protégé 5.6
The protégé chooses the mentor 3.2
It's a mutual decision 15.2
Other 6.4
Don't know 6.4

Purpose of Program
“What is the primary purpose of the mentoring program?”
Promote the careers of participants 31.5%
Promote the careers of women and/or other minorities* 1.6
Provide general orientation for new employees 28.2
Other 32.3
Don't know 6.5

Meeting Frequency Guidelines
“How often are mentors and protégés required or suggested to meet?”
Once a week 35.2%
Once a month 12
Every few months 3.2
There are no guidelines for meeting times 37.6
Other 7.2
Don’t know 4.8

*Since only two individuals reported that the purpose of their program was to promote the careers of women and minorities, we removed this category from future analyses and recoded the variable to reflect the two categories of career development (1) and general orientation (2).

Mentor’s Rank
“On average, how many levels above the protégés are the mentors?”
The values reported ranged from 0 to 5, with a mean of 1.36 levels.

Mentor’s Department
“Are the mentors in the same department as the protégés?”
Yes 86.5%
No 10.3
Don't know 3.2

Recognition Given to Mentor
“Is the mentor’s participation in the mentoring program recognized by the organization in performance appraisals and/or organizational rewards?”
Yes 50.8%
No 22.2
Don’t know 27

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