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# Gender Differences in Research Mentorship and Pretenured Counselor Educators

Cynthia A. Briggs and Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson

The purpose of this study was to determine whether pre-tenured counselor educators receive research mentorship. Furthermore, this study investigated whether mentorship differs for female and male faculty members. The instrument utilized was a web-based survey entitled the Research Mentor Quality Questionnaire (RMQQ). The 139 respondents (51.7% response rate) indicated most pre-tenured counselor educators do receive research mentorship. Additionally, the quality of research mentorship is not significantly different for females and males on most items. Implications for the profession of counselor education and suggestions for future study are presented.

Overall, females are underrepresented in the professoriate. Currently, 51% of doctoral degrees are conferred upon females (Mason & Goulden, 2004). Yet, females account for only 38% of faculty at institutions for higher learning and experience attrition before tenure at a rate of 2:1 compared to males (Curtis, 2003). One reason for the high rate of attrition may be that female faculty members have a more difficult time than males in finding senior faculty willing to mentor them in their areas of research interest (Dohm & Cummings, 2002). Hill (2004) determined lack of mentors was one factor contributing to dissatisfaction among female faculty in the profession of counselor education. Additionally, pre-tenured counselor educators underscore strong collegial relationships and mentorship ease faculty adjustment during the first year of teaching and research (Magnuson, 2002). Research mentorship can assist female faculty with this transition, increasing likelihood of success in the academy. Females who are mentored can experience greater satisfaction at work, may be able to move more quickly through the advancement process, receive more equitable salaries and career satisfaction (Casto, Caldwell, & Salazar, 2005).

## Perspectives of Mentorship

Mentorship evolved as a majority culture construct. Subsequently females have, to a large degree, been excluded from this process. Levinson (1978) and Roche (1979) identified mentoring as a critical relationship in adult

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Caucasian male career development. Levinson and Roche's work was criticized as being non-inclusive of females and people of color, and for lack of empirical support (Rose, 2003). Nevertheless, their work launched mentorship into the larger social consciousness.

In comparison to the more traditional majority culture construct, a feminist mentorship approach takes on different forms and functions. The feminist perspective becomes a more interpersonal activity. It is not merely goal-oriented (Paterson & Hart-Wasekeesikaw, 1994). Feminist mentorship focuses on partnership, collaboration, cooperation, nurturance, learner needs, interpersonal skill development, and open communication. Additionally, self-worth, autonomy, and balancing work-home life are encouraged. Mentors and protégés explore their differences rather than denying or minimizing them (Benishek, Bieschke, Park, & Slattery, 2004; Egan, 1996; Paterson & Hart-Wasekeesikaw, 1994; Schramm, 2000). Traditional male-oriented models of mentorship tend to be less collaborative, more hierarchical, and are less focused on relational factors.

Same gender modeling appears important for female protégés. Females benefit when they observe other females who successfully navigate the system. They develop confidence in their own ability to do the same (Cullen & Luna, 1993). Females who are mentored by males may experience oppression within that relationship; this cross gender relationship may perpetuate the dominant male and subservient female gender stereotypes (Casto, Caldwell, & Salazar, 2005; Kronik, 1990). Additionally, cross gender mentoring may result in romantic entanglements, gender bias, tokenism, and fewer professional development opportunities (Benishek et al., 2004). However, the literature is mixed regarding cross gender mentoring and its effects on female protégés (Dohm & Cummings, 2002). Many females report successful relationships with mentors who are males (Benishek et al.).

### Research Mentorship

The term *research mentor* has emerged in the past 10 years. While general mentorship can be applied to a variety of settings, research mentorship is specific to academic, scientific, or other research-heavy occupations and is

the most common form of mentorship in academia (Clark & Watson, 1998). Research mentorship is rarely defined outside of the general parameters of mentorship (Dohm & Cummings, 2002), and has not been extensively researched (Clark & Watson). We define research mentorship as a complex, dynamic relationship that occurs within an academic setting. The mentor, a more experienced researcher, offers both relational and instructional support to the protégé in research generation and collaboration, and professional development. The relationship is goal and task-oriented, and primarily serves protégé needs, with secondary benefit for the mentor, who gains a research collaborator.

