

THE INFLUENCE OF MENTORING ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AMONG
WOMEN COUNSELOR EDUCATORS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATION

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ABSTRACT

The practice of mentoring in the counseling profession has been increasingly promoted in the literature as a means to facilitate the personal and professional development of graduate students and early career counselor educators. Women, in particular, have been identified as a group with unique needs and experiences related to mentoring that are worthy of scholarly attention. Yet, few empirical studies have examined the nature of women's mentoring relationships and the ways in which they may influence the development of professional domains such as leadership. With a particular interest in protégé experiences in women-to-women mentoring relationships, the purpose of this phenomenological investigation was to describe the nature and meaning of 10 women counselor educators' experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships. In-depth interviews resulted in the identification of five themes: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, Developmental Process, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, Salience of Gender, and Reflections of Mentoring Experiences. This study provides evidence for the need to promote mentoring in the counseling profession as an effective pathway for women's leadership development. Practice implications and recommendations for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Problem

Leadership is a popular topic of scholarly pursuit among scholars across diverse disciplines such as business, education, nursing, and psychology. Using the search keyword “leadership” in Academic Search Complete, a premier database that provides comprehensive coverage of multidisciplinary research, a search yielded nearly 60,000 peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals between 1985 and 2016. The abundance of available research on the topic of leadership provides promise for the continuation of research by scholars interested in understanding the complex and evolving nature of leadership within, and across, diverse professional contexts.

To date, no agreed-upon definition of leadership exists. Instead, there are countless definitions of the concept in the vast scholarly literature for consideration among scholars interested in examining this universal phenomenon. Some definitions put forth by scholars have focused on leadership as a personal characteristic (a trait approach) whereas others have focused on leadership as a bi-directional interaction between those who lead and those who follow (a process approach). Offering a definition that reflects

the process approach, which according to Bass (2008) has become more popularized in the broader leadership literature, Sweeney (2012, p. 5) defined leadership as

those actions by individuals in professional counseling that contribute to the realization of our individual and collective capacity to serve others competently, ethically, and justly as helping professionals. This leadership can be found in all settings and at all levels from local through international service to others needing and desiring our assistance.

Inherent in this definition, and specific to the context of counseling, is the notion that leadership can be learned and demonstrated by any professional counselor across a broad range of contexts.

The view of leadership as a process that can be learned has sparked a more recent and distinct line of scholarly inquiry focused on leadership development. DeRue and Myers (2014) broadly defined leadership development as “the process of preparing individuals and collectives to effectively engage in leading-following interactions” (p. 834). Based on their definition, leadership development practices should not only aim to promote leader knowledge, skills, and abilities in areas such as self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-motivation, but they should also promote leadership competencies in areas on the interpersonal level such as social awareness and social skills (see Day, 2000). The intentional investment of leadership development on both levels builds stronger leaders who, in turn, play a vital role in contributing to the success and advancement of organizations and professions in the ever-changing social and economic landscape.

As a relatively young profession, counseling has greatly benefited from leadership over the last several decades since its development in the 1890s and early 1900s. Indeed, effective leadership on the part of counseling professionals, often working as a collective,

has led to the increased recognition and legitimization of counseling as a distinct profession in both the social and political realms (for a historical overview, see Sweeney, 2012). Yet, leadership has historically been a neglected area of study (Paradise, Ceballos, & Hall, 2010) that has only more recently sparked the interest of counseling scholars, leaving a significant gap between leadership practice and scholarship.

Within the practice context, for example, formal leadership trainings have been developed and initiated over the last few years by leading counseling organizations such as Chi Sigma Iota (CSI), the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) as a means to develop and nurture emerging leaders of the profession. Complementing these efforts for formal leadership training, the most recent standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2016) clearly mandate that accredited counselor preparation and training programs and faculty prepare counseling graduate students to enter into leadership roles. Among doctoral students, specifically, the standards identify leadership and advocacy as one of the five core professional roles that must be addressed in addition to counseling, supervision, teaching, and research and scholarship.

Within the research context, particularly within the last decade and a half, much attention has been paid to documenting the legacies of notable leaders in profile pieces. These works have been published within major leadership texts such as *Leaders and Legacies* (West, Osborn, & Bubenzer, 2003a) and premier journals such as the *Journal of Counseling and Development*. Often focusing on professional counselors who hold privileged statuses (e.g., Caucasians, men) that have served in visible leadership positions

(e.g., organizational leadership roles), these profiles showcase effective leadership behaviors and processes specific to the counseling profession. However, it is important to note that these works are limited in three important ways. Firstly, they do not fully capture *what* leadership looks like across various contexts such as counselor training, scholarship, and clinical practice. Secondly, few diverse leaders are featured in these works, thereby raising an important scholarly question as to *how* leadership may be uniquely experienced among these populations such as women. Finally, the focus of these works is most often centered on the *outcomes* of effective leadership, rather than on the *development* of effective leadership.

To begin to address these gaps, the counseling leadership literature has experienced a few recent noteworthy shifts. Over the last few years, a handful of empirical articles, mostly qualitative in nature, have been published on the leadership experiences among specific sub-populations of counselor leaders such as school counselors (e.g., Dollarhide & Gibson, 2008; Janson, 2009), master's students (e.g., Wahesh & Myers, 2014), and counselor educators (Gibson, Dollarhide, & McCallum, 2010) who have served in leadership roles relevant to their professional growth and development. Important to the present study, Black and Magnuson's (2005) qualitative study turned attention to the importance of examining the unique experiences of women counselor leaders who have served in positional and non-positional leadership roles. In addition to the identification of specific leader attributes and behaviors among these women, findings from Black and Magnuson's study suggest that women's leadership development is fostered in the midst of empowering, interpersonal relationships.

Focused on factors that influence the development of leadership among professional counselors, two empirical studies have been conducted to date. In their seminal study, Magnuson, Wilcoxon, and Norem (2003) qualitatively examined the turning points among seasoned and accomplished counseling professionals that led them to become leaders. In a subsequent study conducted by Meany-Walen, Carnes-Holt, Barrio Minton, Purswell, and Pronchenko-Jain (2013), the authors used mixed methodology to examine the leadership development experiences of organizational leaders in the ACA and CSI. Both studies found that leadership development was influenced by numerous, interacting factors operating on intrapersonal and interpersonal levels. Among the factors identified on the interpersonal level, the role of mentors and professional models was identified by participants in both studies. Yet, no found published study to date in the empirical counseling literature has examined the influence of mentoring relationships on leadership development, particularly among women counselor educators who assume positional leadership roles (e.g., serving in an organizational leadership position) and non-positional leadership roles (e.g., serving as an advocate for clients and/or the counseling profession).

Similar to leadership, mentoring is an age-old practice that has been studied extensively by scholars across a diversity of disciplines. While scholarship on mentoring is not as prolific as scholarship focused on leadership, a search conducted in Academic Search Complete using the search keyword “mentoring” indicated that between 1985 and 2016, about 10,000 peer-reviewed articles have been published. However, many of these articles are void of a definition of mentoring, thereby limiting our understanding of the nature and dynamics of mentoring relationships.

To address this conceptual challenge facing the field, Bozeman and Feeney (2007, p. 731) put forth a comprehensive, universal definition of mentoring to guide scholarly work. They defined mentoring as

a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé).

One of the many implications of this definition is that within formal and informal mentoring relationships, mentors provide a number of career- and psychosocial-related functions to promote the protégé's success and satisfaction in the context of work.

Indeed, a growing body of research focused on the outcomes of mentoring has pointed to a number of subjective and objective benefits that both protégés (e.g., Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004) and mentors (e.g., Ghosh & Reio, 2013) can receive as a result of serving in mentoring relationships. While negative experiences surely exist, research suggests that the benefits that can be accrued for protégés and mentors outweigh the costs. Thus, professional organizations have increasingly promoted formal mentoring programs for the purposes of socialization, enhanced communication, talent and leadership development, and diversification of leaders in high ranking positions (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007).

Within the counseling profession, mentoring has been widely promoted in the context of counselor education. This is likely, in part, because mentoring is an empowering relationship that aligns with current training standards (CACREP, 2016) and ethical guidelines (ACA, 2014), both of which emphasize the importance of promoting growth and development within the professional realm. Yet, there is a dearth of

empirical research on how these relationships are experienced among counseling graduate students and counselor educators, particularly among women.

Purpose of this Study

The primary purpose of this study was to illuminate the phenomenon of mentoring and gain a deeper understanding of the role of mentoring in influencing leadership development among women counselor educators. Currently, there is a dearth of research that focuses on women and mentoring in the counseling profession, and the same holds true for research on women and leadership in the counseling profession. Further, there is no found study to date that has examined the linkage between these two constructs despite claims in conceptual and theoretical works that mentoring is an avenue for personal and professional development. A deeper understanding of the role of mentoring for women counselor educators, specific to their leadership development, advances counseling research and has practical implications on the individual, relational, programmatic, and organizational levels.

Guiding Research Question

The guiding research question for this investigation was as follows: What is the nature and meaning of women counselor educators' experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships?

Definition of Terms

Counselor educator is a professional with a doctoral degree in the profession of counseling who teaches graduate level counseling courses and meets additional requirements to fulfill her/his academic role which may include activities such as conducting research and providing service to the community and profession. A counselor

educator holds the identity of a professional counselor and therefore adheres to the ethical and competency standards set forth by the counseling profession.

Leadership is defined by Sweeney (2012) as “those actions by individuals in professional counseling that contribute to the realization of our individual and collective capacity to serve others competently, ethically, and justly as helping professionals. This leadership can be found in all settings and at all levels from local through international service to others needing and desiring our assistance” (p. 5).

Leadership development is defined by DeRue and Myers (2014) as “the process of preparing individuals and collectives to effectively engage in leading-following interactions” (p. 834).

