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MENTORING WOMEN OF COLOR FOR LEADERSHIP: DO BARRIERS EXIST?

SANDRA Y. JEFFCOAT

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Ph.D. in Leadership & Change Program  
of Antioch University  
in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

May, 2008

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled:

MENTORING WOMEN OF COLOR FOR LEADERSHIP: DO BARRIERS EXIST?

prepared by

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## Dedication

This work is dedicated to my Mother, who always believed in me and always told me I could do anything if I had the education and perseverance, and to my sons, Robert, Jr., Reginald, and Randell, to whom I say, you can do anything if you have the education and perseverance.

## Abstract

The number of women in the workforce is increasing, but they continue to hold few corporate leadership positions. Women are running into the glass ceiling, a ceiling that is thicker for Women of Color. The under-representation of women and minorities in leadership positions and the recognition of the business value of Diversity in this global economy have driven organizations to launch diversity programs and use mentoring as support for aspiring women leaders. Ragins and Cotton's 1991 research found that there were barriers for women who were looking to use mentoring as a tool for leadership development, but her participants were mainly White. In this age of diversity awareness, the question of whether similar barriers exist for Women of Color needs answering. Using factor analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis, this research built on Ragins and Cotton's original study to explore whether Women of Color perceive barriers in obtaining mentoring relationships for career development. It was found that Women of Color perceive three of the same barriers as those found in the Ragins and Cotton study, however, these women tended to disagree with many of the items found for these barriers. The electronic version of this dissertation is at Ohio Link ETD Center, [www.ohiolink.edu/etd](http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd).

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## Chapter I: Introduction

Women compose over 47% of the modern workforce (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007) and yet relatively few hold corporate officer positions, which are defined as positions of vice president or above. “In 2005, women held 16.4% of corporate officer positions.... The average *Fortune* 500 company had 21.8 corporate officers...the average number of women corporate officers was 3.6” (Catalyst, 2006a, p. 1). Far fewer Women of Color hold such positions. “Women of color who are defined as African, African American, Asian, Hispanic (non-White), Native American and Biracial women, held just 1.7% of all corporate officer positions—African American women held 0.9 ... , Asian American women held 0.4 %, and Latinas held 0.3 %” (Catalyst, 2006b, p. 2). This is difficult to understand because history gives us numerous examples of women leaders, White women and Women of Color, who have demonstrated both power and influence. Examples of these women leaders include Sojourner Truth, who spoke out for Blacks and women’s rights from 1843 to 1875; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, an influential leader in the Women’s Rights Movement from 1840 to 1902; Mary McLeod Bethune, who started the first school for Black girls in 1904 and was a leader in the Black women’s movement from 1924 to 1955; Nellie Taylor Ross, who served as the first woman governor in the U.S., for the state of Wyoming from 1925 to 1927; Shirley Chisholm, who was the first African American woman elected to Congress, serving from 1969 to 1982; Wilma Mankiller, who served from 1985 to 1995 as the first female to lead the Cherokee tribe; Dr. Mae Jemison, who in 1992 became the first Woman of Color to go into space; Madeleine Korbelt Albright; who served from 1997 to 2001 as the first female secretary of state; and Condoleezza Rice, who was the first female to serve as the U.S. national security adviser (from 1989 to 1991) and currently serves as the 66th United States

secretary of state. These women leaders are pioneers in arenas of power largely occupied by men. In addition to these pioneer women, the under-representation of women and minorities in leadership positions and the recognition of the business value of Diversity in this global economy have driven organizations to launch diversity programs and use mentoring as support for aspiring women leaders. With these programs in place, what has prevented more women from following in their footsteps?

These women leaders, and others like them, represent small dots in the sea of male leaders that covers the last two millennia, men who filled leadership positions due to a socio-cultural norm known as the patriarchy or rule of the father (Eisler, 1988). The public became aware of this reality of a male-controlled system during the women's right to vote movement in the early 20th century and again during the feminist movement of the mid-to-late 20th century. Feminist writers like Kate Millett (1977) explained the patriarchy as a system in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women, and in which the institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family extended to male dominance over women in society in general. From this perspective, "males [were to] control the economy and occupy positions of power and status. Women [were] denied access to power and deprived of rights, influence and resources" (Alexandre, 2004, p. 1172).

The promotion of women to positions of greater authority in the business environment became a focus in the 1970s as women entered the workforce in much greater numbers, spurred on by the Women's Movement of this period. By the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, corporations were developing programs to facilitate women in gaining the skills and social networks that would enhance their opportunity to move up the corporate

ladder. Mentor programs for women quickly flourished in the business world in hopes that the provision of a senior guide would effectively move women through the chain of command and solve the obvious discrepancy in the proportion of men to women in positions of power (Korabik & Aryman, 2007). Even while efforts were being made to open the door of power to women, there was no door in sight for people of color.

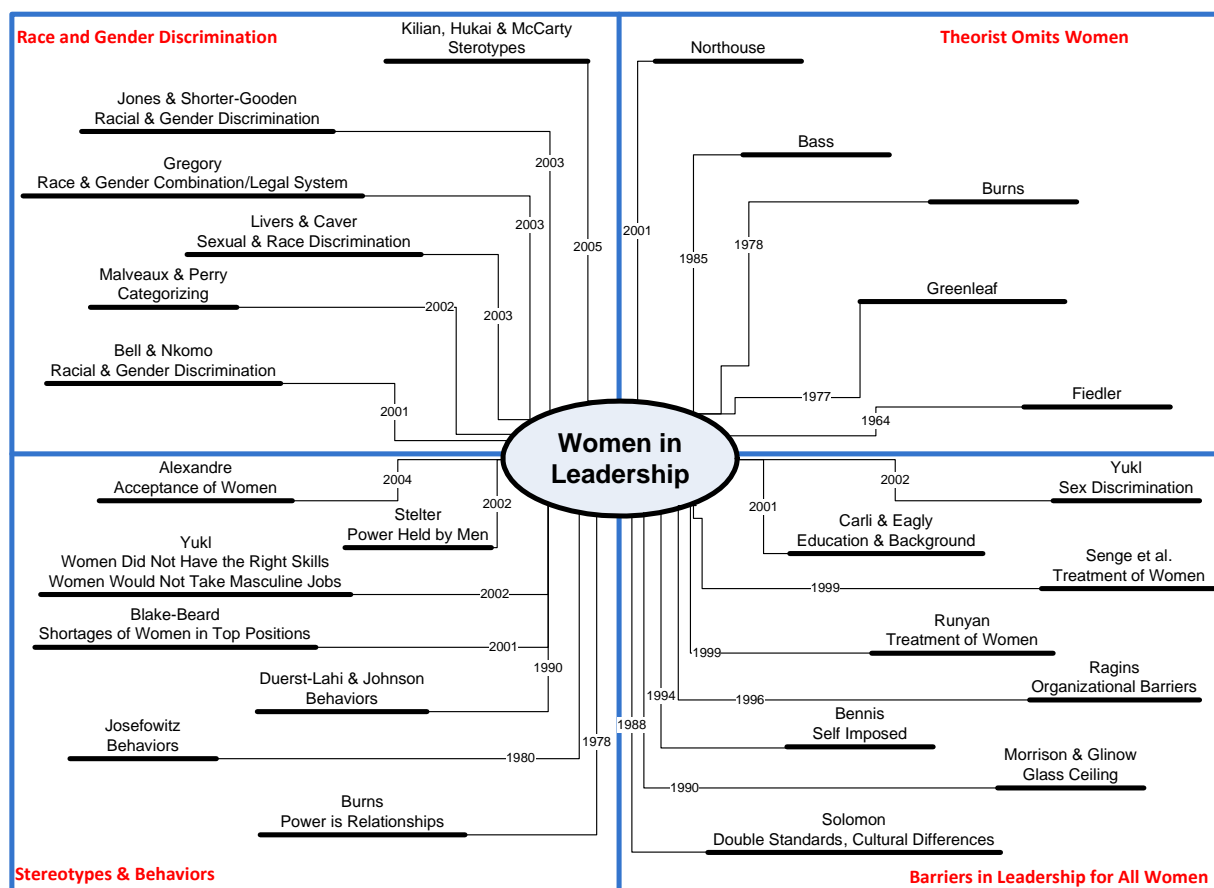
Thirty years after this initial movement, mentoring has become a household word in business corridors. Women are in leadership positions and research has deepened the understanding and function of mentoring as a stepping-stone to leadership. In fact, there is a considerable body of research on mentoring and its role in career promotion (Willbur, 1987; Kram, 1983, 1988). Pointedly, this research has largely focused on White women. Because Women of Color are largely absent from leadership positions, few research studies examine the particular barriers to leadership for Women of Color. There is sufficient literature on the unique gender role of Women of Color and their cultural influence in general (Kram & Hall, 1997), which should cause caution in the extrapolation of findings from studies of White women. Further, an examination of the sparse empirical leadership literature on people of color sheds little light on women within this group. This ignorance of the unique experiences of people of color, and particularly women, in the workplace continues in spite of the increasing diversification of the modern workforce (Hayes, 1999; Rost, 1991). Mentoring may have played a role in this increased diversification of leadership, because it has been used more recently to break down barriers for advancement for people of color into leadership roles in much the same way that mentoring was used with White women in the 1980s (Russell & Adams, 1997).

In response to the lack of research on Women of Color in leadership, this study considers mentoring as a tool for development of women as leaders and addresses barriers Women of Color may face in accessing and developing mentoring relationships. The study's approach is built on Belle Rose Ragins and John Cotton's (1991) research on perceived barriers in mentoring relationships. Ragins' study, now over 16 years old, reflects the social and cultural structure present in the mid-1990s when far fewer Women of Color were being considered or groomed for leadership positions. Thus, her study tells us little about mentoring as a developmental tool for Women of Color. It is now timely to compare the current barriers to Women of Color with the findings of the original Ragins and Cotton's study. Using factor analysis and multiple regression analysis, this study explores the barriers Women of Color perceive when trying to obtain a mentoring relationship for career development and advancement toward a leadership role in their workplaces.

Revisiting Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study in 2008 warrants an examination of how women, specifically Women of Color, have (or have not) been represented in the leadership literature. Because research on Women of Color, especially non-African American women, in leadership is scarce and research on women leaders in general is abundant, this discussion puts in the foreground leadership theories as they relate to all women. In addition, because some literature can be found on African-American women and very little could be found on other Women of Color, this discussion includes some focus on Black women with the assumption that the discussions may also apply to other Women of Color. Where literature is available that addresses the experiences of Women of Color in leadership, or that discuss the evident omission of Women of Color, it is

highlighted. Figure 1.1 is a high-level pictorial view of the leadership literature that is discussed throughout this study in relation to women and Women of Color. This roadmap groups the literature into four major categories represented by the quadrants of the map. The top left quadrant, Race and Gender Discrimination, presents the literature that explores workplace race and gender issues for Women of Color; the top right quadrant, Theorist Omits Women, identifies the leadership theorists who omitted women from their leadership theories; the bottom left quadrant, Stereotypes & Behaviors, identifies the literature that discusses the stereotypes and behaviors that women, especially Women of Color, face in the workplace; and the bottom right quadrant, Barriers in Leadership for all Women, lists literature that addresses leadership barriers faced predominantly by White women. The map suggests that women, especially Women of Color, have not received significant attention in the leadership literature, which this study shows.





**Figure 1.1 Road Map of Why Women and Women of Color Are Missing from Leadership Literature**

*Setting the Context: Women of Color in Leadership Literature*

*Theorists omitted women.* An examination of the literature finds that men have dominated the development of theories of leadership. As suggested in the top right quadrant of the map, for more than two decades the development of these theories was led by such male experts as Bernard Bass (1985), James MacGregor Burns (1978), Fred Fiedler (1964), Robert Greenleaf (1977), , , and Peter Northouse (2001). Their theories have served as guiding principles for leadership theories and practice in business,

educational, and governmental communities. Rost (1991) organized the different theories or movements of leadership into six categories:

(1) the 'great man' theory that was popular in the early part of the 20th century, (2) group theory in the 1930s and 1940s, (3) trait theory in the 1940s and 1950s, (4) behavior theory in the 1950s and 1960s, (5) contingency/situational theory in the 1960s and 1970s and (6) excellence theory in the 1980s (p. 17).

In that study Rost argued that one flaw that stood out and was shared among the theorists he discussed was the lack of women's perspectives. Hayes (1999) agreed. She argued, "Leadership theories were developed without regard to women; . . . it had been generally assumed that whatever was said about leadership applied equally well to both women and men" (p. 112). Hayes also argued that even the name of one of the theories, "the great man theory," left women out. According to Bennis and Nanus (1985), this theory implied that power was in the hands of a select few who were the right breed and everyone else had to be led. What this seemed to suggest was that because women were not well represented in leadership positions, they were not fit for a leadership role. In other words, there existed a core assumption that leadership was a male characteristic.

This idea that leadership was a "male thing" was based on the premise that the North American workforce was predominantly monocultural (White male) and that Americans held similar values and goals (Butler, 1993). "For thousands of years we've lived in a global culture that was authoritarian and hierarchical—a culture obsessed with exercising control over nature, other people, and our own emotions" (Bennis, Spreitzer & Cummings, 2001, p. 112). This translated into a leadership paradigm of command and control, which meant keeping followers submissive by influencing their behavior through manipulation (Kotter, 1990). Under the command-and-control leadership paradigm,

leaders were believed to have a legitimizing function and were appointed to represent investors in large businesses by controlling the corporations' workers.

Between the Civil War and World War I “American society passed through the most rapid and profound transformation in its history . . . the new economically integrated society emerging at the turn of the century developed its own forms of social organization” (Bellah, 1996, p. 146 ). Leadership evolved into a form of social organization that put more and more of a certain type of individual in control of others within the workplace. In the labor force, leaders rose from 4% in 1900 to 8% in 1950 to 13% in 1966 (Schon, 1983). The emergence of formal institutions for managing society (educational, political, social, and economic) drove the requirement for “professional” managers to manage and control both the large immigrant populations who could barely speak English and the factory workers who were needed to fuel the constantly expanding engines of production.

Bennis (2000) referred to this bureaucracy as a useful social invention that was perfected during this industrial revolution as a method of directing the activities of a business firm. He identified the elements of bureaucracy as (a) a well-defined chain of command, (b) a system of procedures and rules for dealing with all contingencies relating to work activities, (c) a division of labor based on specialization, (d) promotion and selection based on technical competence, and (e) impersonality in human relations. The professional manager played a key role in maintaining the status quo within large bureaucracies and, until recently, all professional managers were male.

By the mid-1950s nearly every large company had implemented strict criteria for the professional manager's job (Kleiner, 1996). Keeping the status quo became their

primary job—the desire for stability made the manager of the early to mid 20th century resist change. Part of maintaining the status quo was keeping the patriarchy firmly in control. However, today the workforce is changing and becoming much more diverse (Thomas, 1990). Workers are “demanding the right to participate directly in decision making that affects their work and immediate environment” (Fairholm, 1994, p. 184) and global business realities are supporting and driving this change.

This shift in the leadership paradigm included women entering the workforce in record numbers. “Their strong presence in the workforce, the acceleration of their entry into the professions, and the steady advance in recognition of women’s rights [should] make the increasing prominence of women in leadership ranks inevitable” (Gardner, 1990, p. 178). Yet women in the executive ranks remain relatively few and their rise to the top is a very slow, difficult process. In the United States, women make up 49% of the workforce (U.S. Department of Labor, 2007) and of the workers in leadership positions only 35.4% are women (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2005). Even the reported 35.4% is misleading because that number represents women in leadership positions predominantly in two major areas—clerical and service jobs. Women are over-represented in these two areas and are under-represented in others. “For example, women comprise just 14% of the leadership for engineers but 91.3% for registered nurses” (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005).

These statistics show women in leadership roles to be in the minority, especially in certain professions. However, Fairholm (1994) reports that, according to United States economic advisors and business analysts, the overall workforce is shrinking rapidly, which will cause a shift in these numbers. He believes White males will soon become the

minority and women, along with non-White minorities, will make up more than 75% of the workforce. The Bureau of Labor predicted rate of change in minority participation in the workforce (race representation change) between 2002 and 2014 is Asian, a 30% increase; Hispanic, a 33.7% increase; and Black, a 32.4% increase. By 2014, a nearly balanced condition will exist in the number of males and females in the workplace (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005).

Today, this shift in the workforce indicates a need for a shift in the leadership paradigm; various authors have identified the need for people to increase their “right-brain” capabilities and treat leadership in the 21st century as an “art” (Rabbin, 1998; T’Shaka, 1990; Vaill, 1989).

We need leaders who know how to nourish and rely on the innate creativity, freedom, generosity, and caring of people. We need leaders who are life affirming rather than life destroying. Unless we quickly figure out how to nurture and support this new leadership, we can’t hope for peaceful change. We will, instead, be confronted by increasing anarchy and societal meltdowns. (Wheatley, 2002, p. 2)

Bennis et al. (2001) argued that

The new leadership called for today must have qualities such as skills of mediating, anticipating, negotiating, compromising, and recognizing the needs of others, [which were skills] women specialized in during the centuries they were locked into their traditional gender roles. [Therefore,] the glass ceiling that often [kept] women from reaching the top of the corporate ladder may prove to be a blessing in disguise. (p. 113)

Bennis (2000) suggested that the traditional gender roles women have been forced into for years will afford them skills that will help break through the glass ceiling. This argument, which refers to women in general, begs the question: What are the implications for Women of Color?

*Race and gender discrimination.* Because most job applications ask for identify of race, ethnicity, color, or national origin, it can be assumed the problem scenario begins with the job application for Women of Color. By answering such a question they become instantly categorized. “Race categorizing, in the history of the world, is often used to violate people’s fundamental human rights” (Malveaux & Perry, 2002, p.169). Once these women have been categorized, they face what is referred to as the “double whammy.” They are faced with both sexual and racial discrimination, “which affect the degree to which an individual is given responsibilities and opportunities in the workplace” (Livers & Caver, 2003, p. 76). Further, Women of Color become a forgotten group, lumped with either women or minority men, thus their unique contributions and barriers are often lost among the issues of others, forgotten, or pushed aside.

When facing sexual and racial discrimination, “female workers of color may find themselves vulnerable to both sex and race bias acting in combination to create workplace problems experienced only by them, a subgroup comprised of Women of Color” (Gregory, 2003, p. 62). In other words, being members of this subgroup causes Women of Color to face double marginalization, which makes a climb to the top more difficult for Women of Color than for their peers. Adding to this difficult climb is the complexity of trying to determine which set of barriers they are facing—racial or gender. They are faced with both race and gender shaping their lives, but neither race nor gender theories adequately address their experiences (Glenn, 1999). Theorists have not adequately addressed the experiences of ethnicity/race and gender in combination and Women of Color are left with addressing each separately, causes another dilemma—untangling the biases they face. Both ethnicity and gender are intertwined into the

identity of Women of Color; untangling these biases is difficult, if not impossible. This difficulty leads to the question—Why should these women have to make the distinction, why not understand their issues and present resolutions?