### **Functions of Research Mentorship**

Research mentorship includes two broad domains: relational factors and instructional factors (Clark & Watson, 1998; Magnuson, S., Davis, K. M., Christenson, T. M., Duys, D. K., Glass, J. S., Portman, T., Schmidt, E. A., & Veach, L. J., 2003). Relational factors include: offering support; inviting participation in research projects; role modeling; nurturing the protégé in times of disappointment; advocating for the protégé; and socializing the protégé into academia (Magnuson et al., 2003; Paul, Stein, Ottenbacher, & Yuanlong, 2002; Reynolds, 2005). Although these qualities reflect feminist mentorship values, they may not directly increase protégés' research productivity (Paul et al.).

Instructional factors include several components. First, mentors assist protégés in beginning research projects through research question generation, critical analysis of ideas, and offering multiple perspectives on a topic. Second, mentors assist protégés in concrete tasks such as research design, methodology, analyzing data, and feedback on writing when protégés are immersed in research projects, (Magnuson et al., 2003). Third, research mentors offer guidance on the steps for journal submission, advise regarding career decisions, promote scientific integrity, and assist with time management (Magnuson et al., 2003; Reynolds, 2005). Determining the instructional or relational needs of a protégé is an individual process, based on protégés' past experience with research, level of confidence, and writing experience and the mentors' specific skills and experience (Reynolds, 2005). Research mentorship appears more effective than didactic training (Magnuson et al., 2003), as synergy created by collaboration drives and generates research (Clark & Watson, 1998).

### **Benefits and Barriers**

Research mentorship can benefit both parties. Protégés gain expertise and contribute to the success of projects. Overloaded mentors gain valuable assistance in completing tasks (Benishek et al., 2004) and experience generativity; mentors influence the next generation of scholars (Black, Suarez, & Medina, 2004; Burke & McKeen, 1996). Both mentors and protégés experience increased scholarly productivity (Paul et al., 2002). Collaboration is of particular importance to protégés who have been

marginalized, particularly for females in academic settings (Benishek et al.).

Challenges do exist. Protégés cite difficulty in scheduling meetings with mentors. Feedback and criticism takes an emotional and professional toll. Confidence can be eroded. Power issues emerge as well (Clark & Watson, 1998). For mentors, producing collaborative work with protégés may be time consuming, as the mentor simultaneously produces a project and trains a neophyte (Clark & Watson; Paul et al., 2002). Finally, mentor and protégé may have conflicts and different ideas about what the research mentor relationship should entail. All these challenges can create confusion and disappointment in both parties. However, for the protégé, these can have life long consequences on productivity and scholarship (Tentoni, 1995).

### **Justification for Study**

Counselor educators are mandated to promote and enhance diversity. Both the Council on Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2001 Standards and the American Counseling Association (ACA) 2005 Code of Ethics cite the critical nature of attending to multicultural values, promoting diversity, and engaging in social justice. Counselor educators play a major role in facilitating the success of future female faculty as tenured individuals in academia. Research mentoring is one approach that helps meet this professional responsibility (Benishek et al., 2004).

For females, research mentorship can provide an opportunity to publish with a mentor; it provides hands-on experience, practical skills, and the chance to generate new knowledge. Moreover, a study by Dohm and Cummings (2002) demonstrated females with a research mentor were more likely to conduct research than females without one. Females who work in isolation tend to become perfectionist about their work, and to take more time in crafting articles for submission (Winkler, 2000) contributing to lower publication rates (Creamer, 1998). Though access to collaboration may increase opportunities for females to publish, it can be difficult for females to find collaborators. Faculty females who experience marginalization in majority-dominated higher education contexts may be reluctant to ask a male colleague. They may fear they will lose credit for the work (Winkler, 2000). However, because fewer females exist in the upper ranks of academia, a finite pool of female mentors exists (Curtis, 2003; Winkler, 2000).

Finally, literature about mentoring in counselor and counselor educator preparation is often anecdotal, is a relatively recent development, and is scarce (Black et al., 2004; Tentoni, 1995). Less than 1% of articles in psychology and counseling journals discuss the issue of mentorship (Black et al.). Furthermore, definitions and roles of mentors lack clarity. Faculty and students offer conflicting views about critical aspects of mentorship (Tentoni, 1995). Currently, no information exists regarding whether males

and females counselor educators receive research mentorship, or how they experience it.

## Methodology

A national survey was conducted that addressed two research questions:

- Research question one: Do pre-tenured counselor education faculty members receive research mentorship?
- Research question two: If research mentorship occurs, how does it differ for male and female counselor education faculty?