Mentoring is defined by Bozeman and Feeney (2007) as “a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé)” (p. 731).

Woman counselor educator is described as a self-identified woman with a doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision or Counseling who teaches graduate level counseling courses and meets additional requirements to fulfill her academic role which may include activities such as conducting research and providing service to the community and profession. A woman counselor educator holds the identity

of a professional counselor and therefore adheres to the ethical and competency standards set forth by the counseling profession.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a review of the related literature on mentoring and leadership, particularly in the context of the counseling profession. This chapter is organized into three sections. The first section, focused on mentoring literature, provides a discussion about the history and definition of mentoring, mentoring functions, types of mentoring relationships, mentoring outcomes in the workplace, and mentoring in counselor education. The second section, focused on leadership literature, provides a discussion about the definition of leadership, the distinctions between the concepts of leader development and leadership development, and the nature of leadership in the counseling profession. The chapter concludes with a section on the need to examine mentoring as a leadership development pathway among women counselor educators.

Mentoring

History and Definition

The concept of mentoring has been traced back to ancient Greek mythology by numerous scholars (e.g., Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Kram, 1985; Ragins & Kram, 2007). In Homer's *Odyssey*, Odysseus left his infant son, Telemachus, in the care of his wise and faithful companion, Mentor, when he began his epic journey. On occasion, Athena, the female goddess of wisdom, took Mentor's male form and carried out multiple

roles (e.g., guide, teacher, protector, advisor, and guardian) to promote Telemachus' growth and development. The portrayal of these roles and the dynamics of the mentoring relationship as one that "transcends time, gender, and culture" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 4) have since been extrapolated into our understanding and practice of modern day mentoring (for a critique, see Roberts, 2000).

An interest in modern day mentoring was sparked during the mid- to late-1970s largely through the seminal work of Daniel Levinson (1978) and Kathy Kram (1983, 1985), both of whom are highly cited in the field. Levinson's (1978) book, *The Seasons of a Man's Life*, discussed the importance of a mentoring relationship for men's development, particularly during early adulthood, and the complex nature that it assumes as a "form of love relationship" (p. 100). In his description of mentoring, Levinson depicted the traditional understanding that "the mentor is ordinarily several years older, a person of great experience and seniority in the world the young man is entering" (p. 97). In fact, he identified the mentoring relationship as one of the most important relationships a man can have in his career.

With a focus on developmental relationships in the corporate work setting for both men and women, Kram completed her dissertation in 1980 and published her first article on the successive phases of mentoring in 1983. The subsequent publication of her book, *Mentoring at Work* (1985) not only furthered the contemporary research tradition that arguably began with her previous works (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007) but "moved the concept of *mentoring* from an abstract academic construct to a household word" (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 4). Similar to Levinson's (1978) work, Kram's exploratory, qualitative studies are void of an explicit definition of mentoring and instead echo a traditional

conceptualization. She described mentoring as a complex, ever-evolving developmental relationship that entails a range of functions provided by an older, senior colleague to promote the personal and career development of a younger, junior colleague.

Following Kram's work, research and exploration in the field of mentoring proliferated in academia, cutting across multiple professions and disciplines around the globe to include business and industry, nursing and medicine, law and library science, teacher training and higher education, and psychology and counseling. Unsurprisingly, contemporary reviews and critiques of mentoring theory and research have demonstrated that an inordinate number of conceptualizations and definitions exist within, and vary across, professions and disciplines, reflecting inattention to the conceptual needs of the field (Bozeman & Feeney, 2007; Mijares, Baxley, & Bond, 2013; Roberts, 2000). Within these fragmented works, Bozeman and Feeney (2007) found that it is commonplace for mentoring scholars to inadequately define mentoring, and instead provide suggestive conceptualizations that highlight mentoring attributes. Worse yet, the authors found that there are some mentoring scholars who fail to provide a definition altogether.

In response to this professional dilemma, scholars have employed differing approaches to arrive at a universal definition of the concept, mentoring. For example, in Roberts' (2000) phenomenological reduction of mentoring research published between 1978 and 1999, the following definition was offered: "A formalised process whereby a more knowledgeable and experienced person actuates a supportive role of overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning within a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and personal development" (p. 162). In Mijares and colleagues' (2013) concept analysis, focused on the meaning of mentoring in six

disciplines (i.e., nursing, anthropology, business, education, psychology, and social work), the authors theoretically defined mentoring as “an interpersonal process that takes place between a trained, seasoned mentor and a novice protégé. After accounting for cultural differences, mentoring entails providing emotional support, sharing knowledge and experience, role modeling, and guidance” (p. 27). While these definitions identify widely-agreed upon attributes of mentoring (e.g., existence of a relationship and process form) they, as well as others that have been put forth in the literature, are limited.

According to Bozeman and Feeney (2007), it is not conceptually sufficient for a mentoring definition to reflect the usage of the term in everyday language. The authors stipulated that in order to advance research, the definition must also provide boundary conditions that serve to distinguish mentoring from related forms of knowledge transmission. Guided by these criteria, the authors offered the following re-worked definition of mentoring that was used for the purpose of this research study:

a process for the informal transmission of knowledge, social capital, and psychosocial support perceived by the recipient relevant to work, career, or professional development; mentoring entails informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time, between a person who is perceived to have greater relevant knowledge, wisdom, or experience (the mentor) and a person who is perceived to have less (the protégé). (p. 731)

As discussed by Bozeman and Feeney (2007), this definition has three broad implications. First, this definition posits that mentoring relationships informally develop in a professional context, thereby (a) distinguishing mentoring relationships from work or supervisory relationships in which an individual provides required instruction to another individual, (b) distinguishing mentoring relationships from other relationships that form in the context of socialization such as friendship, and (c) questioning the legitimacy of mentoring relationships that develop in the context of forced pairings. Second, this

definition posits that mentoring relationships, whether hierarchical or nonhierarchical, are structured in nature in the sense that they require the perceived presence of an unequal knowledge base between the protégé and mentor within a particular domain. Third, this definition posits that mentoring relationships are marked by developmental processes that (a) promote relational development through the transmission of knowledge and (b) unfold over a sustained period of time until the relationship transforms or ceases to exist. Taken together, these implications demonstrate the utility of Bozeman and Feeney's definition in the multidisciplinary field of mentoring—a field in need of a clear conceptual vision of mentoring to advance the relationships between its theory, research, and practice.

Mentoring Functions

Within mentoring relationships, mentors serve several functions to promote a protégé's personal and professional well-being. Levinson (1978) was the first to discuss the nature of these functions in the context of young men's development, emphasizing that male mentors assume specific roles for particular purposes such as a *teacher* (to enhance the protégé's skills and intellectual development), *sponsor* (to promote the protégé's visibility and advancement), *host* and *guide* (to socialize the protégé into the social and occupational world), *exemplar* (to provide the protégé with a role model for emulation), and *counselor* (to provide the protégé with moral support in times of stress). In addition to these, Levinson stressed that the most fundamental function of a "true" mentor is to support and facilitate the *realization of the Dream*:

The true mentor, in the meaning intended here, serves as an analogue in adulthood of the "good enough" parent for the child. He fosters the young adult's development by believing in him, sharing the youthful Dream and giving it his blessing, helping to define the newly emerging self in its newly discovered world, and creating a space in which the young man can work on a reasonably satisfactory life structure that contains the Dream. (pp. 98-99)

In this relational context, the mentor serves as a “transitional figure” (p. 99) who encompasses qualities of both a peer and parent in order to balance the protégé’s need for a role model and supporter as he develops increased autonomy and agency in the social and occupational world, and experiences increased mutuality in the mentoring relationship.

With a specific focus on mentoring relationships among men and women in the work setting, to include same-gender and cross-gender relationships, Kram’s (1983, 1985) early work expanded our understanding of mentoring functions. Based on her findings, she proposed two main categories of mentoring functions. The first category, *career functions*, includes sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. These functions are rooted in the structured, hierarchical nature of organizational relationships and aim to promote the protégé’s career development and advancement. The second category, *psychosocial functions*, includes role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship. These functions occur within organizational relationships that are marked by trust, mutuality, and intimacy; that is, relationships in which there is an interpersonal bond. In contrast to career functions, the aim of psychosocial functions is to promote the protégé’s self-efficacy and identity development in the social and occupational world. (See Table 1 for Kram’s [1985] definitions of career and psychosocial mentoring functions.)

Table 1

Kram's (1985) Definitions of Career and Psychosocial Mentoring Functions

Function	Definition
Career Functions	
Sponsorship	Actively nominating the protégé for desirable lateral moves and promotions
Exposure and visibility	Assigning responsibilities to the protégé that allow for the development of relationships with key organizational figures who may influence her or his advancement
Coaching	Suggesting specific strategies to the protégé aimed at enhancing his or her ability to accomplish work objectives, and achieve career recognition and advancement
Protection	Shielding the protégé from untimely or potentially damaging contact with senior organizational members by taking credit and blame in controversial situations, and intervening in situations where the protégé is ill-equipped to achieve a satisfactory resolution
Challenging assignments	Assigning the protégé with challenging work that is supported with training and on-going performance feedback
Psychosocial Functions	
Role modeling	Setting a desirable example via attitudes, values, and behaviors for the protégé to identify with and emulate
Acceptance and confirmation	Conveyance of positive regard from which both the protégé and mentor derive a sense of self
Counseling	Exploration of the protégé's personal concerns that may interfere with her or his positive sense of self in the organization
Friendship	Social interaction that results in mutual liking and understanding and entails enjoyable informal exchanges about work and non-work experiences

Kram's (1985) dual typology of mentoring functions has received empirical support (Noe, 1988; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Schockett & Haring-Hidore, 1985; Tepper, Shaffer, & Tepper, 1996) and has been widely adopted by scholars who conduct

mentoring research in the workplace (Dougherty & Dreher, 2007). Despite its popularity, a growing number of scholars have challenged the dual typology. One study found support for a one-factor solution (Dreher & Ash, 1990) and others have found support for three-factor solutions (Burke, 1984; Pellegrini & Scandura, 2005; Scandura, 1992; Scandura & Ragins, 1993), indicating that role modeling may be a separate, distinct function.