It's been nearly 150 years since slavery was abolished, more than 80 years since women won the right to vote, and over 40 years since the March on Washington; yet today—still, today, in the 21st century—[minority] women are constantly made susceptible to both racial and gender discrimination, and sometimes left wondering which bias is most potent in disadvantaging them.” (Jones & Shorter-Gooden, 2003, p. 38)

Although there are many indications that all Women of Color have trouble determining which type of discrimination they are experiencing, there is one ethnic group that experiences “daily doses of racism—Black women. The everyday occurrence of [racial] incidents almost renders them mundane. Any one dose, taken alone, might be viewed as inconsequential” (Bell & Nkomo, 2001, p. 140). These daily doses of racism cumulatively take their toll by marginalizing and humiliating.

According to Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003), “shifting” is another issue that can make life in corporate America even harder for Black women and possibly all Women of Color. These researchers defined “shifting as changing outward behaviors, attitudes, or tones to accommodate differences in class as well as gender and ethnicity” (p. 7). Because of racial and gender bias, Black women and possibly all Women of Color use shifting to cope with these prejudices. However, Jones and Shorter-Gooden indicates that shifting can be damaging to an individual's sense of self and well being.

In addition to coping with the effects of racism and sexism by shifting, Women of Color, especially Black women, seem to be held to a higher standard. Bell and Nkomo (2001) indicated that in addition to Black women usually being held to a higher standard, their superiors are often surprised when they are able to successfully lead or perform.

In a decade when male-dominated corporations openly questioned whether women could even be managers, African American women presented an altogether different challenge. There were no reference points, no models of them in authority positions for White colleagues to draw upon. Rather, the most pervasive images of African American women ingrained into society were either negative images or images of African American women in subservient roles. (p. 146).

*Stereotypes and behaviors.* No leadership models, negative images—is this why Women of Color, especially African American women, face stereotypical actions that seem to block them from the ranks of leadership? The answer seems to be Yes. Women of Color face many stereotypes that continue to be barriers to career development and often keeping them from visible assignments that can open doors to advancement. Bell (2004) indicated that many of the stereotypes plaguing African American women are due to too little information being written about them. Bell further highlighted that the myth that “successful Black women are arrogant, hard, controlling, self-centered, and uppity [has] had powerful effects on perceptions of Black women” (p. 152).

This myth may be attributed to the history of the Black woman. For many years, Black women were contrasted with White women. According to Stephanie Shaw (1996), White women have been considered pure and honorable, while Black women are considered dishonest and treacherous. For example, during slavery White women were held in high regard and protected by their husbands. Black women were often separated from their husbands and family members and left to protect themselves along with being forced to become sexual objects for their masters. This historical legacy seems to have contributed to the stereotype of Black women being treacherous and dishonest. According to Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003), these myths and “the myth of being inferior are battles African-American women face often in their careers” (p. 13). “These stereotypes can enhance or limit people’s perception of [Women of Color’s] abilities. They can also



affect the expectations placed on individuals, particularly those making their way in corporate America” (Livers & Caver, 2003, p. 76).

This problem is intensified by the legal system. African Americans and other Women of Color have not received the same protection of the law as their White counterparts. When White women face gender discrimination, Title VII is there to protect them. However, when Women of Color face discrimination, it is difficult to determine whether the discrimination is racial or gender related, Title VII was designed to protect against either race or gender discrimination, but it had no provisions for race and gender in combination. Often because Women of Color could not determine which discrimination they were facing, this law did not always protect them. Once again, Women of Color seem to have been overlooked. Understanding of the issues associated with the intersection between race and gender could potentially continue to suppress Women of Color from assuming leadership roles. This lack of understanding may also explain why so little literature was found on Women of Color in leadership. As mentioned earlier, this background discussion addresses women in leadership without regard to ethnicity because of the dearth of specific literature on Women of Color. However, while we continue the journey of this study it should be remembered that issues and barriers inhibiting White women are potentially amplified for Women of Color due to the intersection of gender and race stereotyping.

*Gender barriers in leadership.* Traditionally, the vast majority of top leadership positions in the United States and throughout the world have been held by males rather than females (Stelter, 2002; Weyer, 2007). Despite the increasing number of women entering the workforce and the increasing number of available managerial positions,

women's access to leadership positions remains limited (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003; Oakley, 2001; Stelter, 2002; Weyer, 2007). Solomon (1988) attributed this situation to four main barriers: (a) stereotypes and assumptions, (b) actual cultural differences, (c) the "White Male" club, and (d) unwritten rules and double standards. Often, stereotypical images and attitudes seem to have made it difficult for women to be accepted as leaders in the workplace (Solomon, 1988). Similarly, Burns (1978) said, "over the centuries femininity has been stereotyped as dependent, submissive and conforming" (p. 50). He proposed that these stereotypical characteristics have kept women out of leadership roles and men in control and power positions.

In his landmark book *Leadership*, Burns (1978) defined power "not as property or entity or possession but *as a relationship*" (p. 15). Alexandre (2004) argued that "the 'power as control' approach to leadership is rooted in a very decidedly male disposition expressed through the hierarchical distribution of resources, influences, and position" (p. 1173). Burns (1978) argued that those who hold *power over* others are not leaders; they are simply power-wielders. He suggested that leaders "hold power differently. They share power and they empower their followers. "If this definition were to become truly accepted and practiced, women might be far more likely to be recognized as leaders and to engage in leading" (Alexandre, 2004, p. 1173).

Carli and Eagly (2001) said, "The lack of women in leadership positions has been [further] explained by some as a 'pipeline problem'" (p. 639), suggesting that women with the appropriate education and background simply are not available to the professions. Fernandez (1999), Northouse (2001), and Yukl (2002) give other reasons for the low number of women in leadership. All of them list gender discrimination as one of

these causes, and for Women of Color the discrimination could have been based on gender, race or both. Yukl stated that sex-based discrimination has been around for a long time and men continue to be favored over women in leadership roles. Yukl further explained that this discrimination is due in part to stereotypes, such as: (a) certain jobs were viewed as masculine and women would not take such jobs if offered, and (b) women did not have the right skills or behaviors necessary for effective leadership positions.

In addition to discrimination, Ragins and Cotton (1991) and Ragins, Townsend and Mattis (1998) reported that organizational barriers contributed to the low number of women in leadership. They both agreed many organizations appear to require higher performance standards and a different view of effort for women as compared to those for men in similar positions. Some of those same organizations seem to create a culture that is uncomfortable for women with families. They suggested that women are often made to feel guilty for their perceived lack of family values and feel discouraged when trying to balance career goals with home life (Ragins et al., 1998). Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, and Smith (1999) called the treatment of women with families “discrimination,” and an issue that should not be related to women only. All employees should have the opportunity to balance family life with professional life. They argued that employees “should be able to alternate high-involvement jobs with low-involvement jobs such that more time will be available for family without jeopardizing careers” (p. 100).

Bennis (1994) suggest that the lack of women in leadership positions might be self-imposed. Women, he argued, seem to be taught to play certain roles and do very little to break out of that mode. Rather than being themselves and setting themselves up to be

who they are and what they want to be, Bennis suggested, women continue to play the roles they were brought up from childhood to play. He argued that “to become a leader, women must become themselves; become makers of their own lives” (p. 51).

Runyan (1999) did not agree totally with Bennis. She said all data show “no society treats its women as well as its men” (p. 5). She also emphasized that men appear to have contributed to the stereotypical roles women play and that greater value is assigned to masculine activities than to feminine ones. She offered the example of the difference in response to women wearing pants as compared to men wearing dresses. She argued,

Similarly, girls can be tomboys and adopt boyish names; boys avoid behaving in ways that might result in their being called “sissies” or girlish names. Women are applauded who achieve success in previously male dominated activities, but men who enter traditionally female arenas are rarely applauded and often treated with suspicion. Females dressing or acting like males appear to be copying or aiming for something valued—they are attempting to improve their status by “moving up.” But because feminine characteristics are less valued, boys and men who adopt feminine dress or undertake female roles are more likely to be perceived as “failing” in their manhood or “moving down.” (p. 8)

Runyan’s work suggests that females cannot be themselves and still be successful in the business world. Leadership is still male dominated and women are socially coerced to conform to masculine behaviors in order to enter or maintain their presence in leadership. Even in professions where women are the dominant workforce, such as education, they are absent from the highest and most powerful positions (Shakeshaft, 1999). When trying to work up the corporate or educational administration ladder, women often run into the “glass ceiling,” a term used to describe barriers women face when striving to enter upper-level leadership ranks.

According to Morrison and Glinow (1990), the glass ceiling seems to be a barrier so subtle that it is often transparent, yet strong enough to prevent women from moving

into many leadership roles. This ceiling seems very real and is the reason it is rare to find women at the top of many corporations. Morrison, White, Van Velsor, and The Center for Creative Leadership (1994) further explained that the glass ceiling for Black women appears thicker than the one for White women (p. 7). In an effort to show just how thick the glass ceiling seems for Black women, *Black Enterprise* magazine produced and sponsored an executive women's roundtable. For this roundtable, Black women holding leadership positions in companies that were part of the Equal Opportunity Commission were invited to participate. Sheryl Tucker presided over this roundtable. She presented the results of the roundtable in a final report (Tucker, 1999) that indicated that many of the Black female leaders in the roundtable were the first and, in many cases, the only Black female in their position. "In the total Equal Opportunity Commission companies, Black women make up only 5.9% of all professionals and only 5% of the women in leadership" (Tucker, 1999, p. 60). Tucker also indicated that even though some of these women have obtained leadership positions, the respect they receive is not viewed as equivalent to the respect White males or females in comparable positions receive from their management, peers, or customers. Tucker (1999) cited the experience of a Black female leader in the auditing practice of Arthur Andersen and Company of Washington, D.C., who faced on daily basis clients who did not want her as the lead manager over their accounts. She got very little support from her male peers or management (p. 61).

Many of the executive women's roundtable participants also believed that women, especially Black women, were often placed in positions only to enhance a company's image. Generally, this seems too often mean they were not given any serious responsibilities or authority to affect the business. In other words, these executive women

believed their peers (and perhaps they themselves) saw them as “window dressing” at their firms, positioned to benefit the public image of their corporations, not for their unique gifts.

Tucker (1999) argued that despite being corporate “window dressing,” to maintain their position, White women have to perform well above White males and that this performance expectation was an even bigger problem for Black women. Thus, Black women are often faced with greater and more difficult obstacles to achieving professional advancement. She suggested that because Black women influence the future of any other Blacks in this role their burdens are made even greater (p. 61).

It seems clear that although the problems are different for Black and White women, they both face many barriers when trying to obtain leadership positions. Women face so many hardships in this area that it caused Morrison et al. (1994) to ask whether women in general had what it took for senior leadership. Morrison was part of a team of researchers from the Center for Creative Leadership tasked to answer this question. They conducted a three-year study that included examining top female executives in Fortune 100 companies. They found three major themes that represented why the glass ceiling exists:

...(a) women were thought to be handicapped because of their upbringing and education, (b) it was known that women needed help in reaching the top, but male executives did not step up to address the issue because it would bring attention to a problem, and (c) it was thought that women were not as capable as men in leadership. (p. 7)

Hayes (1999) argued, “Women have always had the capacity and desire for leadership, but were not able to express their potential because of political, economic, and societal restrictions” (p. 113). According to Hayes, the real reason women have been, and continue to be, absent from executive leadership is that traditional descriptions of

leadership style and theory have not considered women's perspectives or reality—men have traditionally defined leadership for men. Women's place is in the home or in non-leadership positions. Women are not considered to have leadership qualities; therefore, they are considered only as followers in the leadership equation.

Slater (2001) presented an interesting twist on the glass ceiling argument. He agreed that gender discrimination in the form of the glass ceiling was very real. However, like Bennis et al. (2001), he believed the “glass ceiling might have been a blessing in disguise” (p. 113). Slater referred to women as “outsiders” and indicated that being outsiders would put them in the best position to take advantage of the rapidly changing business world. He argued that when change occurs, those who are uncommitted to the status quo, “the outsiders,” would be in the best position to move ahead (p. 112). Thus, the presence of the glass ceiling has meant that women are less committed to the status quo and therefore better able to creatively lead in the dynamic and chaotic environment of the modern workplace. Slater argued that the feminine skills of “mediating, anticipating, negotiating, compromising and recognizing the needs of others are the skills that locked women into traditional roles in the past, but the ones the new economy will be demanding” (p. 113).

Cohn (2000) described a very different stereotypical attitude that works against women in leadership. He recognized that the assertion, “Women don't work as corporate managers and leaders because they do not want all that responsibility” (p. 52) is a stereotype, arguing that it might have been true in the early 20th century but that the world is changing and women want more. He suggested that in the past, many women got married and stayed home and took care of the house and family; this was what they were

trained and expected to do. However, he also recognized that today many women are ambitious and career oriented; they are applying for more demanding professional jobs that involve more responsibility and higher pay (p. 53). Cohn suggested that in earlier eras women were content with jobs that did not include leadership, but today women have greater aspirations. He believed they want the same leadership opportunities men have.

*Leadership in politics and public administration.* Duerst-Lahti and Kelly (1995) suggested that gender biases exist not only in the corporate arena but in political and public worlds as well. They further indicated that leadership in the political and public worlds has been defined and judged as a masculine trait, which potentially puts women at a disadvantage. This would suggest that to be successful, women are “forced to master masculinism and its values if they are to move successfully into positions of public leadership” (p. 261). According to Stivers (1993), the leadership image in the public arena is one that presents masculine qualities as privileged over feminine ones and puts people who are not White professional males at a disadvantage. Josefowitz (1980) and Duerst-Lahti and Johnson (1990) agreed that there were indications that the masculine nature of politics also causes women to adopt behaviors or styles that are more masculine and cause them to avoid classic feminine behaviors.

Kelly, Guy, and Bayers (1991) explored women in the public arena to determine whether they were effectively being integrated into the higher ranks of state government administrations. Their research suggests that if women did not have family obligations they would be more likely to obtain career advancement. They “also found that progress had been made toward including women among the elites in State civil service structures;



however, many of those women had paid a high personal price for the inclusion” (p. 409). Many gave up on having a family life and conformed to the male ways of leading.

*Relationships in leadership.* “Regardless of the rules, structures or roles and irrespective of tasks, strategic plans, political alliances, programs, contracts, or lawsuits, leadership is about people and their perceptions of how they are being treated” (Dyer, 2002, p. 28). Spitzer (2000) argued that to understand how to help women and minorities gain more and better positions in leadership, relationships may be established among the disparate groups. He further argued that relationships are essential to leadership and that leaders need to recognize that all people operate in relationship with one another. He concluded that the better grounded the relationships among various groups and leaders, the more positive the relationships may grow.

Authors such as Bennis (1994), Burns (1978), and Greenleaf (1977) also emphasized the importance of relationships among leaders and followers in their description of leadership styles. These styles include the servant leader, the charismatic leader, the transactional leader, and the transformational leader. Each leadership style presents relationships between the leader and the follower as reciprocal or bi-directional and valuable. Rost (1991) agreed leadership relationships are bi-directional, but he also argued that leadership relationships should be vertical, diagonal, and circular. This would suggest that anyone could lead at any given time, a position that could clearly be inclusive of women and minorities, and that many different relationships compose the leadership relationship (p. 105). Rost argued, “leadership is an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes” (p. 17). He also identified a “post-industrial” leadership model that described an

evolution in the leader-follower relationship outlined by the late 20th century leadership scholars. As the equilibrium among leaders and followers has become more balanced, the challenges facing leaders and the opportunities for the practice of true leadership have increased. Rost believed as we move into the 21st century it will become increasingly clear that followers will assume a more dominant role in the leadership equation, emphasizing the relational nature of leadership and opening the door wider for women in leadership to emerge.

Kegan (1994), like Rost, argued that individuals participate in many different relationships simultaneously throughout their lives. These relationships can be based on family, friendship, race, gender, religion, economics, or politics and leaders need to be mindful of all of them when trying to build relationships. Kegan (1994) identified a phenomenon of being “in over our heads” and concluded that “the expectations upon us . . . demand something more than mere behavior, the acquisition of specific skills, or the mastery of particular knowledge. They make demands on our minds, on how we know, on the complexity of our consciousness” (p. 5). He called for methods to (a) integrate the vast sums of knowledge available to the exhausted adult mind and (b) make meaning from that integration. This focus on integration brought a new perspective to leadership studies that, again, created opportunities for new forms of leadership and the emergence of leaders who could address the integration of people, processes, and structures (Parker, 1997) within the workplace (something women have traditionally been quite successful at from their home and community work).

Heifetz (1994) extended the work of earlier leadership theorists by examining the usefulness of viewing leadership in terms of adaptive work. Heifetz defined adaptive

work as consisting of “the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face” (p. 21). He added that “adaptive work requires a change in values, beliefs, or behavior [the major components of culture] and provides leverage for mobilizing people to learn new ways” (p. 22). Heifetz’s work introduced the potential for partnerships that would form around work outcomes as businesses and institutions recognize the value that differing knowledge bases and opinions have on different opportunities and facets of a situation. “The implication [was] important: the inclusion of competing value perspectives [might] be essential to adaptive success” (p. 23). Heifetz recognized not only the value of the goal of the work, but also “the goal’s ability to mobilize people to face, rather than avoid, tough realities and conflicts. . . . The hardest and most valuable task of leadership may be advancing goals and designing strategies that promote adaptive work” (p. 23).

Heifetz (1994) introduced *partnership* as a type of leadership relationship, a subject that has become significant in the discussion of women’s leadership styles. He named “two different types of partnerships: (a) confidant and (b) ally” (p. 270). The confidant is usually a friend or family member whom the leader confides in at the end of each day. Confidants listen and help the leader regain what is needed to continue his or her leadership. The ally, on the other hand, is not necessarily a personal relationship. This individual could be within the leader’s organization, outside the organization, a peer, a follower, or a superior. The role of the ally is to provide the leader with insights on various situations, which could include gender and minority leadership issues. Women leadership scholars in the 21st century have taken up the discussion of the role of

partnership in leadership, a positioning of leadership that is uniquely suited to women's ways of knowing, learning, and leading. This new paradigm, perhaps best described by Eisler (2002), shifts more responsibility in the leader-follower relationship to the follower and creates a more balanced approach to leadership duties that take on a partnership relationship structure.

Gardner (1990) suggested that leader-follower relationships are complex, but he felt there were no easy answers to the questions concerning how these relationships are structured and what they include. He argued that leaders and followers are human and therefore form human relationships. In these relationships people, including women and minorities, want to feel valued and supported. "When people feel supported and valued, they live happier lives and do better work" (Robinson, 2002, p. 167).

One key method of relationship development that has emerged since the women's movement of the 1970s is mentoring, a practice that could potentially help enable women and minorities who may have been locked out of leadership conversations to enter into the dialogue. It is possible that mentoring is uniquely suited for creating that much-needed bridge of trust between the White male authority structure and the women and people of color who need the guidance of existing leaders to get ahead.

### *Statement of the Problem*

Many of the leadership scholars discussed above have presented theories about why more women are not found in leadership roles, and governmental statistics have shown that the number of women in the workplace continues to grow. In addition, the under-representation of women and minorities in leadership positions appears to have caused many organizations to improve their diversity programs and use mentoring as

support for women aspiring to become leaders (Lacey, 1999). Mentoring seems to be looked upon as a natural component of leadership and the mentoring process seems to be used to develop leaders. Senge et al. (1999) found that “women are starting to succeed in the corporate world and mentoring has been important to this success” (p. 214).