### Participants

The sample population included pre-tenured faculty men and women in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs (CACREP, 2005). The population was derived from online directories: those faculty members listed as assistant professors were included. The resulting population was 319. Because the resulting population was a relatively small number, the entire population was sampled to provide the best idea of its true characteristics (Courtney, 2004).

Over the course of survey implementation, the sample size decreased due to factors including the following: invalid emails, self-identification as inappropriate for study, recently deceased, maternity leave, sabbatical, and lack of interest in participating. The final sample included 269 counselor educators; 153 responded. Fourteen responses were discarded, as participants answered “no” to question number one of the survey, “Are you a counselor educator working toward tenure?” The final response rate was 51.7% of the sample, or 139 eligible responses. This exceeds the 30% response rate considered acceptable for web-based surveys (The University of Texas at Austin, 2006).

### Survey Design and Implementation

The web-based Research Mentor Quality Questionnaire (RMQQ) was piloted with six pre-tenured faculty members of CACREP-accredited counselor education programs and a statistician for verification of face validity. Revisions offered during the pilot were included in the final survey. Suggestions included clarification of terminology and wording of individual items. Though face validity seemed to exist, content and construct validity were questionable, primarily due to the absence of empirical data on research mentorship available in the research literature. In spite of this lack, content validity may have existed as the content of the survey’s items seemed to match research mentorship information that does exist in the limited literature. Furthermore, reliability was likely because of Web-based administration and computer scoring, which reduced administration errors or scoring mistakes.

The survey presented research mentorship as “collaborating on research projects with a more experienced faculty person(s).” The survey consisted

of two sections; the first included questions based on information gleaned from literature regarding the instructional (Clark & Watson, 1998; Magnuson et al., 2003; Masked University, 2005; Reynolds, 2005) and relational (Magnuson et al., 2003; Paul et al., 2002; Reynolds, 2005) functions of research mentorship. Instructional functions included career-oriented activities conducted during mentorship: generating research ideas, critiquing research ideas, assisting with research design and data analysis, providing feedback on writing, assisting with journal submissions, and advising on career decisions and the promotion and tenure process. Relational functions examined the nuances of the mentor/protégé relationship: hierarchical issues, cooperation, nurturance, openness, and level of support. In this first section, participants were also asked about collaborative scholarly productivity based on tenure and promotion guidelines outlined within Masked University's Faculty Handbook (2005). These items included publications such as journal articles, books and book chapters, and other scholarly or creative works; presentations including refereed and invited presentations; and local, regional, and national grants. For each of these items, participants selected as many of the instructional and relational functions as seemed relevant to their research mentorship experiences. The second survey section queried demographic information on mentors and protégés (the participants themselves), including gender, racial/ethnic identity, employment status and length, and tenure status. All together, the RMQQ consisted of 19 items.

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the survey was implemented using the Tailored Design Method (TDM) (Dillman, 2000). TDM for web-based surveys recommends mixed-method contacts to increase response rate. Contacts with participants initiated with a pre-survey phone call to each sample participant. This call was followed three days later by a pre-survey email reminding each participant of the forthcoming survey research. Three follow-up email contacts were sent, one each subsequent week, including an electronic cover letter explaining the rationale for the study and link to the survey. All data were collected within one month of the initial phone contact.

## Data Analysis

Demographic data were analyzed to understand particular characteristics of the sample as a whole (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2005). Descriptive data were gathered from the sample to determine to what degree participants experienced research mentorship. To understand whether pre-tenured counselor education faculty women and men experience research mentorship differently, two types of inferential analyses were performed. First, for the two-tailed hypothesis test, the null hypothesis asserted that no difference existed in the proportion of men and women experiencing specified research mentorship qualities. The alpha level was set at 0.05 for all significance testing. Second, a chi-square test of independence was applied to

data related to gender of respondent and presence or absence of a research mentor, as well as to gender of respondent and gender of research mentor. The chi-square tests the association between two variables. For this test, the null hypotheses stated that (a) no association existed between gender of protégé and presence or absence of senior collaborator; and (b) no association existed between gender of protégé and gender of mentor.

## Results

Of the 139 respondents, 59% ( $n = 82$ ) were female, while 41% ( $n = 57$ ) were male. Virtually all respondents identified as assistant professors, and 88% stated they had been working at their current institution for six years or less. Ninety-eight percent planned to seek tenure at their current university. Additionally, 4% of pre-tenured counselor educators had obtained tenure at another institution prior to their current university of employment.