In the wake of research that has begun to examine individual functions instead of broad categories of functions, Fowler and O’Gorman (2005) developed an instrument to measure mentoring functions in contemporary organizational environments based on interview data with 24 mentees and 24 mentors (with gender equally represented) across six organizational settings. The authors found support for an eight-factor solution using confirmatory factor analysis. Importantly, goodness of fit indices indicated that the two-factor solution (based on Kram’s framework) represented poorer fit in comparison to the eight-factor solution, supporting a movement away from conceptually parsimonious explanations to statistically parsimonious factor models.

Adding further complexity to our understanding of mentoring functions, Ragins and Kram (2007) identified four important findings that have emerged from the extant literature. First, the range and degree of mentoring functions that are observed in the work context, and that occur within and across relationships, varies depending on the complex interplay of personal, relational, and organizational factors. Second, the types of functions provided by the mentor may lead to different objective and subjective outcomes for the protégé. Third, mentoring functions change in nature as the relationship evolves over time. Finally, mentoring functions can be provided by individuals in a variety of

supportive, developmental relationships who are not perceived as mentors. Given these considerations, the authors emphasized the importance of distinguishing the differences between “mentoring functions” and “mentoring relationships” to advance the current body of mentoring literature.

Types of Mentoring Relationships

Traditionally, there are two dominant types of mentoring relationships: informal and formal. As previously noted, these mentoring relationships have traditionally been portrayed by scholars as meaningful face-to-face interactions between an older, senior-level and younger, junior-level professional for the purpose of promoting the protégé’s personal and professional development. However, with the changing nature of organizational hierarchies and the trend in technological advancement, alternative informal and formal sources of mentoring have emerged such as peer mentoring and e-mentoring (for reviews, see McManus & Russell, 2007 and Ensher & Murphy, 2007, respectively). Regardless of their variations (traditional, alternative, or a combination of both), informal and formal mentoring relationships can be distinguished from one another primarily on the basis of their initiation and structure (Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

Informal mentoring relationships develop spontaneously as a result of mutual identification and developmental needs (Allen, Day, & Lentz, 2005; Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Kram, 1985; Levinson, 1978; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). During the initiation phase of these relationships, lasting between 6 to 12 months, the mentor and protégé experience positive thoughts about one another and fantasize about the benefits of the relationship: The mentor is viewed by the protégé as a respectable and competent professional that can guide and support her or his personal and professional development,

whereas the protégé is viewed by the mentor as a coachable and likable professional with career promise (Chao et al., 1992; Kram, 1985). As the relationship unfolds, confirming events related to mentoring desires and expectations serve to facilitate on-going meaningful exchanges that typically last between three to six years (see Kram, 1985 for a full description of the five mentoring phases).

In contrast to informal mentoring relationships, formal mentoring relationships develop within the context of a sponsoring organization. Mentors and protégés are selectively matched using a variety of strategies (e.g., administrator assignment, mutual selection activities, and data from formal assessments) which are associated with varying strengths and weakness related to factors such as cost and time, as well as participant input and commitment (for a review, see Blake-Beard, O'Neill, & McGowan, 2007). These relationships, which generally last between 6 months to 1 year, are guided by pre-determined expectations (e.g., frequency and duration of meetings, methods of communication, and evaluative practices) that serve to directly benefit organizational goals (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007; Murray, 1991; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). The success of these relationships, then, is dependent on the degree to which mentors and protégés can “co-construct a shared focus for the relationship and integrate into their functional relationship the goals for which the program has been established” (Blake-Beard et al., 2007, p. 620). While some formal mentoring pairs achieve this critical task, others may be unsuccessful. In these latter instances, many mentors and protégés may choose to refrain from ending a detrimental relationship or exiting the mentoring program because of professional pressure related to participation (Blake-Beard et al., 2007; Chao et al., 1992). However, in the context of successful matching, some mentoring pairs may

opt to enter into an informal mentoring relationship following completion of the formal mentoring program (Baugh & Fagenson-Eland, 2007), thus highlighting how mentoring experiences can be transformative in nature.

Mentoring Outcomes in the Workplace

Most of mentoring scholarship on the outcomes of mentoring has focused on benefits experienced in mentor-protégé relationships, particularly from the perspective of the protégé. A meta-analysis conducted by Allen and colleagues (2004) of 43 empirical studies on protégé outcomes in mentoring relationships – most of which were cross-sectional surveys published in the 1990s – found that mentored individuals receive greater objective career outcomes (i.e., compensation and promotions) and subjective career outcomes (i.e., career satisfaction, expectations for advancement, career commitment, and job satisfaction) in comparison to their non-mentored peers; however, the effect size for objective career outcomes was small. Additionally, the authors found that both career-related mentoring and psychosocial mentoring were positively related to a number of career outcomes. These findings, in conjunction with mentoring reviews that address protégé benefits associated with mentoring (Dougherty & Dreher, 2007; Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002; Ramaswami & Dreher, 2007; Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003), provide general support for widely publicized claims that protégés should seek out and develop relationships with mentors to promote their personal and professional development in the workplace.

Although not as widely publicized or empirically investigated, mentors also stand to benefit from mentoring relationships (for reviews, see Noe et al., 2002; Ramaswami & Dreher, 2007; Wanberg et al., 2003). A meta-analysis conducted by Ghosh and Reio

(2013) of 18 empirical studies – most of which were cross-sectional survey studies published in the 2000s – found that mentors had higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment in comparison to non-mentors. Further, the authors found that mentoring was positively associated with subjective career outcomes for mentors to include job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and career success. The few studies that have focused on objective career outcomes have found that the reported amount of mentoring provided is positively associated with salary and promotions (with small effect sizes; Bozionelos, 2004; Bozionelos, Bozionelos, Kostopoulos, & Polychroniou, 2011); that mentors report higher compensation and number of promotions in comparison to non-mentors (Allen, Lentz, & Day, 2006); and, conversely, that there is no significant relationship between mentors' reported benefits of mentoring and salary and promotions (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2006). Focusing on anticipated costs and benefits among mentors, Ragins and Scandura's (1999) study found that greater anticipated benefits were positively related to willingness to be a mentor, particularly if the mentor had more previous experience in this role; in instances when higher costs were anticipated, individuals had lower intentions to mentor.

Negative mentoring experiences have long been suggested to co-exist in mentoring relationships as they develop over time, taking various forms that lead to unique, as well as overlapping, outcomes for the protégé and mentor (Kram, 1985; for early theoretical models, see Feldman, 1999 and Scandura, 1998); yet, these experiences have only more recently garnered empirical attention. Using protégé accounts, Eby, McManus, Simon, and Russell (2000) developed a taxonomy of 15 negative mentoring experiences that were categorized into five meta-themes: match within the dyad,

distancing behavior, manipulative behavior, lack of mentor expertise, and general dysfunctionality. In follow-up studies, the occurrence of several types of these negative mentoring experiences was linked with protégé outcomes such as psychological job withdrawal, turnover intentions, stress, depressed mood, lower job satisfaction, and less career-related and psychosocial support (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004). Important to note, Eby and Allen (2002) found that negative mentoring experiences among protégés occurred very to somewhat infrequently across all of their mentoring relationships.

With an interest in the negative mentoring experiences of mentors, Eby and McManus (2004) used mentors' accounts to develop a taxonomy of 12 negative mentoring experiences that were categorized into 10 meta-themes: negative relations, malevolent deception, sabotage, harassment, difficulty, spoiling, benign deception, submissiveness, performance below expectations, and unwillingness to learn. In a follow-up study, mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences were associated with mentor outcomes such as burnout, lower relational quality, and intentions to leave the mentoring relationship (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2008). In terms of the frequency of negative mentoring experiences, Eby and McManus (2004) found that mentors most frequently reported marginally effective relationship experiences, followed by ineffective relationship experiences, and lastly, dysfunctional relationship experiences. These findings, taken together with findings relevant to protégés, suggest that in most protégé-mentor relationships the benefits outweigh the costs.

In an effort to capitalize on the benefits of mentoring, organizations have implemented formal mentoring programs as a key strategic tool. In their literature review

on formal mentoring programs, Baugh and Fagenson-Eland (2007) found a dearth of empirical research on the effectiveness of these programs from an organizational standpoint, noting that nearly all of the benefits fall within the practitioner literature and are generalized from the benefits of informal mentoring relationships. The authors identified the most frequently suggested benefits to include enhanced socialization of new hires, improved organizational communication, early identification and development of employee talent and leadership, and the diversification of individuals in higher ranking positions. In Horvath, Wasko, and Bradley's (2008) study, the authors found that the advertisement of formal mentoring programs with certain program characteristics (e.g., supervisor vs. peer as mentor, voluntary participation) may also be used as a tool to promote organizational attraction, which in turn, is likely to promote recruitment and selective hiring practices that will benefit the organization.

Collectively, the literature on mentoring outcomes points to a number of benefits that may be accrued for the protégé, mentor, and organization, as well as negative experiences that may hinder the realization of such benefits. In acknowledgment of major conceptual and methodological issues that limit the generalizability of these findings, scholars have provided a number of recommendations such as the use of a universal definition of mentoring; the employment of research designs that test causal pathways; and a fine-grained examination of factors that may influence mentoring relationships including protégé and mentor demographics (e.g., gender, race), type of mentoring provided (e.g., career, psychosocial), and relationship type (e.g., informal, formal) (for discussions, see Allen et al., 2004; Ghosh & Reio, 2013; Noe et al., 2002; Wanberg et al., 2003). To date, these factors, as well as many others, have been included

in mentoring studies on outcomes, resulting in complex and, in many instances, conflicting findings that highlight the difficulties in capturing the essence of mentoring relationships for protégés and mentors across different professional contexts.