Gardner (1990) agreed that mentoring is important in leadership development, but cautioned, regarding its usage, that “Mentors are growers rather than inventors or mechanics. Leaders must remember they are dealing with people who they do not have control over and with whom they must have patience and willingness to keep trying to develop” (p. 169).

George (2003) argued that mentoring is not only important for leadership development for the protégé, but also important to the leader as mentor. According to George, mentoring gives leaders a chance to walk in the shoes of those individuals they are mentoring. They begin to learn their strengths and challenges, thus giving the leaders a better perspective on the lives of those aspiring to break through the glass ceiling of their organization.

Fernandez (1999) argued that if organizations are to break the glass ceiling and ensure career planning, counseling, and leadership development are not exercises in futility for women, they simply must establish mentoring programs (p. 184). Fernandez suggested the way to remove the leadership barriers is by establishing mentoring programs. He introduced The Bank of Montreal and the Mentium 100 program as models for establishing such programs. The Bank of Montreal developed a mentoring program that was to “bring about cultural change and create career-enhancing opportunities that lowered barriers” (p. 184). The Mentium 100 mentoring program,

which proved valuable to both mentors and protégés, was made up of a coalition of companies that provided mentoring for women outside their own organizations.

It is apparent that many scholars see mentoring as a tool for leadership development for women; however, “the historical shortage of women in advanced managerial positions has led to a reported shortage of female mentors...” (O’Neill & Blake-Beard, 2002, p. 52). This shortage indicates that “in senior management [positions] men tended to be mentors more often than women” (p. 54). This suggests that cross-gender mentoring may be the answer to this shortage; however, “women involved in cross-gender mentoring relationships are immediately confronted with the surface-level diversity dimension of gender and sometimes age” (Blake-Beard, 2001, p. 337) and race for Women of Color. Ragins and Cotton (1991) suggested that women face other perceived barriers as well when trying to enter a cross-gender mentoring relationship, which is discussed in Chapter II.

“The limited number of women in [top level] management positions has influenced the nature of mentoring research” (O’Neill & Blake-Beard, 2002, p. 54), which may explain why very little has been found by other researchers addressing perceived barriers in obtaining a mentoring relationship for career development for Women of Color. As previously argued, the number of Women of Color in leadership positions is low and mentoring programs are being developed as a proposed remedy to this issue. If mentoring is the remedy, are Women of Color experiencing obstacles in obtaining a mentoring relationship? Is their ethnicity a significant contributing factor to those obstacles? To date, the leadership literature provides few answers to the specific

questions related to Women of Color and access to leadership roles through developmental programming.

*Purpose of the study.* To provide some information that can aid in answering these questions regarding mentoring relationships for Women of Color, this study was built on Ragins and Cotton's extensive research on mentoring. Ragins is currently a professor of management at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where she teaches, consults, and conducts research on organizational diversity, mentoring, and gender issues. Her research in these areas has been published in such journals as the *Academy of Management Journal*, *Academy of Management Review*, *Academy of Management Executive*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Management*, and *Psychological Bulletin*. She has also done research for Catalyst, a nonprofit research organization, and served as research advisor to the National Association of Working Women. Because of her research, Ragins has been featured in such magazines and newspapers as the *U.S. News and World Report*, *Barron's Magazine*, *Harvard Business Review*, *Newsday*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. In addition, her research has earned her several awards including the American Psychological Foundation's Placek award and the Academy of Management Mentoring Best Practice award. Cotton is currently a professor of management in the College of Business Administration at Marquette University. His research on employee participation, organizational management, mentoring and employee turnover, has been published in some of the same journals as Ragins' work, including *Human Resource Management*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, and *Personnel Journal*. Ragins and Cotton's specific work of interest for this study is their 1991 research examining the perceived barriers women face in obtaining a mentoring relationship for career

development. Ragins and Cotton's research indicated women perceived five barriers to obtaining a mentoring relationship: (a) Access To Mentors, (b) Fear of Initiating a Relationship, (c) Willingness to Mentor, (d) Approval of Others and (e) Misinterpretation of Approach. The participants for Ragins and Cotton's research were 93% White and included both males and females. Because Ragins and Cotton conducted this research more than 16 years ago and the participants were predominantly White, this study will build on her study to answer similar questions for Women of Color.

*Research questions.* Today, what barriers are perceived by Women of Color when trying to obtain a mentoring relationship for career development? Is ethnicity/race a perceived barrier for Women of Color in obtaining mentoring relationships for career development?

*Research hypothesis.*

H1: Today, Women of Color will perceive the same barriers to mentoring as those found in the Ragins and Cotton study (1991).

H2: For Women of Color, age, rank, and length of employment will have negative effects on perceived barriers to mentoring relationships.

H3: For Women of Color, experience in mentoring relationships will have negative effects on perceived barriers to mentoring relationships.

H4: For Women of Color, ethnicity will contribute to the perceived barriers to mentoring relationships.

*Importance of the Study*

Corporate organizations have formed diversity programs in an effort to include all ethnic backgrounds in their workforce and to ensure that those ethnic groups are



appropriately represented in all functions and at all levels. As part of these programs, organizations put in place tools and programs to help ensure diversity and inclusion. Mentoring could potentially be one of those programs and it is important that those organizations understand whether or not it is effective. This study presents information that will inform organizations of potential issues they may need to overcome so their mentoring programs can be optimally successful. If an organization is just beginning to form a mentoring program, this study could give them some useful information to consider during the design phase of their program. The information from this study could be useful in improving or designing mentoring programs for Women of Color.

## Chapter II: Review of the Literature

### *Purpose of Literature Review*

Historically, participation in mentoring relationships has been a common practice. It has served as a means for senior individuals to mold and guide less senior individuals in development. The master-apprentice, physician-intern, and teacher-student relationships are some of the most commonly known of these. In the business world, mentoring relationships have become tools for career development.

From the late 1960s until the present, researchers have conducted many empirical studies regarding mentoring relationships. Quantitative and qualitative studies of this topic cover a wide range of subjects within many different types of professions. These professions include youth and family services, health, education, law, technology, and business. The questions being asked cover gender issues, effects of mentoring on mentors and/or protégés, diversity issues, educational issues, career development, mentoring programs, leadership, and mentoring relationships. The literature indicates that research interest in mentoring relationships has been fueled in significant part by the positive impacts and usages of these relationships. Mentoring relationships are perceived as having helped organizations resolve problems and improve organizational culture and performance. Some studies have found indications of a few negative impacts, but for the majority of the studies indicate positive outcomes for organizations. In addition, researchers have found many perceived benefits for mentors and protégés.

Mentoring has been the relationship of choice for professional development in the business arena for many years. “The business world has implemented formal and informal mentoring programs [and the] . . . growing interest in the potential benefits of

mentoring relationships has led to an increase in the number of research studies devoted to the topic” (Cunningham, 1999, p. 44).

This interest includes issues surrounding both mentoring and barriers women face when trying to develop mentoring relationships for career development. On this topic the literature was explored using such keywords as mentoring, mentoring relationships, relationships, protégé, coach, sponsor, role model, and career development support. The search also included exploring career development for each of the ethnicities for this study—African, African American, Asian American, Hispanic, and Native American. The results of the literature search indicated that within the last decade no studies have addressed barriers Women of Color face in obtaining a mentoring relationship. Much of this literature review will present issues perceived mainly by White women or women in general.

#### *Cross-Gender Mentoring*

Ragins and Cotton (1991) researched barriers women face in trying to obtain a mentoring relationship; the present study is built on their work. In researching barriers to mentoring, Ragins and Cotton suggested that women perceived more barriers than men did when trying to develop such relationships. They indicated that availability of women mentors was scarce and the requests for female mentors often overwhelmed the supply; therefore, women were left with having to seek male mentors or do without. She also suggested that many women hesitated to make a request of a male for fear the request might be misinterpreted as a sexual advance. Also, Ragins and Cotton’s findings implied that females were expected to wait until asked, which almost never happened, and that seeking a male as a mentor was considered overly aggressive behavior. Further findings

of Ragins and Cotton's study were that "some of the experienced male mentors were more able to overcome the sexual issues and felt more comfortable mentoring women" (p. 40), but on the other hand, the less experienced male mentors often avoided female protégés to avoid both sexual issues and jealousy. Ragins and Cottons' findings also implied that if the male mentor was married there was spousal jealousy, and if the mentor was a supervisor there was co-worker jealousy. "Irrespective of reality, the perception of romantic involvement between the male mentor and the female protégé was always sufficient to result in loss of credibility" (p.39). This risk of the loss of credibility caused many male mentors to avoid female protégés regardless of the males' prior mentoring experiences.

Chao and O'Leary's (1990) research presented results very different from those of the Ragins and Cotton study (which did not indicate whether the participants were Women of Color). The participants of the Chao and O'Leary study perceived the barriers and issues for cross-gender mentoring as exaggerated and they did not place much value in mentoring relationships. They admired and placed more value on non-mentored employees. Employees who were not mentored were perceived as being stronger and better able to control their own destiny.

Booth (1996) also conducted a case study on barriers women face in mentoring relationships, but it was not a generalized study involving Women of Color. The Booth study involved a senior manager and two of her subordinates. The senior manager, who was female, was the mentor for her subordinates—one male and one female. In this study, both protégés reported no barriers in their relationship. "Both acknowledged they were mentored differently but attributed this to their individual development needs and not to

their gender. They each found their mentor fair and honest” (p. 34). The Booth study suggested the participants had taken time to know each other and they genuinely cared for one another, which implied that developing friendships and getting to know one another is an important ingredient in a successful relationship between mentors and protégés.

#### *Requirements for Mentoring Relationships for Women*

Rather than address barriers in mentoring for women, Kathryn Egan (1996) conducted a quantitative study intended “to help women define what they require in a mentor in order to achieve success” (p. 401). To determine these requirements, Egan studied women in broadcasting and communications and grouped them into one of three categories: (a) subjectivists, (b) constructivists, and (c) proceduralists. Egan identified subjectivists as those women who believed they controlled their own destiny and who did not consider luck as having anything to do with their career progress. Although these “subjective” women did not complain openly, they felt opportunities at the top were less available for women than for men. Constructivists, on the other hand, believed men and women in the workplace were equal. They believed men and women had equal opportunities for which equal pay was received. Like the subjectivists, constructivists believed career progress was an individual responsibility. Proceduralists believed career opportunities came from “luck rather than personal planning and hard work” (p. 408).

Egan (1996) suggested that constructivists, proceduralists, and subjectivists differed significantly in their perceptions of the workplace and their opportunities for success (p. 409). Likewise, they differed in their requirements for a mentoring relationship, although proceduralists and subjectivists had some similar requirements.

Constructivists required a mentoring relationship with an individual with characteristics similar to their own—similar ambition, intelligence, and education (p. 422).

Constructivists were found to have very little regard for the mentor's gender, race, religion, age, or background, but did expect that person to be able to coach and define what was needed to make career progress (p. 425). Unlike the proceduralists and subjectivists, the constructivists were found likely to select their own mentor.

Although subjectivists and proceduralists were unlikely to seek a mentor, they did have requirements for a mentoring relationship. The proceduralists indicated that a mentor needed to appear to be an equal, at least in intelligence. Both subjectivists and proceduralists emphasized the relationship should be one of give and take and the mentor should be able to listen to ideas as well as instruct (Egan, 1996, p. 426). Subjectivists, like the proceduralists, seem to require the mentor to recognize the protégé's talents, but were not necessarily interested in the mentor being equal in intelligence. Unlike the proceduralists, the subjectivists indicated more interest in the personality of the mentor. They felt if the mentor was more like the protégé in personality, then the relationship would prosper (p. 423).

The results of Egan's study could potentially provide an understanding of women's requirements for mentoring, which could become a key to solving mentoring availability for women. Availability was a barrier indicated by the Ragins and Cotton study. Being equipped with an understanding of these requirements, organizations could become better prepared and able to make more informed decisions regarding women's mentoring relationship and programs. In addition, the requirements and classifications could be used to better prepare mentors for female protégés.

### *Willingness to Mentor*

Kalbfleisch and Keyton (1995) questioned whether or not the answer to increasing mentoring relationships for females was embedded in the friendship relationships among women. To answer this question, they studied professional women from several organizations in Midwest and Southern metropolitan areas. Mentoring pairs who had participated in both a friendship and a mentoring relationship were chosen. The researchers found indications of a strong similarity between the two types of relationships. The study suggested that “both relationships were characterized by positive feelings, emotional intimacy, meeting relational needs, and providing satisfying relational outcomes” (p. 207). The researchers concluded from this study that:

The problems women faced when forming mentoring relationships were twofold: (a) men were less likely to initiate mentoring relationships with women, whereas conversely women were more likely to form mentoring relationships with other women than with men, and (b) the traditional model of mentoring that appeared to fit many male-male mentoring relationships did not appear to fit female-female mentoring relationships, and was not likely to fit male-female mentoring relationships either. This situation ultimately placed women in the position of having fewer high-ranking or desirable mentors with which to form relationships and left them with a traditional model for mentoring relationships that did not fit successful female relationships. (p. 207)

The issue of men being more willing to mentor as a factor that contributed to mentoring availability for women was of interest to Vincent and Seymore (1995), who conducted a national survey to investigate this assumption. The Vincent and Seymore study concluded that women were equal in their willingness to mentor both sexes, but this did not hold true for the male participants in their study. Generally, many of the male subjects seemed less willing to mentor women. Vincent and Seymore felt this was not only attributable to the issues facing cross-gender mentoring, but also to women surpassing men in career development, which many male mentors could not tolerate

(p.12). The researchers concluded this caused a general reduction in available mentors, with a negative impact on mentor availability for women. Also a part of Vincent and Seymour's conclusion was a comparison of mentored and non-mentored female executives. In this portion of the conclusion, they indicated that a lack of mentoring was due to the lack of formal mentoring programs within an organization, which appeared to be based on the opinion of the researchers since no data or analysis was presented to support this claim.

Studies of willingness to mentor, as in the Ragins and Cotton study, indicated willingness as a barrier women face when trying to obtain a mentor for career development. These studies also suggested some reasons for the existence of this barrier, and in the Vincent and Seymore (1995) study a preventive measure was also suggested—mentoring programs. However, like Ragins and Cotton, Vincent and Seymore conducted their study more than 10 years ago and Women of Color were not specifically addressed. Because, as Senge et al. (1999) state, “women are starting to succeed in the corporate world and mentoring has been important to that success” (p. 214), and because Women of Color are increasingly a part of the corporate world, it is important to determine whether barriers to mentoring exist for them.

### *Mentoring Equality*

Bauer (1999) believed the perception of fairness in mentoring was also an issue in mentoring relationships. Bauer defined fairness as “how satisfied participants were with the amount of mentoring received and how often their mentor engaged in mentoring and how often the mentor mentored individuals at work” (p. 212). To validate fairness as an issue in mentoring, Bauer conducted an experiment on 125 men and women



undergraduate business students. The students were presented with mentoring scenarios followed by a survey regarding perceptions of the scenarios. Each individual was asked to assess the fairness of the mentoring situation described in the scenario they read. The participants consisted of students with and without mentoring experiences. The students who had been in a mentoring relationship rated mentoring as fair, while those without any mentoring relationship experiences rated it as unfair (Bauer, 1999). There were no indications of main differences for gender; however, network mentoring, which will be discussed later, was perceived to be equally as fair as the traditional hierarchical model of mentoring relationships (p. 220). Bauer defined networking mentoring as mentoring relationships where one protégé has multiple mentors for multiple purposes.

#### *Diversity in Mentoring*

When it comes to mentoring relationships, Black women, as well as all Women of Color, are faced with double jeopardy—being Black and being female. To better understand the nature of the mentoring relationship experiences among Black women, Bova (2000) conducted a study “to explore the role mentoring has played in the professional development of a select sample of Black women” (p. 7). The study involved interviews with 14 Black women in professional positions in a diverse range of organizations, including higher education, banking, nonprofit, and the airline industry (p. 9). Although the participants were well educated and qualified for advancement within their respective organizations, obtaining a well-rounded mentoring relationship had been difficult for them. Eventually each obtained a White male or female as a mentor, but the relationship focused solely on career development (p. 10). Any other support needed was obtained from the women’s affiliation with other individuals or groups.

Even though the women in this study had to seek other support, they did indicate that their mentors played a significant role in their career development and the protégés were not the only ones benefiting from the mentoring relationships. Both the mentors and the protégés seem to have learned much about each other's cultures and were able to improve communications and increase teaming; and in return, the organization benefited (Bova, 2000, p. 14).

David A. Thomas (2001), like Bova, believed mentoring relationships were beneficial to career development for minorities, but he also believed minorities should be mentored very differently from their White counterparts. He validated his belief in a case study involving 20 minority executives (predominantly African American), 13 White executives, and 21 minority and White non-executives. Thomas interviewed each of these individuals to determine how minority executives succeeded and the role of mentors in that success (p. 107).

Thomas (2001) found minority executives who climbed high on the corporate ladder seem to require support from their mentors that was both similar to and different from that given to Whites. As with mentoring relationships for Whites, minorities indicated needs for their mentor to (a) open doors to challenging assignments, (b) send positive and supportive messages regarding the protégé to other executive managers, (c) provide crucial career advice and counsel that kept the protégé from becoming sidetracked, (d) provide avenues for promotion, and (e) provide protection against unfair treatment by others. Thomas suggested that while minorities needed some of the same support as Whites in the same areas, the difference came in how this support was delivered. Thomas felt race required mentors to deliver this support to minorities in a

manner that would help them overcome the discouraging aspects of the culture of their workplace. Minority discouragement mainly seem to come from high-potential minorities not being considered on the fast track for career development while they watched White colleagues of equal status receive more highly valued assignments and promotions (p.101). Whites seemed to be placed on the fast track based on their perceived potential, whereas minorities seemed to have to display proven and sustained records of solid performance (p. 104). Thomas indicated that before a mentor can provide support to the minority protégé, the mentor must face the reality that race matters.

The participants in the Thomas study also pointed out that a network of mentors was needed for career advancement, but a key mentor was needed to help minority protégés build their network of relationships.

The network should: (a) be functionally diverse; (b) be varied with respect to position (seniors, colleagues, and juniors) as well as location (people within the immediate department, in other departments, and outside the organization); (c) be demographically mixed in terms of race, gender, age and culture” (Thomas, 2001, p. 106).

Thomas concluded that a network of mentors would be optimally beneficial in breaking through racial barriers and meeting more of the needs of the minority protégés.

Robin Vann Lynch (2002), like Thomas, studied cross-race mentoring relationships. Lynch found that in education mentors seem to be able to help their protégés adjust academically but not socially. Lynch conducted a case study of two African American college students attending a predominantly White university. Both students were members of a formal mentoring program designed to help minority

students stay in school and gain a college degree. The mentors were White senior professors who taught at the university. The student protégés, one male and the other female, were matched with same-sex mentors. Each of the protégés in the study pointed out that for them, as African Americans, social behavior and comfort were different from the behavior being presented to them on campus by both their mentors and fellow students. Although the mentors seem to make it easier for the minority students to complete their college years and feel comfortable academically, they seemed to be unable to remove social barriers. Social issues likely made minority students feel uncomfortable and not a part of the school. Both students felt social acceptance was equally as important as academic acceptance; however, the social behavior of White students was so different that it was almost impossible for minority students to become involved socially. Lynch's results indicated similar findings to those of Thomas's: race does matter in mentoring.