Respondents described collaborative efforts on specific types of scholarly projects. Of the 13 types of projects listed, no significant difference existed between males and females, except with regard to (a) juried publications, where females engaged in this activity more than males; (b) on campus grants, where females engaged in this activity more often than males; and (c) other grants, where males engaged in this activity more often than females. This final result was only marginally significant. The full results are presented in Table 1 (see Table 1).

Respondents selected options that specifically described areas in which they received guidance from their research mentors. No significant difference existed between males and females. The full results are presented in Table 2 (see Table 2).

Respondents also described relational qualities experienced within the research mentor relationship. No significant difference existed between males and females except for (a) "focused on your (respondents') needs" was selected more frequently by males than by females, though the significance was marginal; and (b) "open communication is discouraged" was selected more often by males than by females, though the sample size of males selecting this option ( $n = 3$ ) was so small, making the results questionable. The complete results can be found in Table 3 (see Table 3).

For the chi-square test of independence both null hypotheses were not rejected as it appeared the absence or presence of a research mentor was independent of the gender of the protégé, and the gender of the mentor was independent of the gender of the protégé. These results support previous literature that asserted the gender of the protégé was not related to the likelihood of having a mentor or whether that mentor was male or female (Benishek et al., 2004; Dohm & Cummings, 2002).

These inferential analyses were performed in order to determine whether research mentorship differs for male and female pre-tenured counselor education faculty members. With few exceptions, it appears it does not.



**TABLE 1**  
Scholarly Activities.

Response	Total		Male		Female		Proportion Two-tail Test
	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	<i>p</i> -value
Refereed publications	95	0.683	39	0.684	56	0.683	0.9872
Juried publications	13	0.094	0	0.000	13	0.159	0.0016*
Other publications	21	0.151	9	0.158	12	0.146	0.8516
Other creative works	10	0.072	5	0.088	5	0.061	0.5484
Book	15	0.108	7	0.123	8	0.098	0.6370
Book chapter	49	0.353	25	0.439	24	0.293	0.0766
Refereed papers	8	0.058	2	0.035	6	0.073	0.3430
Refereed presentations	72	0.518	29	0.509	43	0.524	0.8562
Invited presentations	31	0.223	12	0.211	19	0.232	0.7680
Other presentations	24	0.173	9	0.158	15	0.183	0.7009
On campus grants	29	0.209	7	0.123	22	0.268	0.0379*
National grants	24	0.173	8	0.140	16	0.195	0.4007
Other grants	21	0.151	13	0.228	8	0.098	0.0346*
None of the above	8	0.058	6	0.105	2	0.024	0.0441
Other	6	0.043	1	0.018	5	0.061	0.2153
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1.000</b>					

Note: Significance is indicated by \* in *p*-value column.

**TABLE 2**  
Areas of Guidance.

Response	Total		Male		Female		Proportion Two-tail Test
	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	<i>p</i> -value
Generating research ideas	61	0.439	24	0.421	37	0.451	0.7245
Critical analysis of ideas	50	0.360	19	0.333	31	0.378	0.5890
Assistance in research design	40	0.288	14	0.246	26	0.317	0.3600
Assistance in analyzing data	31	0.223	11	0.193	20	0.244	0.4781
Assistance in developing methodology	29	0.209	11	0.193	18	0.220	0.7050
Feedback on writing	70	0.504	30	0.526	40	0.488	0.6551
Editing	63	0.453	24	0.421	39	0.476	0.5251
Assistance in submission of article to scholarly journals	45	0.324	15	0.263	30	0.366	0.2031
Advice about career decisions	57	0.410	26	0.456	31	0.378	0.3572
Promoting scientific integrity	11	0.079	5	0.088	6	0.073	0.7546
Time management skills	37	0.266	15	0.263	22	0.268	0.9463
Navigation of promotion and tenure process	87	0.626	33	0.579	54	0.659	0.3402
None of the above	8	0.058	7	0.123	1	0.012	0.0059*
Other	8	0.058	3	0.053	5	0.061	0.8354
<b>Total Respondents</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1.000</b>					

Note: Significance is indicated by \* in *p*-value column.