Mentoring in Counselor Education

Within counselor education, mentoring is valued as a critical, empowering relationship. Indeed, the practice of quality mentoring aligns with current training standards and professional guidelines. For example, the most recent training standards set forth by the CACREP (2016) emphasize the need for counselor education programs to foster inclusive environments for diverse students and faculty for the purposes of recruitment, retention, and personal and professional advancement. Complimenting these standards, the most recent ethical guidelines set forth by the ACA (2014) emphasize the development and maintenance of meaningful and respectful relationships among counseling professionals in supervision, training, and teaching. The exclusion of the word “mentoring” within the ACA *Code of Ethics*, and the nature of its inclusion in the CACREP standards (in definitions about supervision and as curriculum standard for doctoral students in the domain of teaching) implies that mentoring is not a professional mandate, yet current scholarship related to mentoring counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators suggests otherwise.

Before discussing the existing scholarship related to mentoring in the context of counselor education, it is important to note that mentoring has historically, and continues to be, a neglected area of study among counseling scholars. Much of the discourse on the topic resides in (a) conceptual and theoretical articles on mentoring that offer a generalized perspective and (b) research studies on the career experiences of counselor

education doctoral students and early career counselor educators within which mentoring has emerged as a theme or supportive narrative. With few empirical studies focused directly on mentoring, significant gaps in the counseling literature exist on the nature of mentoring in the context of counselor education and how it is experienced among these populations, particularly women.

To help frame the importance of the present study – which focuses on the influence of mentoring on leadership development among women counselor educators – the subsequent review will focus on relevant empirical research related to mentoring counselor education doctoral students and early career counselor educators. Empirical research related to mentoring among master’s level graduate students was not included in this review because this line of inquiry is nearly non-existent. To date, there are no found studies on the general experiences of master’s students and the few studies found that have directly focused on mentoring often centered more on the development and implementation of successful co-mentoring programs and projects (Bowman, Bowman, & Delucia, 1990; Murdock, Stipanovic, & Lucas, 2013; Salzman, 2000) than on the nature and dynamics of mentoring relationships themselves.

Empirical research related to mentoring doctoral students. Studies on the experiences of counselor education doctoral students suggest that mentoring is central to their satisfaction and success. In Protivnak and Foss’ (2009) internet-based qualitative study on the experiences of 141 counselor education doctoral students, mentoring was identified as a theme, alongside others (e.g., department culture, support systems, and personal issues), that both positively and negatively influenced their experience. For many participants, mentoring was deemed to be the *most important* experience in their

doctoral studies. Participants reported that mentors provided a number of functions such as support in the face of discouragement, guidance in regard to meeting program needs, and extending career development opportunities such as invitations to work on research projects; one participant reported that mentoring experiences outside of the department were beneficial. Mentoring, as a hindering aspect, was discussed in the context of not having a mentor and having dissatisfying experiences in mentoring relationships, which were associated with feelings such as frustration, regret, and loneliness. In their discussions about what they wanted from mentoring experiences, participants reported that they desired for mentors to be genuine, offer more guidance, and extend invitations for research. Important to note, Protivnak and Foss identified mentoring as a supportive narrative for two other themes: department culture and social support. Within these two themes participants noted a desire for formal mentoring and the facilitation of mentoring experiences between doctoral students.

With an interest in the research training experiences among doctoral students, Atieno Okech, Astramovich, Johnson, Hoskins, and Rubel (2006) conducted a survey study among 167 counselor educators in CACREP accredited programs that included four items dedicated to research-specific mentoring. In support of Protivnak and Foss' (2009) finding about the important role of mentoring in research training, the authors found that nearly 94% of participants believed that mentoring is an important aspect in research training and should be a requirement in doctoral research training, with the remainder of participants feeling uncertain or neutral on the matter. Additionally, in their analysis of 49 participants' comments provided alongside survey responses, the desire for research-specific mentoring was identified as a major theme. A noteworthy limitation

identified by the authors was that survey items did not relate to participant's research-specific mentoring experiences during their doctoral programs.

It is important to note that many of the studies focused on the mentoring experiences of doctoral students have focused on research productivity. However, little is known about mentoring among counselor education doctoral students with diverse backgrounds (e.g., ethnicity, gender). Findings from Henfield, Owens, and Witherspoon's (2011) qualitative study on the experiences of 11 African American doctoral students in counselor education programs at predominantly White institutions suggest that mentoring is needed to support African American students' success in overcoming personal, professional, and race-related barriers in pursuit of their doctoral degree. Although participants did not mention a desire for mentors per se, they stressed the important role of supports such as seasoned doctoral peers of color, students in race-based campus organizations, and advisors in their personal and professional development.

Along the same line, findings from Rheineck and Roland's (2008) study suggest that mentoring plays a critical role in the personal and career development among women counselor education doctoral students. Using exploratory survey design, the authors sought to understand the perceived mentoring needs, and desirable mentor attributes, among 21 women counselor education doctoral students who were seeking mentoring relationships with women faculty in their first through third year of doctoral training. Two important findings related to mentoring needs, which resulted in the development of the Rheineck Mentoring Model, were that (a) mentoring is a developmental process and (b) personal and professional mentoring needs were dependent on participants' year in the program. Concerning desirable mentor attributes, participants' qualitative survey

responses indicated that they desired the mentor to provide mentoring functions specific to their personal development (e.g., listening, showing respect, displaying concern for their well-being) and professional development (e.g., offering feedback and guidance, providing opportunities for networking) at all stages of their program. A final noteworthy finding was that for those who had experience with mentoring, qualitative survey responses indicated that these relationships were marked by positive, meaningful, and empowering interactions.

Empirical research related to mentoring faculty. Supporting the critical role that mentoring plays in the career satisfaction and success of early career educators are findings from Magnuson and colleagues' (Magnuson, Black, & Lahman, 2006; Magnuson, Norem, & Lonneman-Doroff, 2009; Magnuson, Shaw, Tubin, & Norem, 2004) 6-year longitudinal study on the experiences of new assistant professors who assumed their positions during the 2000 academic term. Across each phase of the study, participants consistently expressed their desire for mentorship. During their first two years – which for many was accompanied by increased levels of stress and isolation, as well as decreased levels of satisfaction, after the first semester – participants reported that they desired to have a mentor talk ideas out, discuss research and co-write, and increase their confidence (Magnuson et al., 2004). At the conclusion of their third year, which entailed more diverse experiences, many participants expressed a desire for mentorship as a pathway for scholarship and professional friendship (Magnuson et al., 2006). Further, they discussed responses to the absence of mentoring such as giving up on finding a mentor and seeking out mentoring relationships outside of the department to make meaningful connections with other faculty (Magnuson et al., 2006). Importantly,

Magnuson and colleagues (2006) noted that participants who had experience with mentoring activities in their doctoral studies appeared to be more satisfied and successful. In the last phase of the study, participants continued to express that mentoring was a *major influence* on their satisfaction and success, with the lack of mentorship emerging in their descriptions of negative relationships (Magnuson et al., 2009).

To better understand the nature of research mentoring among counselor educators, Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) conducted a national survey study using a sample of 139 pre-tenured counselor educators in CACREP accredited programs, the majority of whom held the rank of assistant professor. The survey constructed for the study, the Research Mentor Quality Questionnaire, included sections related to both instructional and relational functions specific to research mentoring. Results indicated that 107 participants received mentorship. Regarding the nature of the mentoring relationship, over half of the participants reported that they experienced the following instructional functions: navigation of the promotion and tenure process ($n = 87$), feedback on writing ($n = 70$), editing ($n = 63$), generating research ideas ($n = 61$), and advice about career decisions ($n = 57$). Relational functions reported by over half of the participants were cooperation ($n = 84$) and encouragement of open communication ($n = 70$).

Concerning multiculturalism and diversity in mentoring among counselor educators, there are a few recent studies that have examined the experiences of counselor educators of color. For example, Constantine, Smith, Redington, and Owens (2008) found that receiving inadequate mentoring in the workplace was one of seven microaggression themes in their qualitative study on racial microaggressions among 12 African American faculty working in counseling and counseling psychology programs.

Lack of mentoring was also identified as a major barrier to the attainment of promotion and tenure in Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy's (2004) multiple methodology study on the experiences, challenges, and recommendations of 41 African American counselor educators. While some participants reported that they were able to receive mentorship from African American faculty outside of their department, many participants stated that they remained uninformed about expectations and processes related to advancement. The overwhelming recommendation made by participants for African American junior faculty was to put aside the expectation for mentoring and learn to work alone. This sentiment was also echoed by a woman participant in Constantine et al.'s (2008) study. On the programmatic level, Holcomb-McCoy and Bradley's (2003) exploratory study on the recruitment and retention practices in CACREP accredited counseling programs found that only 37 of 73 program liaisons identified mentoring as a strategy used to retain ethnic minority faculty. Interestingly, mentoring was the most common strategy identified by liaisons, yet was not widely practiced across programs.

Focusing on the experiences of women counselor educators, scholars have identified several difficulties related to mentoring. In Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, and Hazler's (2005) national survey on encouraging and discouraging factors in academia as perceived by 115 women counselor educators, the authors found that lack of mentor(s) was reported as a top 10 discouraging factor and, relatedly, that this factor was significantly associated with negative life satisfaction. More so, based on demographic data, the authors found that less than 50% of participants had mentoring programs at their institutions, thereby suggesting a lack of intentional programmatic support for promoting and fostering these critical relationships.