Blake-Beard (1999) investigated race and mentoring by conducting a study to explore the effects of mentoring on career outcomes for Black and White women. The participants were 154 White women and 41 Black women who were MBA graduates from nine different business schools that were members of the Consortium for Graduate Study in Management. The results of the Blake-Beard study "indicated that, while not a statistically significant level, Black women received more mentoring than did White women. Blake-Beard indicated that such finding was unexpected and may not be representative of the general population because

...the Black women selected had participated in the Consortium for Graduate Study Management. The consortium member schools are generally large, prestigious research universities. As holders of the MBA degree from prestigious research universities, these Black women's experiences may not be representative of the general career experiences of Black women in the corporate sector. (p. 31).

The Blake-Beard study also indicated that it was more advantageous for individuals to have a line position over a staff position for career advancement because individuals in line positions were more likely to receive mentoring. She indicated that this finding supported advice often given to young managers to avoid dead-end and powerless positions. There were also indications from this study that protégé race did not affect the relationship between mentoring and career outcomes such as promotion rate, compensation, compensation satisfaction, and satisfaction with career progress.

The Bova (2000), Thomas (2001) and Blake-Beard (1999) studies involved mentoring relationships for minority women. The Bova study concentrated on the effects of mentoring for career development, Thomas focused on the difference in mentoring requirements due to race, and both studies addressed the benefits of a mentoring relationship in career development. Blake-Beard focused on the outcomes of mentoring for Black women, as well as whether or not Black women received greater levels of mentoring than White women. Although all three studies involved minority women, these studies were not designed to address perceived barriers Women of Color might face when trying to obtain a mentor for career development.

### *Mentoring Impacts*

Two studies in the area of education consulted in the literature review examined the impacts of mentoring relationships from two different perspectives. Campbell and Campbell (2000) identified and examined the differences in how college faculty and staff (mentors) and students (protégés) evaluated the benefits of their mentoring relationships (p. 516). Evertson and Smithey (2000) took a different perspective when they conducted an experiment to determine whether primary and secondary teachers can be developed as

mentors for new teachers. They also examined whether or not this practice would improve student engagement in the classroom.

At a university on the West Coast, students and faculty participated in a mentoring program. Students were matched with a mentor based on academic interest and mentors were volunteer faculty members. This university mentoring program was the subject of the Campbell and Campbell (2000) study. Their study hypothesized that (a) student protégés and faculty mentors would differ in their evaluation of the benefits of their mentoring relationship, and (b) students would define very few benefits the faculty received from the mentoring relationships (p. 519). The sample for this study was mentoring pairs who participated in the mentoring program, and the results showed both mentors and protégés agreeing on some benefits of mentoring to students. Receiving advice, guidance, and information were the main benefits indicated by both faculty and students. Faculty and students differed in that the faculty felt role modeling and advocacy were benefits to students, while students gave no indications that these were benefits. The students also indicated academic help as a benefit, while the mentors indicated friendship as a benefit. The students seemed to have had difficulty identifying benefits the faculty might have received from the mentoring relationships.

Instead of searching for benefits to both the mentor and protégé, Evertson and Smithey (2000) focused mainly on benefits to the protégé. More specifically, they were interested in whether or not the protégés' (new teachers) practices could be greatly improved if the mentors (experienced teachers) were trained to be good mentors. To make this determination, the researchers conducted an experiment. The participants of this experiment were from two different school districts. An experienced teacher (mentor)

was paired with a new teacher (protégé). All of the protégés from both school districts were given a three-day workshop by their respective district. This workshop served as an introduction to the organization and the organizational practices and policies. Half of each of the school districts' mentors participated in a four-day workshop on mentoring relationships while the other half of both districts' mentors did not participate in the workshop. The mentoring workshop presented materials on (a) the role of the mentor, (b) skills needed by experienced teachers, (c) how mentors and protégés would work together to develop action plans, and (d) what mentors needed to do to help the protégés create a learning environment for students (Evertson & Smithey, 2000). The results of this study suggested that the mentors who attended the mentoring workshop were more successful in supporting their protégés than those mentors who did not attend the workshop. It was also found that “protégés of trained mentors seem to show increased evidence of developing and sustaining more workable classroom routines, managed instruction more smoothly, and gained student cooperation in academic tasks more effectively” (p. 313).

Although the Evertson and Smithey (2000) study implied that mentoring relationships could benefit from formal programs and training, it is difficult to determine from this study what elements of the program worked and did not work. Before a program can be set up for mentoring relationships, a better understanding of the components of the program is needed, and the way those components lead to the success of the mentoring relationships needs to be explored. In addition, there were validity issues with the Evertson and Smithley study. No measurements or controls were used on the students or the teachers, which may have had some influence on the results. Further,

the character of the students could have easily influenced the performance of either group of participating teachers. For instance, if the group of teachers who received mentoring had extremely well behaved and high-achieving students and the other group had a large number of difficult students who were low achievers that could have skewed the results.

*Negative impacts.* Eby and Allen (2002) explored problems in mentoring relationships and whether or not those problems were related to protégé outcomes. Because there had been many studies pointing out the positive impacts of mentoring relationships, these researchers felt a need to determine the prevalence of some of the negative experiences. To do this, they researched mentoring pairs in accounting and engineering related occupations. The participants were asked to complete a survey that measured 15 different mentoring experiences. These experiences included such areas as mismatched values, mismatched personalities, intentional exclusion, neglect, abuse of power, credit-taking, and incompetence on various levels.

Eby and Allen's (2002) results suggested that negative mentoring experiences occurred very infrequently to somewhat infrequently across the careers of the participants. When negative mentoring experiences did occur, there seemed to be impacts on job satisfaction, turnover, and stress. "Specifically, intentional exclusion, general abuse of power, mismatched personality and incompetence were correlated to negative impacts on job satisfaction, turnovers and stress" (p. 469). Also, there were indications that mismatched values and mentors' personal problems negatively impacted turnover and stress respectively. The researchers were unable to prove that negative mentoring experiences have a greater negative impact on stress in formal than in informal mentoring relationships.



While Eby and Allen's study focused mainly on the impacts of mentoring on the protégés, Singh, Bains, and Vinnicombe (2002) studied organizational impacts. A county governmental organization was the subject of this study; more than 200 managers participated. These managers gained organizational benefits in three major areas: (a) human resource management, (b) culture and change, and (c) communications. In the area of human resource management, this research implied that mentoring relationships increased the speed of developing talented staff and thereby constituted an increased investment in the future success of the organization. The possibility of organizational success was also strengthened because the mentoring relationships groomed future leaders and aided in increasing diversity in the workplace. The participants in this study indicated mentoring was very beneficial in instituting change or introducing new employees to the organizational culture. Many of them used mentoring to change components of the culture that were not effective or were damaging to the organization. Above all, the mentoring relationship could possibly be an excellent vehicle for improving communication.

*Impacts on mentors and protégés.* Beech and Brockbank (1999) conducted a study of 31 mentoring pairs consisting of various levels of management along with one of each manager's direct subordinates. All the mentoring pairs were from a National Health Service Trust hospital and there were both same-gender and cross-gender pairs. The researchers felt that with all the pairs the mentors were adversely affected by the mentoring experience (p. 20). The study suggested two main reasons for the adverse impacts: (a) mentors were the direct line manager for the protégés and there was often conflict over roles—support versus assessment; (b) some of the mentors viewed their

protégé's success as a loss of their relationship, and because some of the pairs were friends this was not acceptable. Beech and Brockbank suggested these and other problems caused mentors to withdraw from the mentoring relationship to protect the working relationship. They felt some protégés lost respect for their mentors; this may have been caused by the mentor being viewed as inefficient or unable to transfer knowledge. Power also seems to have become an issue for these relationships. The mentors felt the relationships were nurturing and developmental; the protégés felt differently about the relationships. The protégés perceived the mentors as having power over their job and career, which made the protégés feel obligated to follow any guidance given by the mentors. This perceived power seemed to have led the protégés to break away from the relationship. In short, the researchers concluded that where there is a direct hierarchical mentoring relationship between mentor and protégé, the mentoring relationship will be influenced from both sides and will lack openness, freedom, and developmental focus.

Dymock's (1999) case study of six pairs of mentoring relationships disagrees with Beech and Brockbank. What emerged from Dymock's study was that the mentor and protégé both benefited from the mentoring relationship. The mentor seems to sharpen communications skills, gain a better understanding of his or her leadership style and its effects, and gain self-satisfaction. Protégés seem to have received broader understanding of the organization and seem to be able to bridge the gap between training and the real business world (p. 316). Dymock also concluded that strong mentoring relationships should be built on openness and trust.

Booth (1996) also found trust and openness important in mentoring relationships in a case study of a mentoring relationship between a senior manager (mentor) and two of her subordinates (protégés). The interviews for this case study implied that mentoring relationships for the protégés made performing their job easy, especially when they knew they were working for an individual who cared about them personally and professionally. The mentoring relationship seems to have made it possible to discuss any issue and not have to hide anything. In addition, there were indications that the mentoring relationships helped the mentor improve her leadership and communication skills.

### *Mentoring Relationship Models*

The majority of the studies performed on mentoring relationships focused on traditional one-on-one mentoring. Only 3 of the 20 studies accessed for this review addressed mentoring relationship models. One of the three studies was Dansky's (1996) quantitative study of the effects of group mentoring on career outcomes. The question she chose to address was "can mentoring be construed as a group phenomenon?" (p. 5). To answer this question, management and supervisory staff from a healthcare agency who were attending an annual healthcare organization meeting participated in this study. Because of the nature of the healthcare industry, there was very little time for traditional individualized mentoring; therefore, group mentoring was more prevalent (p. 10).

Wilson, Pereira, and Valentine (2002), like Dansky, suggested that group mentoring relationships can be beneficial. Dansky (1996) felt that "group dynamics included relationships and processes that supported the career development of its members" (p. 15). There were also indications of feelings of inclusion and belonging by the group membership. In the Wilson et al. (2002) qualitative study, group mentoring was

felt to be helpful in developing teaching and research skills (p. 330). However, this study was not limited to group mentoring.

The participants of the Wilson et al. (2002) study were teachers in the school of social work at an accredited college. There were 19 participants and 12 of the 19 had been assigned a formal mentor. Of the remaining seven, six had informal mentoring relationships and one participated in a group mentoring relationship (p. 324). Although all the models of mentoring relationships in this study were shown to be beneficial, informal mentoring relationships seemed to be of more value than the other models. Some of the participants had informal mentors even when formal ones had been assigned. The formal relationships seemed to work better when the mentor and protégé had similar interests, backgrounds, or ethnicity (p. 332). However, even when the mentor and protégé had nothing in common, it seemed the more they met the more the relationship grew. In fact, there were indications that some of the formal relationships grew into friendships and pairings for shared interests.

On the business side, Raabe and Beehr (2003) also looked at formal mentoring relationships. They conducted a study to determine whether or not mentors and protégés agreed on the nature of their relationships and how the mentoring relationships compared to those of supervisor/subordinate and co-worker/co-worker relationships. These relationships were described as formal relationships within a formal mentoring program. The formal programs were formed in an effort to retain females and minorities in the company's workforce, increase productivity, retain valued employees, and accelerate employee development. The protégés entered the mentoring relationship program for entirely different reasons: their purpose was to obtain self-reliance and career growth (p.

277). The mentor and protégé pair assignments were made following a predefined process; the mentors ranked two levels above the protégés.

After careful analysis of the data collected during this study, Raabe and Beehr (2003) concluded that mentors and protégés in the study did not agree on some aspects of their relationships. The mentors felt they were giving more to the career development of the protégés than the protégés perceived (p. 280). The protégés, on the other hand, felt the mentors did not provide enough support for career development and promotional opportunities. The protégés seem to place more value on their relationship with their immediate supervisor and co-workers than on their mentoring relationship. In addition, the supervisor/subordinate and co-worker/co-worker relationships seemed to have a more positive effect on the goals of the mentoring program than the mentoring relationships.

Booth (1996) is a study of a different facet of mentoring relationships—she focused on the informal mentoring relationships between a corporate vice-president and two of her subordinates, one male and one female. This mentoring relationship model was not only informal, but it was also hierarchical. The protégés in this informal hierarchical mentoring relationship believed having a vice-president to whom they reported directly and having her as their mentor was very beneficial. Informality seemed to allow each of these relationships to develop to the degree required by the participants and indications were that the relationships were not forced as in some formal relationships; they seem to form naturally (p. 34). Each protégé appeared able to decide whether or not he or she wanted to be mentored, when, and to what extent. Because the mentor was a vice president, she seemed able to make things happen for the protégés when they were ready.

The mentoring impact studies discussed here examined the benefits of mentoring, the experiences of mentors and protégés in mentoring relationships, and the use of mentoring for developing mentors. Likewise, the studies of the mentoring models addressed the benefits the various models had on mentoring relationships. None of the studies in these categories specifically addressed barriers in mentoring relationships for Women of Color. However, these studies could provide material excellent for follow-on studies using Women of Color.

#### *Summary of Literature Review*

Mentoring relationships are often associated with career development, but the research presented in this review clearly points out other uses for mentoring relationships. The studies described here that date between 1990 and the present have showed mentoring relationships being used in business, education, and health care. Some studies indicated issues with the mentoring relationship; others suggested positive outcomes when these relationships were used. Mentoring relationship issues were presented that ranged from a focus on gender and diversity to findings of negative impacts on mentors, protégés, and organizations. In a more positive light, there were studies that indicated mentoring relationships could be used to resolve issues such as diversity, job preparation, career development, and organization and workplace improvements.

These studies clearly suggest that in mentoring one size does not fit all. Mentoring relationships can be as diverse as the population mentoring is meant to serve and for as many reasons as required. In some instances, formal relationships may be required; in other circumstances, an informal relationship may be more advantageous. Organizational culture may dictate a hierarchical relationship or a co-worker-to-co-worker relationship.

The model for the relationship should be based on the population and should not be forced. In addition, goals and objectives of the relationship should be clearly understood by all parties involved. Lastly, mentoring pairs should be compatible. Mentoring relationships can be useful leadership and organizational tools when the mentor-protégé pair is properly matched and the culture and environment are set up for success.

The studies presented in this review clearly add value to the understanding and use of mentoring; however, none built upon the Ragins and Cotton study of barriers in mentoring relationships for career development by using Women of Color as participants in their studies. Two studies, however, addressed Black women, the Bova (2000) study and the Blake-Beard (1999) study, and one study addressed minorities, the Thomas (2001) study. All three of the studies focused on determining the benefits of mentoring on career development and all had limitations. The Bova study was a qualitative study involving 14 Black women, which did not provide the generalization that building on the Ragins and Cotton study would provide. Also, the Bova study was limited to Black (African American) women and did not include other Women of Color, as this study does. Like the Bova study, the Thomas study was a qualitative study with the same generalization limitations. Thomas does imply that the participants of his study included minority groups other than African Americans; however, it is unclear if any women were involved. The Blake-Beard study also only included African American women and was more a comparison to White women; she did not include all Women of Color. In addition, she herself indicated that further research needed to be done in the area of mentoring and that “mentoring scholars should attempt to collect data from women

across different educational levels and from a variety of educational settings” (Blake-Beard, 1999, p 31).

By using the Ragins and Cotton study and targeting Women of Color, this study adds value to the mentoring literature by including this important population, which is currently absent. It provides information on perceived barriers these women face in obtaining mentoring relationships for career development and potentially give companies information that can be used to improve or develop mentoring programs for these women. The outcome of this research can also give organizations information to facilitate increases in mentoring relationships for career development for Women of Color.



### Chapter III: Research Method

This quantitative research study used factor analysis and multiple regression analysis in an adaptation of the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study. Although this research built on Ragins and Cotton's research, there were specific adaptations to accommodate the purpose of studying Women of Color. In this chapter key elements of the Ragins and Cotton study are detailed to provide a comparative baseline for this study. The variables, participants, and research instruments employed in this research are described. The descriptive, research questions are listed and data collection, cleaning, and coding procedures are detailed. The research design and data analysis approach are discussed in detail.

#### *Ragins and Cotton's Approach*

The approach for this research is based on Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study called "Easier Said than Done: Gender Differences in Perceived Barriers to Gaining a Mentor," which identified perceived barriers to women obtaining mentors for career development. A total of 229 women and 281 men participated in this study; 93% were White participants, with 70% of them holding at least bachelor's degrees. The participants had a median age of 41; 81% were married and 94% were employed full time. As mentioned previously, because the participants of Ragins and Cotton's original study were mostly White and because studies addressing barriers to mentoring for career development for Women of Color could not be found, this research study will build on Ragins and Cotton's original (1991) study, but will focus on Women of Color.

Ragins and Cotton's original study was a quantitative study using factor analysis and hierarchical regression analysis. Five factors emerged as part of their results: (a) Access to Mentors, (b) Fear of Initiating a Relationship, (c) Willingness of Mentor, (d)

Approval of Others, and (e) Misinterpretation of Approach. The results also showed that three items loaded on two factors, which they chose not to eliminate from their study (see Table 3.1). This left some ambiguity about whether the factors found in Ragins and Cotton's study represented distinctly different structures. As a result, this study did not use the outcome of her Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation but ran a PCA with Varimax rotation against the research data gathered for this study to determine the resulting factors. Generally, "factor analysis [is] used as an expedient way of ascertaining the minimum number of hypothetical factors that can account for the observed covariation, and as a means for exploring the data for possible data reduction" (Kim & Mueller, 1978, p. 9). For this study, factor analysis was used to identify the suitability of the items for this study, to eliminate any of the items that did not appear suitable, and also to determine the perceived barriers (factors) that would be further explored.

**Table 3.1 Ragins and Cotton's Research Results (Ragins & Cotton, 1991, pp. 944-945)**

<b>Results of Factor Analysis of Perceived Barriers to Mentoring</b>						
Items	Factor Loading*					Final Communality Estimate
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Factor 1. Access to mentors</b>						
I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because						
Of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.	<b>.81</b>	.00	.22	.14	.09	.73
Of a lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.	<b>.83</b>	.12	.20	.13	-.04	.76
Of a shortage of potential mentors.	<b>.82</b>	.06	.12	.07	.05	.69
I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors.	<b>.78</b>	.07	-.01	.18	.13	.66
<b>Factor 2. Fear of initiating a relationship</b>						
I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because						
I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.	.08	<b>.87</b>	.07	.09	.12	.80
I am afraid of being rejected by a potential mentor.	.01	<b>.74</b>	.21	.03	.13	.61
I am afraid that a potential mentor may be "put off" by my advance.	.07	<b>.84</b>	.07	.21	.21	.81
I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.	.11	<b>.60</b>	.07	.31	.06	.48
<b>Factor 3. Willingness of mentor</b>						
I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because						
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.	.39	.39	<b>.56</b>	.15	.03	.64
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.	.11	.05	<b>.86</b>	.18	.31	.88
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.	.11	.06	<b>.85</b>	.23	.26	.86
Potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.	.48	.42	<b>.52</b>	.07	-.02	.65
Potential mentors don't notice me.	.41	.30	<b>.58</b>	.21	.06	.65
<b>Factor 4. Approval of others</b>						
I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because						
Supervisors would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	.20	.07	.34	<b>.80</b>	.03	.79
Coworkers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	.13	.10	.42	<b>.77</b>	.02	.80
My immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	.20	.27	.02	<b>.73</b>	.24	.71
My co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	.12	.32	.03	<b>.70</b>	.36	.73

**Results of Factor Analysis of Perceived Barriers to Mentoring**

Items	Factor Loading*					Final Communality Estimate
	1	2	3	4	5	
<b>Factor 5. Misinterpretation of approach</b>						
I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because						
Such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.	.07	.23	.23	.18	<b>.86</b>	.89
Such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.	.10	.22	.24	.19	<b>.87</b>	.91
Percentage of total variance explained	40	12	9	7	6	

\*Boldface statistics indicate primary loading

After grouping items into factor subscales and determining the correlations between the subscales, Ragins and Cotton (1991) performed four separate hierarchical multiple regression analyses. The four “hierarchy multiple regression analyses were performed to assess the relationships between barriers to mentoring subscales and the independent variables. [They] entered the predictors in the following order: (a) age, job rank, and tenure; (b) protégé experience; (c) gender; and (d) the interaction between gender and protégé experience” (p. 943). Table 3.2 shows the results of her analysis. Ragins and Cotton used this order for her regression analysis mainly because she wanted to control gender effects; she believed the other variables would confound gender effects. Because all the participants of this study were women, gender was removed as a variable and the predictors were in the following order: (a) age, job rank, and tenure; (b) protégé experience; and (c) ethnicity. To add further value to this study, ethnicity was added as a predictor.