**TABLE 3**  
Relational Qualities.

Response	Total		Male		Female		Proportion Two-tail Test
	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	Count	Proportion	<i>p</i> -value
Egalitarian	46	0.331	22	0.386	24	0.293	0.2503
Hierarchical	23	0.165	13	0.228	10	0.122	0.0977
Cooperative	84	0.604	37	0.649	47	0.573	0.3678
Competitive	4	0.029	2	0.035	2	0.024	0.7106
Nurturing	51	0.367	25	0.439	26	0.317	0.1437
Individualistic	15	0.108	6	0.105	9	0.110	0.9331
Focused on your needs	41	0.295	22	0.386	19	0.232	0.0498*
Focused on your collaborator's needs	18	0.129	8	0.140	10	0.122	0.7506
Differences are discussed openly	39	0.281	20	0.351	19	0.232	0.1240
Differences are ignored	4	0.029	1	0.018	3	0.037	0.5089
Open communication is encouraged	70	0.504	30	0.526	40	0.488	0.6551
Open communication is discouraged	3	0.022	3	0.053	0	0.000	0.0357*
None of the above	7	0.050	1	0.018	6	0.073	0.1402
Other	10	0.072	2	0.035	8	0.098	0.1609
<b>Total</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>1.000</b>					

Note: Significance is indicated by \* in *p*-value column.

## Discussion

To begin, it is worthy of note that of the 139 usable responses, 59% of respondents identified as female, while 41% identified as male. This differed from the statistics reported by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in their 2003–2004 Fact Sheet, which reported that females make up only 46% of assistant professors (Curtis, 2004). The numbers gathered in this study indicates the profession of counselor education might be becoming female-dominated, in particular at the assistant professor level. Another possibility exists; this study perhaps had more relevance to female faculty members than it did for males, thus explaining the higher response rate of female participants.

Interestingly, the gender of the research mentors was almost exactly opposite to reported gender of protégés, identified as 40% female and 58% male (2% described as “other”). The findings mirrors broader trends in higher education where females are concentrated in lower ranks while those with seniority and tenure tend to be males (Curtis, 2004). There are many possible explanations for this disparity but two are germane to this discussion. First, a shift in demographics is occurring. More females are earning PhDs and subsequently entering the professoriate. Second, it is possible that females are more likely to suffer attrition prior to tenure than males. Whatever the correlation, this is worthy of future investigation.

It appears that traditional endeavors such as obtainment of tenure and publication in scholarly, peer-reviewed journals continue to hold the most significance for novice faculty. This is important for consideration as the current literature indicates that tenure and promotion is a confounding and confusing process for new faculty, particularly for females (Finkel & Olswang, 1996; Hill, 2004). This supports the particular concern that counselor educators have regarding tenure and promotion.

For this study research mentor relational qualities were considered. As we contend they are foundational to a feminist mentorship model, and deviate from traditional mentorship (Benishek et al., 2004; Egan, 1996; Paterson & Hart-Wasekeesikaw, 1994; Schramm, 2000). This is of particular interest because the instructional activities reported more closely aligned with traditional tenure and promotion expectations. Thus, it appears while the goals and outcomes of research mentorship for pre-tenured counselor educators remain traditional, the process of the relationship itself may be more feminist in nature. It seems counselor educators are suspended between two ways of being. They honor the traditions of academia. Simultaneously, they build collaborative relationships that are more progressive thus maintaining sensitivity to cultural and gender differences.

Few significant differences between pre-tenured faculty males and females in counselor education emerged. Of note, faculty females produced more juried publications and on-campus grants applications with research mentors than faculty males. In this case, perhaps female counselor educators are more likely to engage in scholarly endeavors considered less presti-

gious. This supports the findings of Ramsey, Cavallaro, Kiselica, and Zila (2002). Ramsey and colleagues found that female counselor educators were more engaged in conference presentations, while male counselor educators were more invested in publication of journal articles. Again in this case, females were more likely to engage in activities often considered less prestigious in the promotion and tenure process.

Similarly, analysis of other gender elements, including gender of mentor vs. gender of protégé and presence, absence, or number of research mentors demonstrated no significant differences between faculty male and faculty female experiences as they relate to research mentorship. Overall, this study informed us that pre-tenured faculty males and females in counselor education appeared to have more similar than different experiences regarding research mentorship.

### **Implications for the Profession of Counselor Education**

The literature describes a disparity between those individuals outside the majority culture and their ability to obtain research mentorship. This study suggests a greater degree of equity for male and female pre-tenured faculty members in counselor education than perhaps exists in the culture of academia at large. This provides hope and promise to women in the profession of counselor education in terms of retention and promotion of pre-tenured faculty. Mentorship is cited as a critical factor in both of these processes (Hill, 2004; Holcomb-McCoy & Bradley, 2003).