In addition to the role mentoring plays in occupational satisfaction among women counselor educators, another recent study conducted by Shillingford, Trice-Black, and Butler (2013) suggested that mentoring is related to minority women counselor educators' experience of wellness. Their phenomenological investigation on the experiences of eight participants found that mentors were identified as a positive source of social support in the face of challenges related to their professional responsibilities (e.g., overwhelming workloads and high expectations from self and others) and relationships with students and faculty (e.g., negative comments and exclusionary practices). Ideal mentors were described as individuals with a successful record of scholarship who demonstrated a strong commitment to providing personal and professional support and guidance. Importantly, participants stressed the need for minority mentors—a need that remained unmet by colleagues in the profession, some of whom were reported as expressing an outward commitment to multiculturalism.

Another qualitative study conducted by Trepal and Stinchfield (2012) on the experiences of 20 women counselor educator mothers pointed to the importance of mentoring. Participants discussed several environmental influences that were relevant to their status as counselor educator mothers to include position flexibility, experienced discrimination, and felt support. Formal and informal mentoring from other academic mothers at the doctoral and faculty level emerged as an important source of felt support, which may be particularly beneficial in navigating unsupportive and oppressive situations.

Summary. In sum, across the reviewed studies related to mentoring in counselor education, the need for (or lack of) quality mentoring experiences among counselor

education doctoral students and early career counselor educators is a consistent theme. Within these groups, scholars have more recently begun to pay particular attention to the experiences of persons of color and women and have found that these populations desire empowering mentoring relationships that can support them in successfully navigating common career experiences, as well as those unique to their background. Among the common career experiences within counselor education that has sparked the attention of counseling scholars is research productivity, of which the presence of quality mentoring has been found to play a critical role.

To promote quality mentoring relationships in the context of counselor education, counseling scholars have put forth general strategies and guidelines for mentors and protégés for the development and maintenance of intentional (Black, Suarez, & Medina, 2004), ethical (Warren, 2005), and culturally responsive mentoring relationships (e.g., Brinson & Kottler, 1993; Casto, Caldwell, & Salazar, 2005). Relatedly, more recent works focused on mentoring women in particular have advocated for the use of relational models, such as relational-cultural theory, to promote the effectiveness of same-gender and cross-gender mentoring relationships (e.g., Hammer, Trepal, & Speedlin, 2014; Portman & Garrett, 2005; Walker, 2006). Guidelines specific to promoting research-specific mentoring practices for mentors and protégés have also been developed by Borders and colleagues (2012). Yet, few empirical studies in the context of counselor education exist to ground these works. Thus, it is imperative for counseling scholars to continue conducting empirical research to better understand the mentoring experiences of diverse groups and guide effective mentoring practice. Women counselor educators are

one unique group whose mentoring experiences have yet to be examined, particularly in relation to the professional domain of leadership.

Leadership

Leadership is important across all disciplines and has been studied extensively for nearly a century (Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009), particularly among organizational behavior scholars. The popularity of leadership as a topic of scholarly pursuit is likely, in part, attributed to the widely held premise that leadership is the *single* most critical factor in the success of an organization (Bass, 2008). To build strong leaders, and subsequently stronger professions, many leadership scholars have more recently turned their attention to better understanding the factors that influence leadership development. Within the counseling profession, research on leadership and leadership development has been historically neglected (Paradise et al., 2010) and is currently in its infancy. However, promisingly, the current professional call among counseling scholars to increase efforts to promote counselor leadership and leadership development within the profession (e.g., Chang, Barrio-Minton, Dixon, Myers, & Sweeney, 2012; House & Sears, 2002; West et al., 2003a) suggests that these overlapping, yet distinct, areas of research will continue to blossom in the coming years.

Definition of Leadership

Numerous definitions and conceptualizations of leadership have been put forth across time in various forms to include myths, legends, religious texts, popular books, and social science literature (Bass, 2008). In support of this observation in the research context, Fleishman and colleagues' (1991) identified 65 systems for classifying definitions of leadership in their review of organizational leadership behavior literature

spanning nearly 50 years (1940-1986) in psychology, management, and military research. In their discussion of this complex picture of leadership, the authors identified major trends as well as sources of diversity that exist among these classification systems that are resultant from issues such as differing theoretical frameworks and use of research methods. Furthermore, the authors noted that they may have overlooked other classification systems in the vast literature, which has only continued to evolve since their review.

In a more recent text on leadership theory and practice, Northouse (2010) identified four components that are fundamental to the phenomenon of leadership. First, leadership is a process that entails the occurrence of a bi-directional event between *leaders*, “the people who engage in leadership” and *followers*, “those toward whom leadership is directed” (p. 3). Second, influence is the necessary precondition for the existence of leadership. Third, leadership occurs in a context wherein a leader influences a group of others who share a common purpose. Lastly, leadership entails attention to the pursuit of mutual goals.

Encompassing these components, in the simplest of terms, Northouse (2010) proposed the following definition of leadership: “Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 3). In contrast to the trait perspective of leadership, which focuses on inborn traits that make an effective leader, the process perspective importantly reflects the notions that (a) any individual can demonstrate leadership behaviors to varying degrees in relations with others, and (b) that such behaviors can be learned (Northouse, 2010). These notions align

with the dominant discourse on leadership and leadership development in the counseling profession.

Specific to the context of the counseling profession, Sweeney (2012, p. 5) defined leadership as:

those actions by individuals in professional counseling that contribute to the realization of our individual and collective capacity to serve others competently, ethically, and justly as helping professionals. This leadership can be found in all settings and at all levels from local through international service to others needing and desiring our assistance.

This particular definition of leadership was chosen in light of Bass' (2008) recommendation for scholars to select a definition of leadership that aligns with "the methodological and substantive aspects of leadership in which one is interested" (p. 23). Sweeney's (2012) definition surmises that leadership can be learned; is rooted in a desire to serve others; occurs on individual and relational levels; and creates change for the benefit of clients, the profession, and broader communities.

Leader Development vs. Leadership Development

As discussed in Day's (2000) highly cited review of leadership development, important distinctions exist between the concepts of leader development and leadership development. Leader development is "the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in leadership roles and processes" which are used to "facilitate setting direction, creating alignment, and maintaining commitment in groups of people who share common work" (McCauley, Van Velsor, & Ruderman, 2010, p. 2). The focus of leader development is on the individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities in leadership roles; that is, there is an intentional investment in human capital (Day, 2000). To this end, leader development practices such as coaching, mentoring, and providing challenging job

assignments are used in organizations to promote intrapersonal competence skills, including self-awareness (e.g., emotional awareness, self-confidence), self-regulation (e.g., self-control, trustworthiness), and self-motivation (e.g., initiative, commitment) (Day, 2000).

The concept of leadership development, on the other hand, is characterized by a broader, more relational view of leadership and is defined as “expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes” (Day, 2000, p. 582). The focus of leadership development is on interpersonal exchanges within social networks for the purpose of creating organizational value; that is, there is an intentional investment in social capital (Day, 2000). Thus, leadership development practices such as networking and action learning, which involve multiple individuals within the environmental and organizational context, are used to promote interpersonal competency skills to include social awareness (e.g., empathy, service orientation) and social skills (e.g., building bonds, team orientation, conflict management) (Day, 2000).

Although it can be beneficial for leadership scholars to distinguish between leader development and leadership development in their work, DeRue and Myers (2014) contended that separating these two concepts results in an incomplete understanding of the capacity to develop leaders within organizations. Thus, in an intentional effort to emphasize the interdependence among these concepts, these authors put forth a broadened definition that was used for the purpose of this investigation. They defined leadership development as “the process of preparing individuals and collectives to effectively engage in leading-following interactions” (p. 834). Importantly, this

definition reflects the more often expressed usage of the term leadership development, in contrast to leader development, in the existing counseling leadership literature.

The Nature of Leadership in the Counseling Profession

A dominant model of leadership that has been widely embraced and promoted in the counseling profession is one of *servant leadership*. Greenleaf coined this phrase in his 1970 essay entitled, “Servant as Leader,” in which he described its distinction from leadership rooted in self-interest:

The Servant Leader is servant first...It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve *first*. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is a *leader* first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions... The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature. (Greenleaf, 2008, p. 15)

The notion that leadership is a “choice” suggests leadership is not limited to those with privileges, but instead is an open opportunity for many diverse individuals who are driven by a commitment to serve others. As discussed by Greenleaf (2008), this commitment is reflected in actions, accompanied by a constant reflection of their caring nature, that seek to promote the growth and development of those being served. Among many of the possible outcomes of servant leadership is that those being served will become more likely to be servants themselves, which in turn implies that leadership is a process that can be learned.

Adopting the servant model of leadership, CSI is one of the leading counseling organizations that has intentionally focused on the development of future leaders in the profession as part of its organizational mission (CSI, 2009; for a position paper, see Herr, 2010). Influencing, and also reflecting, leadership scholarship and practice in the

counseling profession, CSI emphasizes that counseling leaders serve on multiple levels in non-positional and positional roles across a variety of settings in ways that promote the growth and development of clients, the counseling profession, and the broader society. Additionally, CSI stresses the importance that counselor leadership be rooted in ethical practice.

The relationship between service (as leadership) and ethics in the counseling profession is highlighted in CSI's "Principles and Practices of Leadership Excellence" (PPLEs; CSI Academy of Leaders, 1999). This consensus statement was developed by a group of prominent counseling leaders with more than 500 years of combined leadership experience at all levels of the counseling profession. The 10 principles included in the statement are as follows: Philosophy of Leadership; Commitment to Mission; Preservation of History; Vision for the Future; Long-Range Perspective; Preservation of Resources; Respect for Membership; Mentoring, Encouragement, and Empowerment; Recognition of Others; and Feedback and Self-Reflection. Each principle is accompanied by a statement of practice to guide the decision-making process of exemplary leaders in the counseling profession. As the only document of its kind within the existing counseling literature, Wahesh and Myers (2014) have identified the PPLEs as a major contribution to leadership development within the profession of counseling.