Table 3.2 Ragins and Cotton's Regression Results<sup>1</sup>

## Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analyses

Predictors	Access			Fear			Willingness			Approval			Misinterpretation		
	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\beta$	$\Delta R^2$	R <sup>2</sup>
Step 1															
Age	-.06		.04***	-.09			.08		.02	-.08		.01	-.12		
Job Rank	-.12*			-.01		.00	-.10*			-.10			-.03		
Tenure	-.09			.07			.03			.06			.01		
Step 2															
Experience <sup>A</sup>	-.21***	.04***	.09***	.07	.01	.01	-.14**	.02**	.03**	-.14**	.02**	.03**	-.09*	.01*	.02*
Step 3															
Gender <sup>B</sup>	-.17***	.02***	.11***	-.08	.01	.01	-.15***	.02***	.06***	-.11*	.01*	.04**	-.18***	.03***	.06***
Step 4															
Gender by Experience	-.02	.00	.11***	.11	.00	.01	.00	.00	.06***	.22	.00	.05*	-.12	.00	.06***

<sup>1</sup>From Ragins & Cotton, 1991, p. 947

<sup>A</sup>Higher values represent more experience

<sup>B</sup>Gender was coded 1 for men, 0 for women

\*p < .05

\*\*p < .01

\*\*\*p < .001

### *Variables*

Mentoring experience, age, rank, and tenure were the variables used in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study and this research used the same variables, along with ethnicity. The measured categories for these variables are in Table 3.3. The categories for mentoring experience were set up to determine whether a participant currently has a mentor and/or had a mentor in the past. Intervals beginning with 18 to 25 as the first interval and over 65 as the last interval were the numerical categories for age and tenure. The middle categories for age were in increments of 10 years. Tenure categories were in increments of 5 beginning with 0 to 5 and ending with over 25. Rank categories included non-management and various levels of management. The last variable, ethnicity, contained categories as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005)—African, African-American, Asian, Hispanic (not White), Native American, and White.

**Table 3.3 Variable Categories**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Categories</b>
Mentoring experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently have a mentor</li> <li>• Had a mentor in the past</li> <li>• Currently have a mentor and had one in the past</li> <li>• Never had a mentor</li> </ul>
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18-25</li> <li>• 26-35</li> <li>• 36-45</li> <li>• 46-55</li> <li>• 56-65</li> <li>• Over 65</li> </ul>
Rank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO, president, or executive director</li> <li>• Partner</li> <li>• Vice president</li> <li>• Director</li> <li>• Manager</li> <li>• Supervisor</li> </ul>

Variable	Categories
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team leader</li> <li>• Non-leader, manager or supervisor</li> <li>• Other (asked to specify the category)</li> </ul>
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0-5</li> <li>• 6-10</li> <li>• 11-15</li> <li>• 16-20</li> <li>• 21-25</li> <li>• Over 25</li> </ul>
Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• African</li> <li>• African American</li> <li>• Asian</li> <li>• Hispanic</li> <li>• Native American</li> <li>• White (not Hispanic)</li> <li>• Others (specify)</li> </ul>

The dependent variables were the factors that resulted from the PCA with Varimax rotation. The 24 items included in the factors were measured using a seven point Likert Scale, with possible responses being:

- 1 = strongly agree,
- 2 = moderately agree,
- 3 = slightly agree,
- 4 = neither agree nor disagree,
- 5 = slightly disagree,
- 6 = moderately disagree, and
- 7 = strongly disagree.

### *Participants*

The participants of this study were Women of Color who have participated in the Career Communication Group's Women of Color Conference. The Career



Communication Group hosts a conference for Women of Color leaders and nationally recognized Women of Color who are outstanding in education, engineering, government, industry, research, and technology. Each year, thousands of Women of Color attend this conference to network and celebrate those women chosen as outstanding in their field. The participants of this conference received a request to participate in this study. Each participant received the purpose of this study and the definition of mentoring.

To encourage participation, the Career Communications Group published a news article in their *Women of Color* magazine. Distribution for this magazine included major industries across the nation. The article was about the researcher's accomplishments and awards as a Woman of Color and it announced her research as an Antioch PhD student. Also, it presented the purpose of the proposed study and asked interested participants to contact her via e-mail or telephone. In addition, members of the Career Communications Group Conference staff sent e-mails to potential participants, which stated the purpose of the study, the definition of mentoring, a request for participation, and instructions on how to access and complete the study survey. Included with the email was the letter of introduction (see Appendix A). The letter of introduction also included information and instructions concerning the survey. In addition to explaining how to access the survey, the letter invited participation, introduced the researcher, stated the purpose for the study, and gave them a contact for the Institutional Review Board, the board designed to approve, monitor and review research involving human subjects for Antioch University.

### *Instrument*

Because this study was building on the Ragins and Cotton study, it used the same quantitative method and survey questionnaire, with a few modifications, as the data

collection instrument. Ragins and Cotton's survey contained 19 barriers to mentoring items and the survey for this study contained 24 items (see Table 3.4). Modification to the Ragins and Cotton's survey included exclusion of some items and addition of others. Because all the participants of this study were women, gender became a constant and therefore removed from the questionnaire. The addition of Ethnicity was from three different perspectives: (a) as a descriptive variable for identifying the ethnic groups represented by the participants; (b) as a barrier-to-mentoring item to determine if ethnicity was perceived as a barrier to mentoring for Women of Color; and (c) as an independent variable to determine whether ethnicity contributed to the perceived barriers. The addition of questions about organizations was to determine whether Women of Color perceived their organization to be a barrier.

The items were measured on a "seven-point Likert-type scale with responses ranging from 1 to 7, with the response categories of strongly disagree, moderately disagree, slightly disagree, neither agree nor disagree, slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree" (Ragins & Cotton, 1991, p. 942). The survey was the ideal data collection format based on the proposed analyses and because this study included a population too large to be observed by a qualitative method (Nardi, 2003).

Because the exact scale setup for the Ragins and Cotton 1991 scale could not be obtained, a review of other works of Ragins and Cotton was done. This led to the setup of the scale for this study to be in the opposite direction (1 to 7, with the response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree). However, the interpretations took into account the opposite directions.

Tables 3.4 and 3.5 show the survey questions; the actual survey can be found in Appendix B. Table 3.4 contains the descriptive questions that were used to collect demographic information about the participants, and Table 3.5 shows the Barriers in Mentoring items. The data collected through this survey were used in the Principal Component and regression analyses. The items in italics in both tables are the questions that were unique to this study; those in Roman type are from Ragins and Cotton's original study.

**Table 3.4 Descriptive Questions**

Item	Responses
1. <i>Ethnicity: (please check the one that applies to you)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. African <input type="checkbox"/> 2. African American <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Asian <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Hispanic <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Native American <input type="checkbox"/> 6. White <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Other _____
2. Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-25 <input type="checkbox"/> 26-35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36-45 <input type="checkbox"/> 46-55 <input type="checkbox"/> 56-65 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 65
3. What is your marital status?: (please check the one that applies to you)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Single <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Married <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Living with a partner <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Separated <input type="checkbox"/> 5. Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Widowed
4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (please check the highest level you have completed)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. High School <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Bachelors Degree <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Masters Degree <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Doctorate
5. What is your employment status?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Employed Part-time <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Employed Full-time
6. How many years have you been employed?:	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-3 <input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 <input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 <input type="checkbox"/> 21-25 <input type="checkbox"/> Over 25
7. What is your current employment rank with your current employer ?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Non-management <input type="checkbox"/> 2. First Level management <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Middle management <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Executive management
8. What is your mentoring experience?: (please check the one that best applies to you)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1. Currently have a mentor <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Had a mentor in the past <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Currently have a mentor and had one in the past <input type="checkbox"/> 4. Never had a mentor

**Table 3.5 Barriers to Mentoring Questions**

1. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.
2. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of the lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.
3. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors.
4. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a shortage of potential mentors
5. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.
6. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am afraid of being rejected by a potential mentor.
7. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am afraid that potential mentors may be “put off” by such advancement.
8. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.
9. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.
10. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.
11. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.
12. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.
13. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.
14. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors do not notice me.
15. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because supervisors would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.
16. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because co-workers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship
17. *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment.*

18. *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my organization does not recognize the value of mentoring.*
  19. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.
  20. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.
  21. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.
  22. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.
  23. *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because there are no mentors available with my ethnicity.*
  24. *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of my ethnicity.*
  25. *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of their ethnicity.*
- 

### *Data Collection Procedures*

The data for this study were collected through a survey management tool called SurveyMonkey.<sup>©</sup> This tool allowed for online creation and distribution of the survey. Using this link [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uuaHLkq6Jb9icYBhXuDBwg\\_3b\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uuaHLkq6Jb9icYBhXuDBwg_3b_3d), each participant was able to access the survey via the Internet using the Web browsers located on their own computers. The survey was available online for completion for 30 days, which began on November 14, 2007 with an initial request e-mailed to potential participants. A follow-up request was sent on November 30, 2007. At the completion of the data collection 511 responses had been collected.

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<sup>©</sup> SurveyMonkey.Com, Portland, Oregon, Ryan Finley, Owner

### *Data Loading, Cleaning, and Coding*

Following the closing of the data collection process on December 14, 2007, the data contained in each survey were downloaded into a Microsoft Excel file, which was then imported into SPSS for analysis. After the data were loaded into SPSS, screening and cleaning of the data began. There were 67 incomplete surveys. The incomplete surveys contained fewer than 5 questions answered, thus all 67 were removed from the data file. Reviewing the frequencies resulted in discovery of two surveys submitted by White women. Removal of two surveys for White women occurred because this study focused on Women of Color and there were only two surveys for White women found in the data. After removal of the incomplete surveys and two self-identified surveys for White women, there were 441 surveys remaining.

After removal of the incomplete surveys and the two surveys for White women, the variables were assigned SPSS names and three stages of coding began: (a) placing the “Other” category responses into the appropriate defined category, (b) assigning the data numerical values, and (c) coding of the open-ended question. Renaming of variables and coding was necessary to fit SPSS guidelines and because the analysis requires the data be placed in discrete categories and numerically represented.

The first stage of coding involved evaluating and coding the “Other” answers for question numbers 9 (What is your ethnicity?), 11 (In what region of the country are you located?), 13 (What is the nature of the work of your organization?), 15 (What is the position title that most closely matches your current role?), and 17 (Are there other formal or informal programs that you have participated in that have advanced your career/leadership? If so, please briefly describe those programs). This stage of coding was

required because many of the answers placed in the other categories for the above questions fell into one of the predefined categories for the answers to those questions.

The second phase of coding was done following the coding matrix (see Appendix C). During this phase, each of the survey items was assigned a short variable name and each category for the item was assigned a numerical value. The coding matrix presents the mappings between the survey items and variables, along with the associated numerical assignments for each category. The last phase, coding the open-ended question, was more complicated. The open-ended question asked was, “Are there other formal or informal programs that you have participated in that have advanced your career/leadership? If so, please briefly describe those programs.” The coding of this question involved scanning the answers to this question several times and finding patterns and themes. Each of the patterns and themes found received a label and assigned a numerical value as defined in the coding matrix. One-of-kind responses that did not fall into a pattern or theme received the label of “Other.” A check for valid responses and correction of invalid responses was not necessary because the Survey Monkey tool was set up to allow the participants to select only valid responses.

#### *Data Analysis Procedures*

A preliminary analysis began with obtaining information about the participants and data. The first analysis looked at (a) the number of participants, (b) the number of participants by ethnicity, (c) the number of participants by management level, (d) the number of participants by age group, (e) the number of participants at each level of education, (f) the number of participants employed and unemployed, and (g) the number



of participants in each marital status. Preliminary analysis also looked at descriptive statistics for the barriers to mentoring items.

Using the SPSS Descriptive function, descriptive statistics, including the mean, standard deviation, median, mode, and measures of skewness and kurtosis were obtained. The measures of skewness and kurtosis were used to evaluate whether the mentoring variables were normally distributed. Descriptive statistics are usually used to determine if there are missing data; however, because Survey Monkey was set up to require responses to a question before allowing the participants to move to the next question, missing data was not an issue.

Next, data suitability for factor analysis and regression analysis was determined. This involved evaluating the data set for four issues: (a) sample size, (b) the strength of the relationship among the items, (c) multicollinearity, and (d) normality. Determination of the adequacy of the sample size involved using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy. The calculation of this measure is the ratio of the squared correlation between variables to the squared partial correlation between variables. “[KMO] values range from 0 to 1. A value of 0.70 or more is generally considered sufficiently high, while a value below 0.50 is unsatisfactory and one over 0.90 is outstanding” (Blaikie, 2003, p. 221). The KMO for this study was .93, which makes this sample size suitable for factor analysis. To further ensure ample sample size for regression analysis, the Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) formula was used. Their formula for calculating sample size requirements is “ $N > 50 + 8m$  (where  $m$  = the number of independent variables)” (p. 117). There were five independent variables: rank, tenure, age, mentoring experience, and ethnicity. The result of this equation was compared to the

number of subjects participating in the study and the sample size of 441 was found more than adequate.

The second issue for both factor analysis and multiple regression analysis was to determine the strength of the relationship among the variables. This involved evaluating the correlations as shown in the correlation matrix produced by SPSS. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), the majority of the coefficients should be greater than 0.3 for exploratory factor analysis. That is, there should be some reason to suspect that the items are related to each other. On the other hand, if the variables are highly correlated they basically duplicate each other or are multicollinear. The SPSS correlation matrix for this study showed that all items have correlations of  $r \geq 0.3$  with most of the other items.

For multiple regression analysis, multicollinearity was checked in order to ensure the validity of the multiple regression analysis. Multicollinearity exists when there is a high correlation between the independent variables. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001), “careful consideration should be taken before including two variables with a bivariate correlation of greater than or equal to .7 ( $r \geq .7$ )” (p. 84).

Following the assessment of the suitability of the data, Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation was run to identify barriers to mentoring factors. “The first [step] of the analysis was to determine the linear components (factors) within the dataset” (Field, 2005, p. 652). “The common rule of thumb is to consider only components with eigenvalues greater than or equal to one” (Blaikie, 2003, p. 223). This study followed this rule of thumb and retained all components with an eigenvalue greater than or equal to one and eliminated all others.

The barriers to mentoring data were rotated using the Varimax method because, according to Field (2005), this method produces uncorrelated factors and minimizes the number of items that have high loadings on each factor, resulting in more interpretable factors. Using the Varimax method, SPSS produced the rotated Component Matrix, which was examined for factor loadings. Items loading on more than one component were eliminated and the others were retained. The Varimax rotation was repeated using .35 as the cut-off value for factor loadings. Items loading on multiple factors (having a loading of .35 or greater on more than one factor) were extracted for each iteration and the rotation was repeated with the remaining items. The iterations continued until all remaining items loaded on only one factor. The factor scores from the three components were saved as variables in the SPSS data file and used as the dependent, or criterion, variables in the hierarchical multiple regressions.

Three separate hierarchical multiple regressions were run—one for each of the barriers to mentoring factors derived from the Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation. The factor scores from the factor analysis were the dependent or criterion variables. To prepare the independent variables for the hierarchical regression analysis, dummy variables were defined, coded, and saved in the data file for each of the independent category variables. Dummy variables, with one category of interest receiving a code of “1” and all other codes for the variable receiving a code of “0,” were needed because multiple regression analysis requires interval data for each independent variable. Thus, category data had to be converted to interval data. For each barrier-to-mentoring factor, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was performed to determine how much variance of each factor, the dependent or criterion variables, was explained by the five

independent variables. The independent variables or predictor variables were entered in the following order: (a) Age, Rank, and Tenure; (b) Mentoring Experience; and (c) Ethnicity. This order was used because of the possibility that Age, Rank, Tenure, and Mentoring Experience might compound Ethnicity effects.

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, including the overall F statistic for the regression models, the amount of variance that accounted for ( $R^2$ ), the change in R-square ( $\Delta R^2$ ) between steps, and the significance level of the standardized betas (B) were examined. The SPSS model summary, ANOVA, and coefficients tables produced were reviewed to determine how much of the variance in each of the barrier-to-mentoring factors (dependent variable) was explained by the model. This was done by evaluating the value of  $R^2$  in the coefficients table. The F-statistics from the ANOVA tables were used to determine the significance of each of the overall models, and the standardized beta coefficients as shown on the coefficients tables were used to determine the contribution of each independent variable to each of the barrier-to-mentoring factors (dependent variables).

## Chapter IV: Results

This chapter focuses on the characteristics of the data and the research findings. The results presented are from descriptive analysis, Principal Component Analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The descriptive analysis presents participants' demographic information and data distributions. The demographic information includes age ranges, ethnicity, employment, tenure, and rank. The mean, median, mode, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis present an understanding of the data distribution for this study. The outcome of the Principal Component Analysis—the perceived barriers Women of Color faced when trying to obtain a mentoring relationship for career development—is presented, along with the multiple regression analysis results showing which of the research variables significantly influenced those barriers.