Faculty males and females described similar research mentor relationships. However, most participants characterized the relationship in terms of feminist behaviors. These included collaboration, nurturance, and open communication. These qualities differed from those described in traditional mentorship. One possibility for this discrepancy is the clinical training that counselor educators receive prior to entering the professoriate; clinical training that often focuses on relational strengths, equalitarian communication, and working alliances with individuals from varied cultural backgrounds. This includes congruence between mentor and protégé expectations, inclusion, cultivating autonomy, nurturance and cooperation. Thus suggesting perhaps counselor educators are better equipped than others in higher education to mentor females and other individuals from outside the majority culture (Benishek et al., 2004; Egan, 1996; Gellhaus, Thomas, Werner-Wilson, & Murphy, 2005; Paterson & Hart-Wasekeesikaw, 1994; Schramm, 2000; Shaw, McMahan, Chang, & Hannold, 2004). It may prove worthwhile for counselor educators to explore the role of working alliance in their mentoring relationships, and possibly to formalize the types of interactions that occur between mentor and protégé in the same way these skills are applied to counseling relationships. The research mentor relationship is inadequately understood. Therefore, quantifying effective behaviors for mentors in the context of working alliance may prove beneficial for protégés. Additionally, this information may well provide useful information for research mentors.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of this study is that the majority of pre-tenured counselor educators do receive research mentorship. Further, that counselor education is far ahead of the national average with regard to employing females at the assistant professor rank. Also, it appears that females and males receive similar degrees of research mentorship. And finally, females do not seem to be at an obvious disadvantage. This bodes well for the profession of counselor education and for those who wish to create a positive future for women faculty. Diversity, multiculturalism, and inequity are issues of much concern in higher education; counselor education seems to be making significant progress within these arenas.

### **Limitations of This Study**

First, the survey did not accommodate respondents who had no research mentor; potentially alienating and losing respondents. Second, using the terms both “juried” and “refereed” to categorize publications may have caused confusion. The two are quite similar, though refereed publications generally emerge in research journals after blind review by a panel of counselor educators, while juried publications might be read by one editor before acceptance. Third, a higher response rate would have been favorable, though 52% is adequate. Nonresponse error should be considered regarding external threats to validity with a rate less than 80% (Linder, Murphy, & Briers, 2001). In this study CACREP accredited programs were specifically targeted because CACREP represents the highest professional standard in our profession. However, this ultimately limited the generalizability of this study.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The dearth of information on research mentorship in counselor education invites many possibilities for further investigation. This survey provided an initial effort to determine the most effective ways to train new counselor educators for successful, satisfying careers in higher education. One venue for exploration is to examine research mentorship from the other side of tenure. Specifically, investigating research mentorship experiences of those who have a working alliance with individuals from many different cultural backgrounds and who have achieved tenure and promotion. Further, it would be beneficial to compare those results with the results from this study. This type of study could provide important clues about what factors truly lead to successful careers for female faculty. Related areas for exploration might include the relationship of research mentorship to job satisfaction, type and quality of research pursued by those mentored and retention in academia. These issues are particularly significant for people of color, GLBTQ individuals, females, and individuals with disabilities.

This survey included an open-ended comment section. The feedback of the respondents’ experiences with regards to research mentorship provided some compelling reading. Additional qualitative inquiry would harvest even more valuable information. For example, several respondents stated

that they had been mentored with support and encouragement. However, they claimed they lacked a structured relationship with someone willing to help them publish or present scholarly work. Others suggested that although they had a research mentor, their time together proved unproductive, oppressive, or insufficient to create scholarly work. Also, one respondent mentioned that she was included in a formal, assigned mentor program at her university, but that she had never met with or received guidance from her mentor. These reflections are strong reminders that not all mentorship is helpful. Exploring research mentor relationships through qualitative means may enlighten counselor educators concerning those factors that help or hinder protégé success.

Additionally, while this study examined the differences in mentorship experiences between male and female counselor educators, it would also be enlightening to examine differences based on race, ethnicity, national origin, ability status, sexual orientation and sexual identity. Identifying ways those from outside the majority culture experience mentorship in the early years of their professional development further supports the counseling profession's call to enhance and honor diversity; a call that extends to all in academia.

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