Drawing upon the PPLEs, West, Osborn, and Bubenzer (2003b) proposed three dimensions of leadership that reflect the nature and course of leadership practices among counselors in their formative text, *Leaders and Legacies*. The first dimension, *context*, is concerned with the awareness of, and appreciation for, the influence of counseling legacies and milestones from the past (referred to as historical hindsight) as well as the

current landscape consisting of stakeholders and cultural events and trends that influence the future (referred to as peripheral vision). The second dimension, *vision*, evolves from understanding the context and entails the generation of a strategic set of actions to accomplish a shared goal. During this phase, visionaries engage in a decision-making process marked by creativity, reflection, a holistic and caring perspective, relational exchanges, and the commitment to serve others. *Action*, the third dimension, involves carrying out the vision. The authors discussed a number of important behaviors and considerations during this phase related to communicating the vision to others; creating a space for diverse individuals to make contributions; working as part of a team; feedback and evaluation; and recognizing and celebrating successful steps toward accomplishing the goal. The behaviors for each of these phases have also identified in West, Bubenzer, Osborn, Paez, and Desmond's (2016) Q-methodology study on the beliefs and practices associated with carrying out a leadership effort. Importantly, these authors support the assumption that leadership attitudes and behaviors can be learned to effectively carryout such efforts.

The three dimensions of leadership, as proposed by West et al. (2003b), may be expressed in various ways. Informed by the stories of 23 notable counseling leaders selected to be featured in *Leaders and Legacies* (West et al., 2003a), as well as others who were not included in the text, Osborn, West, Bubenzer, Duba, and Olson (2003) introduced a traditional conceptualization of the expressions of leadership through a visual depiction, the "leadergram." In this visual of a triangle, three distinct and interrelated expressions are represented to include scholarship (e.g., presentations, publications, engagement in research), practice and teaching (e.g., counseling,

supervision, and classroom instruction), and service and stewardship (e.g., pursuit of counselor licensure, organizational leadership, and volunteerism). A strong professional counselor identity, which lies at the heart of the visual depiction, informs and guides each of the expressions of leadership. The authors emphasized that “passion for the counseling profession and pride in one’s identity as a counselor...is the capstone of leadership in and for counseling” further noting that its role is more than important—it is absolutely necessary (p. 299).

In addition to the inseparable relationship between the concepts of leadership and professional identity proposed by Osborn and colleagues (2003), scholars of another formative leadership text in the counseling profession, *Professional Counseling Excellence Through Leadership and Advocacy* (Chang et al., 2012) have discussed the inseparable interrelationships between leadership, professional identity, *and* advocacy in various contexts to include clinical practice, supervision, school counseling, counselor education, and research. Advocacy, simply defined, is “the process or act of arguing or pleading for a cause or proposal” (Lee, 1998, p. 8). Taking many forms, advocacy as done on behalf of clients and the profession is an ethical obligation and moral responsibility that lies at the heart of counselor identity (Lee, 1998) that has been framed as a professional imperative (for an early discussion, see Myers, Sweeney, & White, 2002). In their eloquent summation of the relationship between advocacy and leadership, Chang and colleagues (2012) remarked:

Professional advocacy is a means to an end that benefits professional counselees, the betterment of society, and raises the role of counselors to a level of servant leader. The servant leader has personal qualities, knowledge, skills, and habits that exemplify the best in leadership capacity. Through this servant leadership role, professional counselors will win a position of respect and appropriate

recognition as partners in promoting a healthy and just society where respect for human dignity and wellness are its highest aspirations. (p. xiv)

Moving beyond the tying together of these two related yet distinct concepts, the authors' summation reflects the broader themes that have been discussed in this section related to the nature of leadership in the counseling profession as a developmental process that can be learned by professional counselors committed to serving others in competent, ethical, and meaningful ways.

In a more recent study by McKibben, Umstead, and Borders (2017), the authors conducted a content analysis of counseling leadership literature to provide a contextually sensitive counseling leadership model that addresses contextual limitations of external leadership theories (e.g., transformational theory) and philosophies (e.g., servant leadership) that have been used to describe counseling leadership. They identified 24 themes that were grouped into three broad categories. The first category, Leadership Values and Qualities, included 13 themes (e.g., professional identity, advocacy, mentorship, service, wellness) that reflected what counseling leadership looks like and how it is understood to occur. The second category, Personal and Interpersonal Qualities, included 8 themes (e.g., intrinsic motivation, authenticity, intentionality, openness) that reflected the individual qualities that a leader brings to counseling leadership. The last category, Interpersonal Skills, included three themes (i.e., interpersonal influence, assertiveness, role competence) that reflected the specific skills that counseling leaders use in their efforts with others to achieve a goal. While some themes were found to be similar to leadership theories from other disciplines (e.g., transformational theory, servant leadership, authentic leadership), others were unique to the professional context of counseling (e.g., wellness, professional identity, professional advocacy, leadership-

specific cognitive complexity) thereby pointing to the importance of further understanding leadership and leadership development experiences among counselors.

Leadership and leadership development experiences among professional counselors. Given the necessity of leadership in the counseling profession, leadership and leadership development experiences have been widely promoted in the context of counseling practice. Within counselor education, current CACREP (2016) training standards have mandated that counselor educators address leadership competencies in the curricula for entry-level and doctoral counseling students. Among doctoral students, in particular, leadership (and advocacy) is identified as one of five primary foci of counselor education doctoral programs alongside counseling, supervision, teaching, research and scholarship. Complimenting leadership curricula is engagement in co-curricular activities such as CSI chapter involvement to promote “hands-on” leadership experiences among graduate students. On the organizational level, formal leadership trainings, workshops, and fellowships have been offered by major counseling organizations on the state, regional, and (inter)national levels. And across various practice contexts, mentoring has been used to nurture and develop the individual and collective leadership capacity of counselors, particularly counseling graduate students and new professionals. Although these popular practices appear to be promising, there exists a great disconnect between current leadership development practices and existing empirical research focused on the efficacy of these practices for leadership development. Furthermore, little is known about the nature of counselors’ leadership and leadership development experiences.

Within the research context, there has been a concerted effort among counseling scholars and organizations over the last decade to better understand and document the leadership experiences and contributions of the profession's most notable leaders. This impetus is reflected, for example, in the publication of case history books such as *Journeys to Professional Excellence* (Coyne & Bemak, 2005) and *Leaders and Legacies* (West et al., 2003a); leadership profiles in premier counseling journals such as the *Journal of Counseling and Development*; and interviews with heroes and heroines recognized by CSI's Professional Advocacy Committee (see CSI, 2015). Although much can be gleaned from their experiences in leadership such as significant persons and experiences that have shaped their leadership development, these conceptual works are limited in that the "spotlight" has often been narrowly focused on leaders who hold membership in dominant social groups (e.g., Caucasians, men) and who have served in key positional leadership roles within major counseling organizations during the early, formative years of the profession. These limitations call for an *expanded* understanding of the ways in which diversity exists within counselor leadership in the present milieu of the counseling profession.

In response to this call, counseling scholars have begun to examine leadership and leadership development experiences among sub-populations of leaders within particular contexts. For example, a growing body of research has focused on examining leadership practices among practicing school counselors within their school settings more broadly (e.g., Mason & McMahon, 2009; Shillingford & Lambie, 2010; Young, Dollarhide, & Baughman, 2015). Other studies have explored the perceptions of leadership among particular populations such as high school counselors (Janson, 2009), new counselors

engaged in leadership (Dollarhide, Gibson, & Saginak, 2008), and early career school counselors providing leadership relative to program transformation (Dollarhide & Gibson, 2008).

Leadership experiences among counseling graduate students within the context of CSI has also been of growing interest among counseling scholars. For example, studies have focused on CSI chapter leaders' use of the CSI Academy of Leaders' (1999) "Principles and Practices of Leadership Excellence" and their involvement in leadership activities and training (Wahesh & Myers, 2014), how early career counselors' professional identity development was influenced by experiences with CSI chapter leadership during graduate training (Luke & Goodrich, 2010), the development of servant leadership through counselor community engagement in a CSI chapter (Fulton & Shannonhouse, 2014), and the role of social justice in leadership development as perceived by chapter leaders (Storlie & Wood, 2014a). Storlie and Wood (2014b) also explored the role of social justice in leadership development from the lenses of CSI chapter faculty advisors.

Finally, the leadership experiences of successful counseling leaders has also been of growing interest among counseling scholars. Within this line of study, scholars have focused on the leadership experiences of more seasoned counselors who are recognized for their scholarly contributions and leadership achievements (Magnuson et al., 2003), as well as appointed ACA and CSI leaders (Meany-Walen et al., 2013). Scholars have also focused on counselor educators' leadership experiences associated with serving as ACA Division Presidents while in pre-tenured assistant positions (Gibson et al, 2010). More so, a study by Niles, Akos, and Cutler (2001) focused on the experiences of seasoned and

prominent counselor educators to identify strategies for (leadership) “success” specific to research, teaching, and service obligations in academia for early career counselor educators.