Analysis of the demographic characteristics showed that the majority of the respondents were African American (70%). The distribution of other ethnic backgrounds was African (2%), Asian (14%), Hispanic non-White (10%), Native American (3%) and Biracial (1%) (see Table 4.1). The marital status of the participants was 38% single, 42% married, and the remaining 20% living with a partner, divorced, or widowed (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Descriptive Information**

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Ethnicity	African	7	1.6
	African American	307	69.6
	Asian	63	14.3
	Hispanic	45	10.2
	Native American	13	2.9

	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	Other	6	1.4
	Total	N=441	100.0%
Marital Status	Single	168	38.1
	Married	184	41.7
	Living with a partner	15	3.4
	Separated	9	2.0
	Divorced	59	13.4
	Widowed	6	1.4
	Total	N=441	100.0%
Location	Northeast	79	17.9
	Southeast	92	20.9
	Central	75	17.0
	Northwest	118	26.8
	Southwest	75	17.0
	Outside the U.S.	2	.5
	Total	N=441	100.0%
Mentoring Experience	Currently have a mentor	71	16.1
	Had a mentor in the past	147	33.3
	Currently have a mentor and had one in the past	68	15.4
	Never had a mentor	155	35.1
	Total	N=441	100.0%
Type of Organization	Not Applicable <sup>1</sup>	15	3.4
	Agriculture	1	.2
	Education	82	18.6
	Transportation	32	7.3
	Communications	25	5.7
	Wholesale trade	12	2.7

<sup>1</sup> Not Applicable represents those participants who were unemployed.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Retail trade	9	2.0
Finance	45	10.2
Service other than healthcare	52	11.8
Healthcare services	41	9.3
Public administration	35	7.9
Technology	31	7.0
Aerospace	33	7.5
Manufacturing	13	2.9
Other	15	3.4
Total	N=441	100.0%

The respondents were almost evenly distributed across the United States—18% from the Northeast, 21% from the Southeast, 17% from the central part the country, 27% from the Northwest, and 17% from the Southwest. The majority of the respondents had bachelor's degrees or better (81.6%), and most were employed full time (91.8%) by various types of organizations, as can be seen in Table 4.1. The organizations varied in size with most respondents (65.3%) employed by an organization that had 300 or more employees and the rest of the respondents employed by organizations with between 150 and 299 employees (18.4%) or organizations with fewer than 150 employees (13.2%). The majority of the respondents described themselves as non-leaders, managers, or supervisors (51.7%); managers, supervisors, or team leaders (32.7%); directors (7.3%); vice presidents or firm partners (2.7%); or CEOs, presidents; or executive directors (2%) (see Table 4.1).

More than a third of the respondents never had a mentor (35.1%) or had one in the past (33.3%). The remaining respondents currently have a mentor (16.1%) or currently have a mentor and had one in the past (15.4%).

### *Barriers to Mentoring Items*

The mean, standard deviation, and measures of skewness and kurtosis were calculated for each Likert-type barriers to mentoring experience items (see Table 4.2).

Review of the skewness and Kurtosis measures show that the distribution for most items was close to normal, or less than  $\pm 1.00$ . Items 2, 12, and 23 had skewness greater than one but less than 1.5 indicating not being too highly skewed (Field, 2005). An inspection of the normal Q-Q plots for each of the items also suggested normal distribution; each plot showed a reasonably straight line.

Six of the items (1,3, 5, 7, 10, and 15) had a mean of about four (3.81 to 4.40), which indicated for those items on average the response was “neither agree nor disagree.” Twelve of the items (4, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21, 22, and 24) had a mean of approximately five (4.76 to 5.40), indicating that for those items on average the response was “slightly disagree.” The last six items (2, 6, 12, 17, 19, and 23) had a mean of about six (5.45 to 5.79), indicating that the response for those items on average was “strongly disagree.”

All of the barriers to mentoring items had the same mode, 7.00. This indicates that a substantial number of the responses to the items were the same, “strongly disagree.”

The standard deviation range from 1.63 (item 12) to 2.30 (item 5), indicated that for all of the items the responses averaged about two points from the mean.



**Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for Barriers to Mentoring Items**

Item	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
1. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.	4.02	2.172	4.00	7	.132	.116	-1.369	.232
2. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	5.73	1.688	7.00	7	-1.130	.116	.251	.232
3. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because of a shortage of potential mentors	3.86	2.139	4.00	7	.198	.116	-1.291	.232
4. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.	5.18	1.766	6.00	7	-.619	.116	-.539	.232
5. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because there are no mentors available with my ethnicity.	4.03	2.300	4.00	7	.050	.116	-1.490	.232
6. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because my co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	5.65	1.726	7.00	7	-.994	.116	-.127	.232
7. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors.	3.81	2.220	3.00	7	.276	.116	-1.400	.232

Item	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
8. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am afraid that potential mentors may be put-off by such advancement.	5.01	1.888	5.00	7	-.437	.116	-1.038	.232
9. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.	5.40	1.754	6.00	7	-.869	.116	-.224	.232
10. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.	3.92	2.187	3.00	7	.185	.116	-1.406	.232
11. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their ethnicity.	4.93	1.939	5.00	7	-.439	.116	-1.045	.232
12. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because co-workers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	5.71	1.631	7.00	7	-1.035	.116	.011	.232
13. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors do not notice me.	4.97	1.865	5.00	7	-.425	.116	-.989	.232
14. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.	5.07	1.769	5.00	7	-.377	.116	-1.050	.232

Item	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
15. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.	4.40	2.059	4.00	7	-.084	.116	-1.296	.232
16. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.	4.76	2.117	5.00	7	-.394	.116	-1.275	.232
17. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.	5.50	1.871	7.00	7	-.876	.116	-.621	.232
18. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because I am afraid of being rejected by a potential mentor.	5.23	1.948	6.00	7	-.587	.116	-1.135	.232
19. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.	5.45	1.880	7.00	7	-.783	.116	-.801	.232
20. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.	5.29	1.851	6.00	7	-.620	.116	-.957	.232
21. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because my supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment.	5.34	1.864	6.00	7	-.748	.116	-.689	.232

Item	Mean	SD	Median	Mode	Skewness		Kurtosis	
					Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
22. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my ethnicity.	5.05	2.012	6.00	7	-.532	.116	-1.113	.232
23. I prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because my supervisor would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	5.79	1.563	7.00	7	-1.058	.116	.066	.232
24. I prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because my organization does not recognize the value of mentoring.	5.23	1.963	6.00	7	-.746	.116	-.684	.232

Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) recommend for exploratory factor analysis that the items show evidence of correlation coefficients greater than or equal to .3 ( $r \geq .3$ ) with at least some other items in the analysis. Inspection of the items in Table 4.3 revealed all items had coefficients of  $r \geq .3$  with at least some other items in the analysis.

**Table 4.3 Correlation Matrix**

	ITEM1	ITEM2	ITEM3	ITEM4	ITEM5	ITEM6	ITEM7	ITEM8	ITEM9	ITEM10	ITEM11	ITEM12	
Correlation	ITEM1												
	ITEM2	<b>0.387</b>											
	ITEM3	<b>0.697</b>	<b>0.363</b>										
	ITEM4	<b>0.473</b>	<b>0.462</b>	<b>0.393</b>									
	ITEM5	<b>0.528</b>	0.274	<b>0.581</b>	<b>0.432</b>								
	ITEM6	<b>0.320</b>	<b>0.615</b>	<b>0.306</b>	<b>0.529</b>	0.291							
	ITEM7	<b>0.746</b>	<b>0.379</b>	<b>0.726</b>	<b>0.490</b>	<b>0.589</b>	<b>0.376</b>						
	ITEM8	<b>0.452</b>	<b>0.467</b>	<b>0.462</b>	<b>0.588</b>	<b>0.415</b>	<b>0.512</b>	<b>0.565</b>					
	ITEM9	<b>0.332</b>	<b>0.306</b>	<b>0.327</b>	<b>0.376</b>	0.240	<b>0.376</b>	<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.498</b>				
	ITEM10	<b>0.753</b>	<b>0.365</b>	<b>0.676</b>	<b>0.488</b>	<b>0.543</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>0.809</b>	<b>0.505</b>	<b>0.376</b>			
	ITEM11	<b>0.477</b>	<b>0.409</b>	<b>0.480</b>	<b>0.479</b>	<b>0.463</b>	<b>0.408</b>	<b>0.559</b>	<b>0.579</b>	<b>0.386</b>	<b>0.586</b>		
	ITEM12	0.277	<b>0.556</b>	0.260	<b>0.390</b>	0.225	<b>0.689</b>	<b>0.329</b>	<b>0.481</b>	<b>0.372</b>	<b>0.352</b>	<b>0.493</b>	
	ITEM13	<b>0.384</b>	<b>0.327</b>	<b>0.318</b>	<b>0.460</b>	<b>0.333</b>	<b>0.371</b>	<b>0.480</b>	<b>0.411</b>	<b>0.364</b>	<b>0.558</b>	<b>0.467</b>	<b>0.457</b>
	ITEM14	<b>0.440</b>	<b>0.337</b>	<b>0.451</b>	<b>0.467</b>	<b>0.407</b>	<b>0.336</b>	<b>0.530</b>	<b>0.555</b>	<b>0.374</b>	<b>0.565</b>	<b>0.771</b>	<b>0.413</b>
	ITEM15	<b>0.360</b>	0.289	<b>0.398</b>	<b>0.378</b>	<b>0.336</b>	<b>0.312</b>	<b>0.491</b>	<b>0.406</b>	<b>0.304</b>	<b>0.557</b>	<b>0.346</b>	<b>0.397</b>
	ITEM16	<b>0.337</b>	0.169	<b>0.301</b>	0.269	0.253	0.173	<b>0.349</b>	<b>0.404</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>0.402</b>	<b>0.410</b>	0.208
	ITEM17	0.295	0.244	<b>0.313</b>	<b>0.319</b>	0.246	0.252	<b>0.314</b>	<b>0.434</b>	0.290	<b>0.364</b>	<b>0.570</b>	<b>0.338</b>
	ITEM18	0.299	0.232	0.249	<b>0.358</b>	0.271	0.291	<b>0.330</b>	<b>0.351</b>	0.221	<b>0.348</b>	<b>0.351</b>	<b>0.367</b>
	ITEM19	0.276	0.232	<b>0.326</b>	<b>0.319</b>	0.228	0.250	<b>0.309</b>	<b>0.441</b>	0.272	<b>0.358</b>	<b>0.558</b>	<b>0.327</b>
	ITEM20	<b>0.402</b>	0.296	<b>0.389</b>	<b>0.434</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>0.317</b>	<b>0.431</b>	<b>0.486</b>	<b>0.347</b>	<b>0.484</b>	<b>0.681</b>	<b>0.386</b>
	ITEM21	<b>0.319</b>	<b>0.601</b>	<b>0.311</b>	<b>0.404</b>	0.225	<b>0.417</b>	<b>0.368</b>	<b>0.449</b>	<b>0.335</b>	<b>0.404</b>	<b>0.436</b>	<b>0.552</b>
	ITEM22	<b>0.441</b>	<b>0.348</b>	<b>0.435</b>	<b>0.429</b>	<b>0.388</b>	<b>0.326</b>	<b>0.474</b>	<b>0.482</b>	<b>0.332</b>	<b>0.513</b>	<b>0.769</b>	<b>0.396</b>
	ITEM23	<b>0.341</b>	<b>0.695</b>	<b>0.322</b>	<b>0.378</b>	0.247	<b>0.511</b>	<b>0.338</b>	<b>0.428</b>	<b>0.323</b>	<b>0.368</b>	<b>0.433</b>	<b>0.637</b>
	ITEM24	<b>0.478</b>	<b>0.452</b>	<b>0.407</b>	<b>0.349</b>	<b>0.300</b>	<b>0.348</b>	<b>0.447</b>	<b>0.328</b>	0.274	<b>0.514</b>	<b>0.312</b>	<b>0.421</b>

**Table 4.3 Correlation Matrix (continued)**

	ITEM13	ITEM14	ITEM15	ITEM16	ITEM17	ITEM18	ITEM19	ITEM20	ITEM21	ITEM22	ITEM23	ITEM24
Correlation												
ITEM1												
ITEM2												
ITEM3												
ITEM4												
ITEM5												
ITEM6												
ITEM7												
ITEM8												
ITEM9												
ITEM10												
ITEM11												
ITEM12												
ITEM13												
ITEM14	<b>0.534</b>											
ITEM15	<b>0.524</b>	<b>0.425</b>										
ITEM16	<b>0.332</b>	<b>0.418</b>	<b>0.327</b>									
ITEM17	0.238	<b>0.591</b>	0.257	<b>0.480</b>								
ITEM18	<b>0.453</b>	<b>0.368</b>	<b>0.450</b>	<b>0.494</b>	<b>0.405</b>							
ITEM19	0.221	<b>0.589</b>	0.272	<b>0.467</b>	<b>0.873</b>	<b>0.432</b>						
ITEM20	<b>0.360</b>	<b>0.725</b>	<b>0.336</b>	<b>0.470</b>	<b>0.721</b>	<b>0.414</b>	<b>0.707</b>					
ITEM21	<b>0.391</b>	<b>0.364</b>	<b>0.380</b>	0.245	<b>0.311</b>	<b>0.382</b>	<b>0.326</b>	<b>0.371</b>				
ITEM22	<b>0.390</b>	<b>0.724</b>	<b>0.318</b>	<b>0.423</b>	<b>0.656</b>	<b>0.392</b>	<b>0.644</b>	<b>0.837</b>	<b>0.418</b>			
ITEM23	<b>0.364</b>	<b>0.371</b>	<b>0.371</b>	0.240	<b>0.319</b>	<b>0.356</b>	<b>0.343</b>	<b>0.428</b>	<b>0.742</b>	<b>0.485</b>		
ITEM24	<b>0.407</b>	0.283	<b>0.439</b>	0.177	0.160	<b>0.353</b>	0.164	0.264	<b>0.575</b>	0.278	<b>0.610</b>	

### *Principal Component Analysis*

PCA with Varimax rotation was run on the 24 barriers to mentoring items. Decisions about retention of the components (factors) and items loading on the factors followed these decision rules: .35 was the loading cut-off value and items loading on more than one item were eliminated. “Ideally, an item should have a high loading on only one factor” (Blaikie, 2003, p. 221). According to Stevens (1992), the minimum loading for a factor depends on the sample size. Stevens did not give a loading for a sample size of 441 (sample size for this study), however he indicated that for a sample size of 300 the minimum loading should be .30 and for 600 it should be .21. He further suggested that only loadings of .40 should be taken seriously. Blaike (2003), on the other hand, suggested that “another common recommendation is .30 or above (p. 222). Because the sample size for this study was 441 and there are two suggested minimum loadings, this study used .35, which is a point between the two suggestions. This decision was also supported by the intuitive sense of the resulting factors. Following those rules, the PCA with Varimax rotation was repeated three times until items loading on only one component (factor) was obtained.

After the first iteration the following items were eliminated:

4. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.
6. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.
8. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship because I believe I am afraid that potential mentors may be put-off by such an advancement.
11. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their ethnicity.



12. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because co-workers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.
13. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors do not notice me.
14. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.
15. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.
16. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.
24. I prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because my organization does not recognize the value of mentoring.

When PCA with Varimax rotation was rerun with the remaining 14 items, two additional items loaded on more than one component. The two items eliminated from the next run were:

2. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.
9. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.

Based on examination of the eigenvalue  $\geq 1$  decision rule, the remaining 12 barriers to mentoring items yielded a three component solution that explained 79.1% of the total variance, with Component 1 (Access to Mentors) explaining 33.6%, Component 2 (Misinterpretation of Approach) explaining 28.7%, and Component 3 (Approval of Others) explaining 16.7% of the total variance. In addition to presenting the percentages of explained variance for each of the components, Table 4.4 presents the eigenvalues for each component: Component 1 (Access to Mentors), 3.7; Component 2 (Approval of

Others), 3.2; and Component 3 (Misinterpretation of Approach), 1.9. Factors scores for each of these components were calculated using the regression method and saved in the database to be used as the criterion or dependent variables in the multiple regression analysis.

**Table 4.4 Total Variance Explained**

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.697	33.608	33.608
2	3.164	28.762	62.370
3	1.846	16.786	79.156

Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis.

Ragins and Cotton (1991), in their study on perceived barriers women face with obtaining a mentoring relationship, found five components that they labeled: (a) Access to Mentors, (b) Fear of Initiating a Relationship with a Mentor, (c) Willingness of Mentor, (d) Approval of Others, and (e) Misinterpretation of Approach. The items for each of these components for their study are listed in Table 4.5. Reviewing Ragins and Cotton's results helped to label the components derived through the PCA analysis for this study.

For this study only three factors emerged from the PCA analysis. They were given the same labels as Ragins and Cotton's factors because with only a few exceptions the items included in this study's components were the same as those in the Ragins and Cotton study. For the Access to Mentors component, four of the five items included in this factor were the same as in the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) original set of items. One item was added by this study: Item 5—I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because there are no mentors available with my ethnicity. Clearly, this item logically fit under the Access to Mentors label. Of the two items in the Approval from

Others component, one item was the same as in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study and the other, Item 21--I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment--was added for this study. Again, it clearly fit under the Approval from Others label. The Misinterpretation of Approach component included two items that were part of Ragins and Cotton's study and two items that were added for this study, but that were logically related to the original two items. The two items added for this study were: Item 20--I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender, and Item 22--I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my ethnicity. Because the two items added for this study intuitively seemed to fit in the labeling given by Ragins and Cotton (1991), the component was given the same label, Misinterpretation of Approach.

**Table 4.5 Perceived Barriers to Mentoring for Women of Color: Item Loadings for Extracted Components**

	Component		
	1	2	3
<b>Access to mentors</b>			
7. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors.	.872		
1. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.	.844		
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
3. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a shortage of potential mentors.	.829		
10. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.	.826		

	<b>Component</b>
<b><i>5. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because there are no mentors available with my ethnicity.*</i></b>	.738
<b>Misinterpretation of approach</b>	
17. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.	.912
19. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.	.903
20. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.	.829
<b><i>22. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my ethnicity.*</i></b>	.752
<b>Approval from others</b>	
<b><i>21. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment.*</i></b>	.892
23. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	.882

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Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

A rotation converged in 5 iterations.

\* Note: Results for items in bold italics differed from those in the Ragins and Cotton study.

After completion of the PCA, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were run with each of the Component factor scores as dependent variables. Each of the three regression analyses was run to assess how much the independent variables of Age, Tenure, Rank, Ethnicity, and Mentoring Experience explained the extracted components. This followed the guidelines used by Ragins and Cotton (1991) in their study.

Before beginning the regression analysis, dummy variables for each of the independent variables were set up in the following manner:

- Age: Age Over 45 was assigned the value 1 and included the age categories of 46 to 55, 56 to 65, and over 65. Age Under 46 was assigned

the value 0 in the dummy variable and included the age categories of 18 to 25, 26 to 35, and 36 to 45.

- Mentoring Experience: Have a Mentor was assigned the value 1 and included “currently have a mentor and had one in the past” and “currently have a mentor.” Do Not Have a Mentor was assigned the value 0 and included “had a mentor in the past” and “never had a mentor”.
- Rank: Top Leader was assigned the value of 1 and included CEO, president or executive director, partner, vice president, director, manager, and supervisor. Non-Top Leader was assigned the value of 0 and included team leader, non-leader, manager, and supervisor and other (participants asked to specify).
- Ethnicity: African American was assigned the value of 1 and included African American. Non-African American was assigned the value of 0 and included African, Asian, Hispanic, Native American and Biracial.
- Tenure: Tenure under 15 years was assigned the value of 1 and included 0 to 5 years, 6 to 10 years, and 11 to 15 years. Tenure over 15 years was assigned the value of 0 and included 16 to 20 years, 21 to 25 years, and over 25 years.

The dummy variables were created to reflect the same variables found in Ragins and Cotton’s (1991) study, with two exceptions—gender and ethnicity. Because the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study involved both men and women, they used gender as a variable to explore the degree to which gender explained each perceived barrier. Gender was not used in this study because all the participants were women. However, because this study

focused on Women of Color, including different ethnic groups, ethnicity was an independent category variable and thus was recoded as a dummy variable.

Using the dummy variables as independent variables and factor scores for each of the extracted components as dependent variables, hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed. The first step in this analysis was to review the Pearson correlation coefficients between every pair of variables. The correlations in Table 4.6 revealed no coefficients of .7 or above ( $r \geq .7$ ) between any two independent variables, which according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) indicated that multicollinearity was not an issue.

**Table 4.6 Correlations<sup>a</sup>**

Variable	Age	Rank	Tenure	Mentoring Experience	Ethnicity
Age	1.00				
Rank	-.13(**)	1.00			
Tenure	.65(**)	.11(*)	1.00		
Mentoring Experience	-.19(**)	-.01	.13(**)	1.00	
Ethnicity	-.18(**)	-.16(**)	.15(**)	.06	1.00

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

<sup>a</sup> Listwise N=426

For each hierarchical multiple regression, variables were entered in three steps in the following order: (a) Age, Rank, and Tenure; (b) Mentoring Experience; and (c) Ethnicity.

Using the Access to Mentors factor score, Rank significantly explained Access to Mentors when only Age, Tenure, and Rank were included in the regression model,  $F(3, 422) = 2.03, p < .05$ . The amount of variance in the Access to Mentors variable

explained by these Step 1 variables is a low 1% ( $R^2 = .01$ ). Age and Tenure were not significant contributors to the model. When Mentoring Experience (Step 2) and Ethnicity (Step 3) are added to the Access to Mentors regression model, Ethnicity significantly explains Access to Mentors  $F(5,420) = 14.26, p < .001$  and Rank is no longer statistically significant. The amount of variance explained increases to 15% ( $R^2 = .15$ ).

In the hierarchical multiple regression with Approval of Others as the dependent variable, there are no significant contributors in Step 1 (Age, Tenure, and Rank), but when Mentoring Experience is added in Step 2, it significantly explains the Approval of Others component,  $F(4, 421) = 1.95, p < .05$ . Age, Tenure, and Rank were still not significant contributors to the model. While the model is statistically significant, the amount of Approval of Others variance explained is a low 2% ( $R^2 = .02$ ). After Step 3 when Ethnicity was added to the model, Mentoring Experience continues to be the only significant contributor,  $F(5,420) = 1.56, p < .05$  and all of the other independent variables are not significant. The amount of variance explained is 2% ( $R^2 = .02$ ).

Mentoring Experience significantly explains Misinterpretation of Approach when Age, Tenure, Rank, and Mentoring Experience are included in the regression model,  $F(4, 421) = 7.15, p < .001$ . Age, Tenure, and Rank were not significant contributors to the model. While the model is statistically significant, the amount of Misinterpretation of Approach variance explained is a low 6% ( $R^2 = .06$ ). When Ethnicity is added to the model in Step 3, Mentoring Experience continues to be the only significant contributor to the Misinterpretation of Approach component,  $F(5, 420) = 5.83, p < .001$ . Similar to the Approval component, the other independent variables were not significant contributors to the Misinterpretation component.

The beta coefficients in Table 4.7 show which of the independent variables contribute statistically significantly to the barriers. For the Access to Mentors Ethnicity is statistically significant  $\beta = .37$ ,  $p < .001$ . For Approval of Others and Misinterpretation of Approach Mentoring Experience is the only variable that has a statistically significant contribution,  $\beta = .11$ ,  $p < .05$  and  $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .001$  respectively.

**Table 4.7 Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis**

Variable	Access			Approval			Misinterpretation		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>									
Age	.10	.13	.05	-.16	.13	-.08	.00	.13	.00
Rank	-.23*	.10	-.11*	.05	.10	.02	.07	.10	.03
Tenure	-.05	.15	-.02	-.20	.15	-.09	.05	.15	.02
<b>Step 2</b>									
Age	.11	.13	.05	-.12	.13	-.06	.10	.13	.05
Rank	-.23*	.10	-.11	.04	.10	.02	.05	.10	.02
Tenure	-.05	.15	-.02	-.21	.15	-.09	.04	.14	.10
Mentoring Experience	.07	.11	.03	.25*	.11	.11*	.55**	.10	.25**
<b>Step 3</b>									
Age	-.01	.13	.00	-.12	.13	-.06	.11	.13	.06
Rank	-.08	.10	-.04	.04	.10	.02	.04	.10	.02
Tenure	.01	.14	.00	-.21	.15	-.09	.04	.14	.02
Mentoring Experience	.09	.10	.04	.25*	.11	.11*	.55**	.10	.25**
Ethnicity	-.81**	.10	-.37**	.03	.10	.02	.08	.11	.04

Access: Step 1  $R^2 = .01$ , Step 2  $R^2 = .02$ , Step 3  $R^2 = .15$

Approval: Step 1  $R^2 = .01$ , Step 2  $R^2 = .02$ , Step 3  $R^2 = .02$

Misinterpretation: Step 1  $R^2 = .00$ , Step 2  $R^2 = .06$ , Step 3  $R^2 = .07$

\* $p < .05$

\*\* $p < .001$

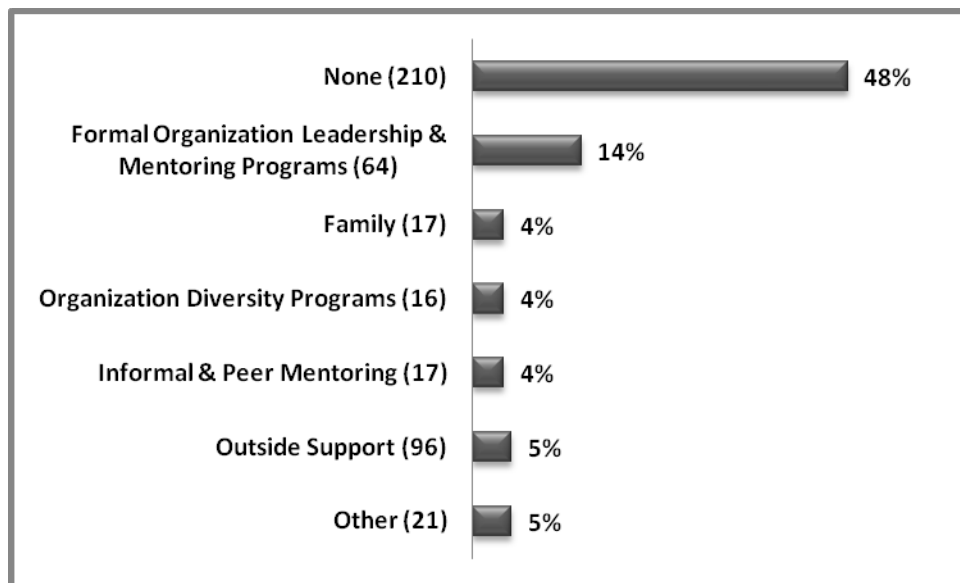


For the Access to Mentors component, the mean for the items for African American ethnicity was 3.96 and for non African American ethnicities was 3.84, indicating that African American and non African American respondents were likely to neither agree or disagree that Access to Mentors is a barrier.

For the Approval of Others component, the mean for those items for African Americans was 5.61 and for non African Americans the mean was 5.45 indicating that both African Americans and non African Americans were likely to disagree that Approval of Others is a perceived barrier.

For the Misinterpretation of Approach component, the mean for the items was for African Americans 5.70 and for non African Americans 5.45 indicating that both African Americans and non African Americans are likely to disagree that Approval of Others is a perceived barrier.

The respondents answered an open-ended question regarding their participation in formal or informal programs that helped advance their career/leadership. If they replied “Yes,” they were asked to describe the program. After reviewing the answers of the 441 participants, several patterns emerged and the frequencies of those patterns are shown in Figure 4.1. Almost half (47.6%) of the participants indicated that they did not participate in any formal or informal program for career or leadership development and 14.5% did participate in formal leadership and mentoring programs. In addition, 21.8% relied on outside sources for career development support. Answers to this question indicate that very few Women of Color participate in mentoring relationships for career development.



**Figure 4.1 Formal or Informal Support Results**

#### *Summary of Results*

For Women of Color, three perceived components emerged from Principal Component Analysis: (a) Access to Mentors, (b) Approval of Others, and (c) Misinterpretation of Approach. Regression analysis showed that Ethnicity was the only statistically significant influence on Access to Mentors. Regression analysis also showed that Mentoring Experience is a statistically significant contributor to both Approval of Others and Misinterpretation of Approach. Age, Rank, and Tenure did not significantly contribute to the Access to Mentors, Approval of Others, or Misinterpretation of Approach factors. Mentoring Experience did not significantly contribute to Access to Mentors and Ethnicity did not significantly contribute to Approval of Others or Misinterpretation of Approach.

## Chapter V: Discussion, Limitations, and Implications for Research and Practice

The purpose of this study was to explore whether or not Women of Color perceive the same barriers as those found in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study. This chapter presents a discussion of the outcomes of the PCA and multiple regression analyses performed, along with the implications of each of those analyses. In addition, the limitations of this research and the implications for research and practice are presented.

### *Discussion of the Findings*

First, the Principal Component analysis results will be discussed, followed by a similar discussion on the regression analysis results. These findings will be examined in relation to Women of Color and the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, as well as the extant literature on Women of Color and leadership.

*Findings of the factor analysis.* Because mentoring has been identified by many scholars as a tool for career development, why in the 21<sup>st</sup> century do these questions remain? Do Women of Color have access to this tool? Are they facing challenges when trying to obtain this tool? To this question, Bell and Nkomo (2001) responded in reference to Black women "...Black women have limited access to information and social networks in their organizations and getting ahead depends on access to informal networks and the relationships those networks can foster – mentorship, sponsorships, and help from colleagues" (p. 152). Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study on barriers to mentoring relationships for career development, on which this study builds, investigated these questions for all women; however, her participants were 93% White and included men. A key finding of the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study was that women perceived more barriers than men did. This study did not include men; however, it did find that Women of Color identified three of the same barriers as those found by the Ragins and

Cotton (1991) study: Access to Mentors, Approval of Others, and Misinterpretation of Approach. The two barriers found in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study and not found in this study included Fear of Initiating a Mentoring Relationship and Willingness to Mentor. Table 5.1 shows the barriers and loadings for those perceived barriers for both the Ragins and Cotton (1991) and this study.

**Table 5.1 Ragins and Cotton (1991) and Jeffcoat Factor Analysis Findings Comparisons**

		Factor Loadings–Ragins & Cotton (Jeffcoat)				
Items in bold italic were added by this study and did not appear in the Ragins and Cotton study.		Access	Fear	Willingness	Approval	Misinterpretation
1.	I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.	.81 (.84)				
2.	I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a shortage of potential mentors.	.82 (.83)				
3.	<b><i>I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because there are no mentors with my ethnicity.</i></b>	(.74)				
4.	I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors.	.78 (.87)				
5.	I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of the lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.	.83 (.83)				
6.	I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am afraid that potential mentors may be “put off” by such advancement.		.84			

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**Factor Loadings–Ragins & Cotton (Jeffcoat)**


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Items in bold italic were added by this study and did not appear in the Ragins and Cotton study.

	Access	Fear	Willingness	Approval	Misinterpretation
7. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.		.60			
8. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.		.87			
9. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because I am afraid of being rejected by a potential mentor.		.74			
10. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.			.56		
11. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors do not notice me.			.58		
12. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.			.85		
13. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.			.52		
14. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.			.86		

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**Factor Loadings–Ragins & Cotton (Jeffcoat)**


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Items in bold italic were added by this study and did not appear in the Ragins and Cotton study.

	Access	Fear	Willingness	Approval	Misinterpretation
15. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.				.73	
16. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because co-workers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.				.77	
17. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.				.70	
18. <b><i>I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment.</i></b>				(.89)	
19. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because my supervisor would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.				.80 (.88)	
20. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.					.86 (.91)
21. I am prevented from initiating a relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.					.87 (.83)
22. <b><i>I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.</i></b>					(.83)

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**Factor Loadings–Ragins & Cotton (Jeffcoat)**


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Items in bold italic were added by this study and did not appear in the Ragins and Cotton study.

	Access	Fear	Willingness	Approval	Misinterpretation
23. <i>I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of my ethnicity.</i>					(.75)

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Cultural differences could account for Women of Color’s perception that Fear of Initiating a Mentoring Relationship was not a barrier. For example, Jones and Shorter-Gooden’s (2003) research indicated that “a large number of Black women in America feel pressured to present a face to the world that is acceptable to others even though it may be completely at odds with their true selves” ( p. 61). It is possible that fear was not an emotion that culturally these women felt they could express. In addition, although for the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, Fear of Initiating a Mentoring Relationship was a perceived barrier for women, Ragins and Cotton’s findings did not support the stereotype that men are more aggressive than women when initiating a relationship (p. 948). The findings of this study also did not support this stereotype for Women of Color because for these women, there was no indication that Fear of Initiating a Mentoring Relationship was a perceived barrier.

Willingness to Mentor, a second perceived barrier found in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study but not found in this study, had some weaknesses. For the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, this barrier had three of five items loading on multiple factors, which made these items candidates for elimination. The remaining two items were related to gender, which had strong loadings. By ignoring the three items that loaded on more than one factor and considering only the remaining two items, Willingness to Mentor

seemed to be related to gender. Gender as a major component of Willingness to Mentor is supported by the findings of the Vincent and Seymour (1995) study. In their study, they found that women were willing to mentor both males and females; however, males were less willing to mentor females. Males being less willing to mentor females and “the historical shortage of women in advanced managerial positions [causing] a reported shortage of female mentors...”(O’Neill & Blake-Beard, 2002, p. 52) may be the reason for the existence of this barrier for all women.

Another reason for Willingness to Mentor not being a perceived barrier for Women of Color might include Women of Color avoiding situations that cause them to be rejected (Bell and Nkomo, 2001). When the participants of this study were asked about their mentoring experience in an open-ended question, a large number of them indicated they did not have a mentor or never had a mentor. It is possible that these women never attempted to enter to a mentoring relationship or they might have felt there was too great a risk of rejection. They may also have not seen the benefits of mentoring since they tended to not have experience with mentoring. As a result, Willingness to Mentor was not perceived as an issue for them.

For Willingness to Mentor, the items for the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study were gender related. According to Gregory (2003), Women of Color often have to choose between ethnicity/race and gender issues. Also, according to Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003), Women of Color often choose racism over gender issues in support of Men of Color. Choosing ethnicity/race over gender may have contributed to these Women of Color not perceiving that Willingness to Mentor was a barrier to mentoring relationships for them.



Three of the barriers found in the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, Access to Mentors, Approval of Others, and Misinterpretation of Approach, were also found in this study of Women of Color. Although those barriers maybe the same as in the Ragins and Cotton study, two of the perceived barriers, Access to Mentors and Misinterpretation of Approach, had ethnicity items. These items (see Table 5.1)—Item 3: *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of my ethnicity* (Access to Mentors) and Item 23 *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of their ethnicity* (Misinterpretation of Approach)—were not items found in the Ragins and Cotton’s (1991) study and indicates that Women of Color are faced with an added challenge, their ethnicity. In other words, mentoring may be the tool for career development, but Women of Color perceived barriers associated with this tool and their ethnicity was perceived to add to the challenge of obtaining a mentor.

A question may naturally follow for Women of Color—What prevents access to mentors? Bell and Nkomo’s (2003) writings provide insight into this issue. They concluded that “informal social functions and networks, on and off the job, are said to foster collegiality and strengthen working relationships” (p. 153). However, Bell and Nkomo further suggested that minority women often do not participate in informational networking because they usually yield negative experiences such as painful rejection, sexual harassment, or being subjected to racial and ethnic slurs and jokes. Jones and Shorter-Gooden (2003) suggested this lack of participation in networking on the job and during job related social events contributed to Women of Color feeling excluded.

Gregory (2003) suggested that Women of Color are faced with gender, racial, and ethnic discrimination, which implies that perceived workplace issues such as Access to Mentors is different for Women of Color than for White women.

The findings of this study supports Gregory's (2003) claim, when it found that the perceptions of Access to Mentors as a barrier to obtaining mentoring for career development was different for Women of Color. This difference was indicated by the items that loaded on each of these barriers. For Access to Mentors (see Table 5.1), Item 1: *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors*, Item 2: *I am prevented from obtaining mentoring relationship because of a shortage of potential mentors*, Item 4: *I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because there is a lack of access to potential mentors*, and Item 5: *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because of the lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors* were the same items that loaded on the same barrier as in the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study. What was different from the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study was the loading of Item 3: *I am prevented from entering into a mentoring relationship because there are no mentors available with my ethnicity*. This item indicated that for Women of Color, their ethnicity may have presented challenges in their being able to obtain a mentor for career development. This also implied that Women of Color may have preferred mentors that were of the same ethnicity as themselves.

For the barrier Misinterpretation of Approach, two of the items (see Table 5.1), Item 20, *I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor* and

Item 21, *I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization*, were the same as those in the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study and two were different (Item 22, *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender* and Item 23, *I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my ethnicity*). The two items that were different were related to gender and ethnicity and indicated that both gender and ethnicity attributed to the Misinterpretation of Approach when Women of Color initiate a relationship with a potential mentor. In other words, this barrier suggested that when Women of Color initiate a mentoring relationship, their perception is that they will be thought to be making sexual advances by various members in their organizations and that they were rejected because they were women and they were not White. This finding supports Glen (1999) and Gregory (2003), who suggested that Women of Color are faced with ethnicity, race, and gender issues and this combination makes them vulnerable to workplace challenges.

The items that loaded on Approval of Others for the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study indicated that approval from both supervisors and co-workers were considered a part of this barrier. This study's results were different from Ragins and Cotton's in two ways: (a) approval only from supervisors was indicated, and (b) supervisors authorizing the time commitment for mentoring. These items implied that Women of Color found it difficult to get their manager to approve entry into a mentoring relationship as well as be allowed time required for mentoring. The lack of approval from supervisors could have

been due to organizations being under-staffed and not able to give employees time for mentoring. Another possible cause may have been that managers did not value mentoring. There could be any number of reasons, such as lack of funding, lack of understanding of the value of mentoring or insecurities on the part of the supervisors, for these Women of Color perceive approval for obtaining a mentoring relationship as an issue. More research is needed to better understand the existence of these barriers.

The items for Access to Mentors indicated that Women of Color were likely to neither agree or disagree this is a perceived barrier and they are likely to disagree that Approval of Others and Misinterpretation of Approach are perceived barriers. The responses to open-ended questions asking for descriptions of any formal or informal programs that supported their career development may hold the reasons for these responses. A substantial number of participants indicated they never had a mentor or they used outside entities for support, yet many of the items for the Mentoring Survey addressed mentoring from their organizational prospective. These Women of Color might not have used their organization's mentoring programs and felt the items were not relevant to their situation or their organizations did not have mentoring programs.

*Findings of the Regression Analysis.* The Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study indicated that "older, higher-ranking, senior members of the organization perceived themselves as having significantly greater access to mentors than younger, lower-ranking newcomers" (p. 943). Unlike the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, this study indicated that Age and Tenure had no significant influence on any of the perceived barriers and Rank had a significant influence only on Access to Mentor and only before Ethnicity was entered into the model.