Despite these scholarly strides, empirical literature on counselor leadership experiences among minority groups such as women is nearly non-existent. In their notable study that is particularly relevant to the present dissertation, Black and Magnuson (2005) asserted that the prioritization of formal, hierarchical leadership roles, which few women held during the formative years of the counseling profession, has led to the historic neglect of women’s contributions as positional and non-positional leaders. To begin to address this gap, the authors used phenomenological and feminist research methods to document the experiences of 10 successful diverse women leaders (aged 40-80 years) and provide a model for emerging leaders. Findings from interviews with the participating leaders, as well as two protégés for each leader, suggested that women leaders’ attributes and behaviors developed over time. And more so, that these attributes and behaviors appeared in varying degrees in each leader and among the collective group between personal, interpersonal, and professional life domains. Sub-classifications that emerged within each domain were as follows: authentic and passionate/tenacious (personal domain), compassionate and empowering (interpersonal domain), and visionary and intentional (professional domain). Despite expressed self-doubt among these women related to their capacity to lead, they used these attributes and behaviors to empower others. That is, these women experienced successful leadership not as a “skill set, position, power, or personal acclaim” (p. 341), but as a service endeavor that flourished

in collaborative, empowering relationships. This finding, in particular, begs the question: what are the specific factors that influence women counselors' leadership development?

To date, two studies that have specifically examined contributing factors that influence the development of leadership among counselors provide some insight into this critical question. In Magnuson and colleagues' (2003) qualitative study on turning points that led 10 counseling professionals to become leaders, the authors identified influential, interacting factors that were influential in their achievements and professional contributions such as the influence and encouragement of family and professional models, personal attributes and values, and serendipitous events and seized opportunities. Key to the manifestation of these factors for many of the participants was professional passion, professional counselor identity, and professional affiliation. An important limitation of this study was the focus on seasoned leaders in the counseling profession who met specified inclusion criteria such as a minimum of 15 years of post-academic professional experience, authorship of at least 10 articles or books, and national recognition or awards for accomplishments.

In a more recent study conducted by Meany-Walen and colleagues (2013), the authors used mixed methodology to explore 59 elected and appointed ACA and CSI leaders. In support of Magnuson et al.'s (2003) findings, they found that participants' leadership in counseling organizations was attributed to several influences, most notably their desire to contribute, intrinsic motivation, and enjoyment of challenges/learning. The influence, support, and encouragement/validation from mentors/role models were identified as having a moderate influence on leadership development in the contexts of

counselor preparation and professional practice. This study, too, is limited on its focus of organizational leaders' experiences.

The Need to Examine Mentoring as a Leadership Development Pathway Among Women Counselor Educators

Taken together, Black and Magnuson's (2005) study on women's attributes and behaviors related to their counselor leadership, and Magnuson et al.'s (2003) and Meany-Walen et al.'s (2013) studies on factors that contribute to leadership development, serve as a valuable springboard for future research in the area of relational and contextual factors related to women's leadership development. Meany-Walen and colleagues (2013) recommended that future researchers focus on the experiences of leaders who assume less visible roles or serve in smaller venues. Women counselor educators, by very nature of their professional training and obligations, serve in both positional and non-positional leadership roles in which mentoring, as a relational and contextual factor, may serve to promote their leadership development.

Mentoring has been identified by counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators as critical to their personal and professional development. However, there are no empirical studies found in the counseling literature to date that directly explore the nature and dynamics of successful mentoring relationships, particularly in the context of leadership development. Given the importance of leadership in the profession of counseling, it is imperative to fully understand effective pathways to promoting leadership development among diverse groups of counselors across various contexts. Mentoring has been identified in counseling studies on the leadership development experiences of counselor leaders as one such critical pathway.

The purpose of the present study was to extend counseling literature on mentoring, leadership, and leadership development by examining the role of mentoring on leadership development among women counselor educators. Representing a unique sub-population of women leaders in the counseling profession, women counselor educators' leadership contributions may be more visible (e.g., organizational leadership) and behind the scenes (e.g., counselor preparation and community service). Therefore, examining the influence of mentoring on women counselor educators' leadership development serves to recognize their leadership contributions and, more so, leads to a deeper understanding of how to better promote and foster rewarding leadership journeys among this population.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In Chapter II, a review of the literature on mentoring and leadership, particularly within the counseling profession, was presented. Overall, scholarship supported the need to empirically examine mentoring experiences among professional counselors as it relates to their leadership development, specifically among unique groups such as women. To begin to address this gap in the current literature, this qualitative investigation sought to better understand the lived experiences of women counselor educators who have served as protégés in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that have positively influenced their leadership development in the counseling profession. In this chapter, the guiding research question for the current investigation is presented and the corresponding methodology and research design is discussed.

Guiding Research Question

The guiding research question for this investigation was as follows: What is the nature and meaning of women counselor educators' experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships?

The formulation of this guiding research question was based on a thorough understanding of the literature as well as passion for the research topic that is deeply rooted in my personal experience (as discussed more fully in the "Researcher Subjectivity and Engagement in Epoche" section below). Both social and personal meaning are

deemed as essential to the preparation of a study using phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), the qualitative research tradition determined to best fit the purpose of this investigation. Additionally, the wording of the guiding research question aligns with Moustakas' (1994) recommendation for phenomenologists to use clear, concrete terms that are carefully positioned to accurately reflect the purpose of the study. More so, the question is rooted in Moustakas' approach to transcendental phenomenology, a major approach of phenomenology that was chosen for this investigation. A brief overview of qualitative inquiry, the tradition of phenomenology, and the transcendental phenomenological approach, is described below.

Qualitative Inquiry

Qualitative research is a holistic approach that entails a reflective and evolving exploration of a research topic and question in context to generate new knowledge (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013; Patton, 2015). At the heart of the word qualitative is “an emphasis on the qualities of entities, on processes and meaning that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 8). Thick description of experience – the detailed presentation of conceptual structures and meanings within a particular social context (Geertz, 1973) – is produced through deep and meaningful engagement with participants who have an intimate connection with the phenomenon of interest, usually occurring in a naturalistic setting over a sustained period of time (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2015). With its strong emphasis on qualities, processes, and meanings, many qualitative scholars (e.g., Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2015) contend that qualitative research is an ideal mode of

inquiry for investigating seminal research topics and questions, providing a new angle for lines of inquiry in need of further investigation, and bridging gaps that exist between research and practice.

The Tradition of Phenomenology

Phenomenology is one of the major qualitative research traditions, alongside others such as case study, narrative, grounded theory, and ethnography (Creswell, 2013). The purpose of phenomenological research is to provide an in-depth description of the lived experience of a single concept or phenomenon from an individual, and shared, perspective (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). “Phenomenology asks for the very nature of a phenomenon, for that which makes a some-‘thing’ what it *is*—and without which it could not be what it is” (van Manen, 1990, p. 10). Of particular interest to phenomenologists is the understanding and identification of two elements: *what* people experience and *how* they experience it in their everyday lives, or life-world (Hays & Singh, 2012; Patton, 2015). The essence, or the central underlying meaning of lived experience, is derived from integrating differing data sources into a universal, composite description (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). As stressed by van Manen (1990), findings from phenomenological research investigations are not intended to “explain and/or control the world,” as in other science, but rather to present “the possibility of plausible insights that bring us in more direct contact with the world” (p. 9).

The practice of phenomenological research, in its many forms and variations, is informed by and grounded in philosophy. The phenomenological movement in philosophy began during the 20th century and was largely influenced by the work of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), a German mathematician and philosopher who is often

referred to as the father of phenomenological philosophy. Guided by the basic philosophical assumption that “we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings that awaken our conscious awareness” (Patton, 2015, p. 116), Husserl developed a new science with its own distinctive methodology to rigorously study the intentional structures of consciousness, which he later referred to as transcendental, or pure, phenomenology.

Transcendental Phenomenology

The foundation of Husserl’s philosophical transcendental phenomenology was explicated in his text, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, which was first published in 1931 (for a reprint, see Husserl, 2013). In this work, Husserl introduced his development of a method of phenomenological reductions (and also what he referred to as eidetic and transcendental reductions) as a means to break away from the natural attitude; that is, viewing the world and accepting things as they are *without* reflection or philosophical insight as done in the empirical natural sciences. According to Husserl, the aim of the phenomenological reduction is the setting aside of “the limitations to knowledge essentially involved in every nature-directed form of investigation...until we have eventually before us the free outlook upon ‘transcendentally’ purified phenomena” (Husserl, 2013, p. 43). Husserl’s phenomenological concepts, presented in this work and many others, have been adopted, refined, and re-worked into many separate styles of phenomenological inquiry by diverse thinkers across a variety of disciplines (see Moran, 2000, for a historical account of the phenomenological movement).

As one of the many phenomenologists in the social sciences who have taken elements from the Husserlian perspective, Clark Moustakas (1994), an American

psychologist, operationalized the methodology of transcendental phenomenology (also referred to as psychological phenomenology) to include four sequential core processes. The first process, *Epoche*, meaning to suspend judgment in Greek, entails the setting aside of a researcher's experiences with the phenomenon of interest in preparation for new knowledge with a fresh perspective. The second process, the Transcendental-Phenomenological Reduction, aims to arrive at a textural description of the meanings and essences of the phenomenon under investigation: "its essential constituents, variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapers" (p. 34). The third process, Imaginative Variation, aims to arrive at a structural description: "a picture of the conditions that precipitate an experience and connect with it" (p. 35). The final process is the Synthesis of Meanings and Essences, or the integration of the textural essences (the "what") and structural essences (the "how") to arrive at absolute knowledge.

The Application of Transcendental Phenomenology in Social Science Research

The application of transcendental phenomenology has been widely used by social science researchers seeking to provide the description and meaning of lived experience among persons who have an intimate connection with a particular phenomenon of interest (Moerer-Urdahl & Creswell, 2004). Contributing to its popularity, perhaps, is the logical and systematically-driven data organization and analysis steps that guide the research process. In reference to these strengths, Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) contended that transcendental phenomenology can be used as an alternative to hermeneutic phenomenology, another phenomenological approach developed by Husserl's student, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), that focuses on moving from description to the

interpretation of text as it presents itself through the dynamic interplay of non-linear research activities (van Manen, 1990).