For Women of Color, ethnicity contributing to all of the perceived barriers (Access to Mentors, Approval of Others, and Misinterpretation of Approach) to mentoring relationships was not totally supported by the findings of this study. Ethnicity, in terms of African American and non African American Women of Color, had no significant influence on Approval of Others and Misinterpretation of Approach. The regression analysis showed that when ethnicity entered into the regression model for Access to Mentors, the other independent variables, Rank, Tenure and Age, lost their predictive value. Ethnicity also made the strongest unique contribution to this perceived barrier; it accounted for 14% of the variance in Access to Mentors.

Mentoring Experience was not related to Access to Mentors, but Mentoring Experience did significantly influence Approval from Others and Misinterpretation of Approach. Similar to Ragins and Cotton's findings, Women of Color with mentoring experience were less likely to perceive Approval from Others and Misinterpretation for Approach as barriers than Women of Color who did not have mentoring experience. The Ragins and Cotton (1991) study also indicated that "individuals with more protégé experience perceived more opportunities for meeting mentors, expected fewer negative reactions from supervisors and co-workers, and were more likely to view potential mentors as willing to enter relationships and not misinterpret a protégé's approach as a sexual advance" (p. 948). For this study there were no indications that mentoring experience was related to the reactions of co-workers or access to mentors. However, similar to the Ragins and Cotton research, this study indicated that individuals with more mentoring experience perceived fewer negative reactions from supervisors and were more likely to view their gender as not being an issue when entering a mentoring

relationship. This study also indicated that those with mentoring experience were likely to not have issues with their approach being misinterpreted as a sexual advance.

The participants of this study were also asked in an open-ended question to describe any formal or informal programs that supported their career development and only 14% had participated in a mentoring program. Just under half of the participants (47.6%) said they had never had support for their career development from mentoring programs or family and friends. This may be a function of almost half (48.3%) of the respondents indicating that they did not have a leader, manager, or supervisor role. More than a third of the participants (36.2%) received support for their career development; however, 21.8% of them received support from outside organizations. According to extensive research done by Bell and Nkomo (2003), this finding is not unusual. In their study, very few African American women indicated having mentors. The women of that study indicated that “what was critical to their [career] advancement was gaining sponsorship” (p. 167). To these women sponsorship was a boss who championed their careers—opened doors for them. Further research is needed to investigate how Women of Color view sponsorship versus mentoring for career development and why they feel the two are different.

### *Summary*

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2007), women make up almost half of today’s workforce and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2005) project that by 2014 they will make up more than 75% of the workforce with a large number of these women being Women of Color. Organizations, realizing that their workforce is changing and becoming more and more diverse, have instituted many diversity and mentoring programs to ensure

diversity at all levels of employment (Giscombe & Mattis, 2002). Such programs, along with the current and projected labor statistics, make the findings of this study surprising—Women of Color perceive barriers in obtaining mentoring relationships for career development even though they tended to disagree with the items associated with each of the barriers. The surprising findings of this study indicate that today’s mentoring programs may not be designed to reach all women, which was also supported by the Ragins and Cotton (1991) study, and her participants were 93% White. The ethnicity of the women of this study implies that they are from different backgrounds and many require different approaches for entrance into mentoring relationships. Just as the population of women in the workforce is very diverse, there need to be diverse approaches and formats for these programs. In fact, “Women of Color generally feel their company’s definition of diversity and mentoring are too broad to address effectively the specific concerns of gender and race/ethnicity” (Giscombe & Mattis, 2002, p. 117).

#### *Limitations of the Study*

“Among the challenges Women of Color face are exclusion from informal networks, [and] lack of institutional support...” (McFall, 2004, p. 10), and it can be inferred from this study that Women of Color also face challenges entering into a mentoring relationship for career development. However, racism and sexism may have influenced how the participants of this study answered the survey questions, thereby producing skewed results. Race related defense mechanisms might have been the cause, which are defense mechanisms triggered by race-related questions [that] cause the individual not to want to be seen as being prejudiced or as accusing others of being prejudiced (Schiele, 2007). This could cause problems with the data in that individuals

may have unconsciously answered the survey questions in a manner that may not have been an exact reflection of their situation.

The design of the questionnaire for this study may have also been a limitation. Built on the Ragins and Cotton's (1991) study, the design involved predominately mirroring their instrument. Only a few questions, along with an open-ended question regarding the participants' mentoring experiences, were added in an effort to keep this study closely aligned to the original Ragins and Cotton (1991) study. Additional questions added to the scale to cover potential issues Women of Color may have faced when trying to climb the corporate career ladder may have given more insight into mentoring issues for these women. There could have been questions addressing stereotypes, racial, and gender concerns, which may have presented reasons for the barriers these women faced.

The sample for this research may also be a limitation. The majority of the participants (70%) were African American women, which may cause the results to be skewed. Because the sample included few representatives from other ethnic groups, these results may not present a clear view of the barriers these women may face when obtaining a mentoring relationship for career development.

The researcher presented inference from the data through her own ethnic lens—another limitation of this study. The researcher is an African American female and has been both a mentor and a protégé. Her identity and experiences may have caused her to see differently than a person of another ethnicity with different mentoring experiences. She may have also missed other inferences for these same reasons.



### *Implications*

This research study has indicated perceived barriers to mentoring relationships for career development for Women of Color, which suggests a need for a better understanding of how and why these barriers exist. To obtain this better understanding, more research is required. In addition, organizations need practices that will help them understand how to remove barriers and how to monitor their mentoring programs to ensure access and equality for all. The discussion in this section provides implications of this study for research and practice in these areas.

*Implications for Research.* Because so little could be found on Women of Color and mentoring, and because the results of this study lead to additional unanswered questions, more research is needed. The research results of this study suggest that Women of Color did not have access to mentoring relationships; did not receive approval when seeking mentoring relationships from their organization, supervisor/manager, or peers; and when they attempted to initiate a cross-gender mentoring relationship, their approach was misinterpreted. These results indicate a need to answer such follow-on questions as: (a) How can mentoring programs be improved to eliminate barriers to obtaining a mentoring relationship for career development for Women of Color?, (b) For those Women of Color who have never had formal or informal support for career development, what helped them in their career development?, and (c) What metrics should be collected to ensure fairness and usefulness in mentoring programs for career development?

Another important research implication from this study: Are Women of Color facing deeper problems when trying to obtain a mentoring relationship for career

development? Before the barriers to mentoring relationships for career development for Women of Color can be addressed, better understandings of the causes may be required. Women of Color are not a homogenous group and each ethnic/racial group has vastly different cultural and economic circumstances that shape who they are and in turn shape their employment experiences. Examination of existing mentoring and diversity programs and why these barriers exist can not only make organizations aware of the barriers, but also give them some insight into how to resolve these challenges. There may not be one answer to these, but several; one size may not fit all. These programs and access may need to be as diverse as the women they are intended to serve.

This research also indicated that many Women of Color have never had a mentoring relationship for career development. Some of these women used outside support groups and family rather than entering into mentoring relationships within their organizations. Examining why these women chose outside sources rather than internal mentoring programs, as well as gaining an understanding of the difference in support received, could help with internal program improvements. In addition, exploring a comparison of Women of Color who had no mentoring relationship with those who had mentoring could also be beneficial.

According to Denise Mc Fall (2004), while there are frequently heard personal and career experiences related to ethnicity/race and gender, there is very little supporting research data. Exploring the research implications of this study could begin to fill this void as well as provide some useful data that could lead to removal of barriers for mentoring relationships for career development for Women of Color.

*Implications for practice.* This study suggests the need for changes to ensure Women of Color have equal opportunities in obtaining mentoring relationships for career development. The literature suggests mentoring as a tool for leadership development, yet this study showed that Women of Color perceived issues when trying to obtain mentors. There were implications that Women of Color perceived issues related to their race, ethnicity and gender in the workplace. This suggests that organizations need to look at their formal and informal mentoring programs for career development and include these women when designing mentoring programs. By including these women, there may be a better chance that resolving the issues surrounding mentoring relationships for career development become a part of the design. Such actions may also help organizations solve issues of race, ethnicity and gender in the workplace.

This study also suggests that Women of Color have an obligation for the improvement of organizational mentoring programs. In order to resolve issues and barriers in mentoring for career development, they need to be known by the individuals responsible for resolving them. This suggests that Women of Color must take responsibility for making their negative experiences known. Suggestions in how to resolve these issues and barriers, along with any additional mentoring requirements can also be helpful. With Women of Color working with their organizational leaders, it is possible that any barriers and issues may be more easily resolved.

To ensure continuous improvements and to prevent the return the return of mentoring barriers once they have been resolved, requires monitoring and collection of Mentoring program measurements. Measurement must be set up to collect data that will aid organizations in adjusting their programs as needed. These measurements also need to

be set up such that the data is collected accurately and used in an appropriate manner. One of the key components in collecting metrics for improvements is that they must include information from all employees at all levels and should not be used in a threatening manner.

### *Conclusion*

In the past, theories defined leadership without women and certainly without Women of Color (Hayes, 1999). Researchers and scholars have found that the workforce has become more diverse, which certainly includes Women of Color. Scholars and researchers have found Women of Color continue to face gender, ethnicity, and racial discrimination, which certainly compounds leadership issues for these women. Women of Color continue to face stereotypes, which certainly makes their journey to the top difficult, if not impossible. Researchers have found that barriers exist in leadership and in mentoring for women and this study certainly indicated some of the same for Women of Color. All of this indicates that it is time for a leadership that is as diverse as the current workforce and that is equally obtainable by all. A change is needed that will enable a positive answer to Sojourner Truth's question for Women of Color: Yes, you too are a woman (Hooks, 1981)!

## Appendix A

### Survey Introduction Letter

November 12, 2007

Fellow Women of Color:

Can mentoring be a key to career development? Has mentoring been part of your career development? Would having a mentor help you develop your career? Your participation in this survey on “Mentoring Women of Color for Leadership: Do Barriers Exist?” will help us all understand the dynamics of career development and mentoring for Women of Color. Understanding these dynamics can open up mentoring and career opportunities for all Women of Color.

My name is Sandra Jeffcoat and in 2005 Career Communications Group awarded me the Women of Color in Technology Career Achievement award and in 2007 I received the National Society of Black Engineers Golden Torch Award for Career Achievement. I received both of these awards for my leadership and career accomplishments while performing in a largely male-dominated profession. I am conducting this survey for my dissertation research as a doctoral student at Antioch University in the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change program.

The survey for this study will not ask you any identifying information and your participation will be anonymous. However, if you have any questions concerning protection of your identity or your anonymity, please contact Carolyn Kenny, the Antioch University Institutional Review Board Officer at 805-585-7535 or email her at [CKenny@phd.antioch.edu](mailto:CKenny@phd.antioch.edu). Also, if at any time during the survey you do not wish to continue, then you may exit the survey.

To participate in this study, click on this link:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uuaHLkq6Jb9icYBhXuDBwg\\_3d\\_3d](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=uuaHLkq6Jb9icYBhXuDBwg_3d_3d)

The browser on your desktop will open followed by the display of the first page of the survey. The first page, will give you the same information as presented in this email, so when ready, click the next button and the survey will begin. After answering all the questions on each of the pages, click next to proceed to the next page. A response will be required for each question before you can proceed to the next page of questions. There are 17 questions, which should take about 15 minutes to answer.

If you have any problems or questions, please contact me at 206-380-4174 or email me at [PhDResearch@msn.com](mailto:PhDResearch@msn.com).

Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,  
Sandra Y. Jeffcoat

Appendix B  
Mentoring Survey

## Mentoring Relationship Experiences for Women

Can mentoring be a key to career development? Has mentoring been part of your career development? You're helping your career? Your participation in this survey on "Mentoring Leadership: Do Barriers Exist?" will help us all understand the dynamics of career development and understanding these dynamics can open up mentoring and career opportunities for all Women of Color.

My name is Sandra Jeffcoat and in 2005 Career Communications Group awarded me the Women of Color Achievement award and in 2007 I received the National Society of Black Engineers Golden Achievement. I received both of these awards for my leadership and career accomplishments in a largely male-dominated profession. I am conducting this survey for my doctoral dissertation at Antioch University in the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change program.

The survey for this study will not ask you any identifying information and your participation will be anonymous. If you have any questions concerning protection of your identity or your anonymity, please contact, the Antioch University Institutional Review Board Officer at 805-585-7535 or email me at [mailhy@antioch.edu](mailto:mailhy@antioch.edu). Also, if at any time during the survey you do not wish to continue, then you may exit the survey.

There are 17 questions, which should take about 15 minutes to answer.

If you have any problems or questions, please contact me at 206-380-4174 or email me at [PhDResearch@msn.com](mailto:PhDResearch@msn.com).

## Your Mentoring Experience

For the purpose of this research, a mentor is defined as a "high-ranking, influential member of your organization who has advanced experience and knowledge and who is committed to providing upward mobility and support to your career" (B. R. Ragins, 1996).

Choose the answer that best fit your mentoring experience.

### 1. What is your mentoring experience within your organization?

- Currently have a mentor.
- Had a mentor in the past.
- Currently have a mentor and had one in the past.
- Never had a mentor.



## Obtaining a Mentor

The questions below ask about your experience with obtaining a mentoring relationship within your organization.

### 2. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because:

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Of a lack of opportunity to meet potential mentors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My immediate supervisor may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Of a shortage of potential mentors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are no mentors available with my ethnicity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My co-workers may disapprove of me initiating a mentoring relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Obtaining a Mentor

### 3. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because:

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is a lack of access to potential mentors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am afraid that potential mentors may be "put off" by such advancement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that it is up to the mentor to make the first move.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Obtaining a Mentor

### 4. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because:

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Of lack of opportunity to develop relationships with potential mentors.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a mentoring relationship with me because of their ethnicity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Co-workers would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors do not notice me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of their gender.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors lack the time to develop a mentoring relationship with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Obtaining a Mentor

### 5. I am prevented from initiating a mentoring relationship with a mentor because:

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am uncomfortable taking an assertive role in approaching a potential mentor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Such an approach may be misinterpreted as a sexual advance by a potential mentor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am afraid of being rejected by a potential mentor.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Such an approach may be seen as a sexual advance by others in the organization.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Obtaining a Mentor

### 6. I am prevented from obtaining a mentoring relationship because:

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Slightly Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my gender.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor will not authorize the mentoring time commitment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Potential mentors are unwilling to develop a relationship with me because of my ethnicity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My supervisor would disapprove if I entered a mentoring relationship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My organization does not recognize the value of mentoring.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Descriptive Questions

### 7. What is your highest level of education?

- No High School Diploma.
- High School
- Some college, but not a 2-year degree.
- Associate Degree or 2-year College Degree
- Bachelors Degree or 4-year College Degree.
- Masters Degree
- Doctorate Degree or equivalent (e.g. Law Degree)

### 8. What is your martial status?

- Single
- Married
- Living with a partner
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed

## Descriptive Questions

### 9. What is your ethnicity?

- African
- African-American
- Asian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- White (not Hispanic)
- Other (please specify)

### 10. What is your age?

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Over 65

## Questions 11 and 12

### 11. In what region of the country are you located?

- North East
- South East
- Central
- North West
- South West
- Outside the US (please specify)

### 12. What is your current employment status?

- Unemployed
- Employed part-time
- Employed full-time



## Descriptive Questions

### 13. What is the nature of the work of your organization?

- Agriculture
- Education
- Transportation
- Communications
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade
- Finance
- Services other than healthcare
- Healthcare services
- Public administration
- Other (please specify)

## Descriptive Questions

**14. How many years have you been employed with your organization?**

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- Over 25

**15. What is the position title that most closely matches your current role?**

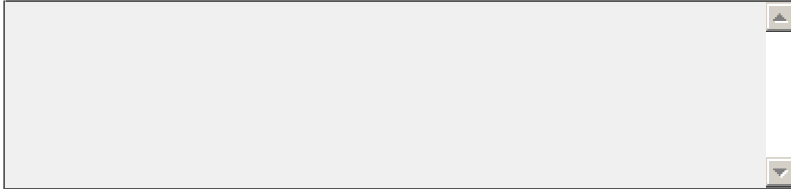
- CEO, President, or Executive Director
- Partner
- Vice President
- Director
- Manager
- Supervisor
- Team Leader
- Non-Leader, manager or supervisor
- Other (please specify)

## Open-ended Question

### 16. What is the size of your current employer?

- Small (fewer than 150 employees)
- Medium (150 to 299 employees)
- Large (300 or more employees)

### 17. Are there other formal or informal programs that you have participated in that have advanced your career/leadership? If so, please briefly describe those programs.



Appendix C  
Coding Matrix

Survey Item Description	SPSS Variable Name	Coding
What is your mentoring experience within your organization?	EXPERIEN	1 = Currently have a mentor 2 = Had a mentor in the past 3 = Currently have a mentor and had one in the past 4 = Never had a mentor
What is your highest level of education?	EDUCATE	1 = No high school diploma 2 = High school 3 = Some college, but not a 2-year degree 4 = Associate degree or 2-year college degree 5 = Bachelor's degree or 4-year college degree 6 = Master's degree 7 = Doctorate degree or equivalent
What is your marital status?	MARITAL	1 = Single 2 = Married 3 = Living with a partner 4 = Separated 5 = Divorced 6 = Widowed
What is your ethnicity?	ETHNIC	1 = African 2 = African-American 3 = Asian 4 = Hispanic 5 = Native American 6 = White (Not Hispanic) 7 = Other
What is your age?	AGE	1 = 18-25 2 = 26-35 3 = 36-45 4 = 46-55 5 = 56-65 6 = Over 65
In what region of the country are you located?	LOCATION	1 = Northeast 2 = Southeast 3 = Central 4 = Northwest 5 = Southwest 6 = Outside the U.S.

What is your current employment status?	ESTAT	1 = Unemployed 2 = Employed part time 3 = Employed full time
What is the nature of the work of your organization?	ORGAN	1 = Agriculture 2 = Education 3 = Transportation 4 = Communications 5 = Wholesale trade 6 = Retail trade 7 = Finance 8 = Service other than healthcare 9 = Healthcare services 10 = Public administration 11 = Technology 12 = Aerospace 13 = Manufacturing 14 = Other
How many years have you been employed with your organization?	EYEARS	1 = 0-5 2 = 6-10 3 = 11-15 4 = 16-20 5 = 21-25 6 = Over 25
What is the position title that most closely matches your current role?	POSITION	1 = CEO, president, or executive director 2 = Partner 3 = Vice president 4 = Director 5 = Manager 6 = Supervisor 7 = Team Leader 8 = Non-leader, manager or supervisor 9 = Other
What is the size of you current employer?	OSIZE	1 = Small (fewer than 150 employees) 2 = Medium (150 to 299 employees) 3 = Large (300 or more employees)
Mentoring Scale	Item1–Item24	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Moderately Agree 3 = Slightly Agree 4 = Neither Agree nor Disagree 5 = Slightly Disagree 6 = Moderately Disagree 7 = Strongly Disagree

Open Question: Are there other formal or informal programs that you have participated in that have advanced your career/leadership? If so, please briefly describe those programs.

OPEN

- 1 = None
- 2 = Organization formal leadership and mentoring program
- 3 = Family
- 4 = Organization diversity program
- 5 = Informal and peer
- 6 = Outside support and education
- 7 = Other

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