Within the professions of counseling and education, both transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenology are acknowledged as respected and accepted approaches to qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012). The selection between these dominant approaches is governed by the guiding research question and its philosophical implications. In this current study, my intention was to use the voices of women counselor educators to describe, rather than interpret, the nature and meaning of their experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships. Thus, transcendental phenomenology was selected as the methodology of choice.

An exemplary study that demonstrates the utility of transcendental phenomenology as outlined by Moustakas (1994) was conducted by Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell (2004) on the “ripple effect” among a sample of mentors who took part in a leadership mentoring program. In the present study, I aimed to extend their work by providing further support for the application of transcendental phenomenology in social science research to examine the phenomenon of mentoring in the context of leadership development, particularly within the counseling literature wherein this line of inquiry has received little empirical attention to date. As a starting point for discussing its application, the next section addresses key concepts related to the primary research instrument in this study – that is, myself as the researcher.

Researcher Subjectivity and Engagement in Epoche

The acknowledgement of researcher subjectivity – described by Peshkin (1988) as investigator qualities that have the potential to “filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe, and misconstrue” (p. 17) the research process – is an important practice among qualitative researchers. Peshkin (1988) argued that the pursuit of subjectivity should be an ongoing, systematic process of self-monitoring that begins at the inception of an investigation through the reporting of its findings. The enhanced awareness that arises from this endeavor allows the researcher to better manage the influence of her or his subjectivity, thus minimizing researcher bias and thereby lending support to the quality, credibility, and trustworthiness of an investigation.

In transcendental phenomenological investigations, researcher subjectivity is addressed through engagement in Epoche. Moustakas (1994) described a researcher’s engagement in Epoche—bracketing—as a reflective-meditative process that entails the labeling; writing out; reviewing; and subsequent letting go of “whatever colors the experience or directs us, anything whatever that has been put in our minds by science and society, or government, or other people” (p. 86) from consciousness. By allowing preconceptions about the phenomenon under investigation to enter and exit the mind freely, Moustakas remarked that a sense of “philosophical solitude” is achieved that allows the researcher to more fully engage in authentic encounters with participants (and the world) that are marked by openness, receptiveness, and the uncovering of the nature and essence of experience as it presents itself.

The sections below reflect my search for subjectivity and expose my personal qualities that may have potentially influenced the research process for the current study.

First, a personal description of myself (as the researcher) is provided to identify salient statuses and roles that I held at the time of the investigation. Second, my experience with mentoring is discussed, particularly as it relates to my leadership development as a counselor educator-in-training. Finally, a list of my bracketed assumptions is provided.

Description of the Researcher

I am a young, single, White, heterosexual, middle-class, and able-bodied woman who is currently a doctoral candidate in a CACREP-accredited Counselor Education and Supervision program at The University of Akron, a large public university in Northeast Ohio. I am also a licensed professional counselor in the State of Ohio, an adjunct instructor in the School of Counseling at The University of Akron, and an Assistant Editor for an academic counseling journal and an interdisciplinary behavioral science journal that addresses gender-related issues. I have completed two semesters of formal training in qualitative methods and identify as a novice investigator who is eager to continue gaining expertise in the field of qualitative research. More so, I am an active member of, and an emerging leader within, professional counseling organizations and their divisions (e.g., CSI, ACA, ACES) as well as a published scholar in areas such as women and gender issues in counseling; career development; and advocacy, social justice, and leadership. I identify as a servant leader, advocate, feminist, and social justice agent in the counseling profession and in my everyday life. Within mentoring relationships, which will be discussed more fully below, I have served as both a protégé and a mentor.

Researcher's Experience in Mentoring Relationships

I have served as a protégé and mentor in both informal and formal mentoring relationships, and have observed that although formally matched relationships have been influential, those that have informally formed have had a more profound impact on my personal and professional development. In my reflections on my protégé experience in informal mentoring relationships, three women mentors have consistently stood out. Mentoring relationships with each of these women were initiated during my graduate training; have been marked by positive, empowering, and authentic interactions; have lasted several years; and continue to flourish. Two of the mentors are women counselor educators who have provided me with psychosocial and career support, and have served in various other roles such as clinical supervisor, research collaborator, instructor, advisor, and colleague; the other is a feminist social psychologist who has also provided me with both forms of support in our mentoring relationship in addition to serving as a former professor and current colleague. In their own unique ways, all of these mentors have helped to promote my identity as a professional counselor and counselor educator, and have increased my self-efficacy in many professional leadership domains to include scholarship, teaching, counseling and supervision, and service to community and the profession. My experience as a protégé, particularly in the context of research mentoring, has been more fully described in a text on transformational learning experiences among professional counselors (Headley & Sangganjanavanich, 2017).

As a result of my positive experiences as a protégé, I have experienced a strong desire to promote the personal and professional development of others in the counseling profession through mentoring, particularly in the areas of professional identity and

counselor leadership development (see Headley, 2015 for a positional essay). In my reflections on my experience as a mentor within informal mentoring relationships, three professional counselors who have shared that they consider me to be their mentor, stand out. Two of these relationships were initiated while I served as their instructor in a graduate counseling program; the other was initiated while I served as a supervisor-in-training at a clinical training site. One of these relationships has continued to flourish over the last few years in the face of consistent contact and communication. As needed, I have provided psychosocial and career-related support in all of these relationships, particularly in the professional leadership domains of scholarship, counseling, and service to community and the profession.

Bracketed Assumptions

As a result of my reflections on mentoring relationships that have been particularly relevant to my leadership development as a counselor educator-in-training, I have identified a number of personally held assumptions that may have potentially influenced the current investigation. These assumptions, bracketed below, were derived from my personal experience as a protégé and mentor in mentoring relationships (as discussed above) and my understanding of the current mentoring and leadership literature (as reviewed in Chapter II). In line with the notion that bracketing is an ongoing process, I updated this list throughout the research process to promote a complete and accurate description of the nature and meaning of women counselor educators' experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships. Assumptions that I held at the onset of the investigation, prior to conducting individual interviews, were as follows:

1. Mentoring relationships are critical to leadership development among all professional counselors, particularly women counselor educators;
2. Both mentoring and leadership are bi-directional, relational, and developmental processes;
3. Both personal and career-related functions are present in mentoring relationships;
4. Professional identity lies at the heart of counselor educator leadership, which can be expressed through various behaviors (e.g., scholarship, service, teaching);
5. There are numerous opportunities, formally and informally, to initiate mentoring relationships; however, the maintenance and success of mentoring relationships is dependent on a number of factors (e.g., personal characteristics, shared interests, availability);
6. Informal mentoring relationships may be more powerful and long-lasting in comparison to formal mentoring relationships;
7. Women counselor educators who have experienced successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring will have unique, as well as shared, meanings and descriptions of the phenomenon; and
8. Women counselor educators' experiences as protégés in successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships will influence their beliefs about the importance of mentoring on women's leadership development in the counseling profession, as well as their own mentor practices.

Two additional assumptions identified during the data collection and analysis process were as follows:

9. Women counselor educators face gender-related challenges while engaging in leadership that are important to address in mentoring relationships (e.g., balancing leadership and motherhood, navigating sexism); and
10. Despite significant strides, when compared to men counselor educators, women counselor educators are not equally represented in leadership positions, or recognized for their leadership contributions, within the counseling profession.

Participants

Sampling Strategies

Participants were selected for this transcendental phenomenological investigation using two common purposeful sampling strategies: criterion sampling and snowball sampling (Creswell, 2013; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Criterion sampling entailed the deliberate selection of persons who met a set of inclusion criteria and who were willing to share their lived experiences with the phenomenon of interest. This strategy was chosen because it helps to establish a boundary for the collection of data and promote quality assurance (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The inclusion criteria for this investigation were: (a) current woman counselor educator who holds a doctoral degree in Counselor Education and Supervision; (b) experience as a protégé in a woman-to-woman mentoring relationship that positively influenced her leadership development; and (c) currently demonstrates leadership, formally or informally, to promote the well-being of clients and/or the counseling profession.

To compliment this strategy, a snowball sampling method was used to recruit potential participants and ensure that the necessary sample size was met. This method entailed contacting influential women leaders holding leadership positions in the state, regional, and national counseling associations and asking them to nominate their women protégés who they consider successful leaders in the counseling profession and who meet the aforementioned inclusion criteria. To promote a diversity of experiences, influential women leaders were identified from all five regions of ACES: North Central, North Atlantic, Southern, Rocky Mountain, and Western United States.

Sample Size

A sample size of 10 persons who meet the inclusion criteria was determined to be adequate for this investigation because descriptive saturation was met; that is, no new themes were identified from the phenomenological data analysis process. In addition to the sample size being sufficient for descriptive saturation, it adhered to expert recommendations that the sample size for a phenomenological investigation can be as many as 10 persons (Creswell, 2013), or consist of at least six persons (Morse, 1994). According to scholarly observation, the typical sample size used in phenomenological investigations is between 1 to 10 persons (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Although Creswell (2012) noted that the number of persons included in a qualitative study can be as many as 30 or 40, he cautioned that “because of the need to report details about each individual...the larger number of cases can become unwieldy and result in superficial perspectives” (p. 209). A smaller sample size was therefore used in this investigation to gain an in-depth understanding of women counselor educators’ protégé experiences in

mentoring relationships that have positively influenced their leadership development, and acknowledge my availability of anticipated resources such as time, energy, and funding.

Participant Selection Process

Participant selection began after receiving approval from my dissertation committee and The University of Akron Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). To seek women counselor educators with protégé experience in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that positively influenced their leadership development, a recruitment email was sent to influential women leaders across the ACES regions who actively held leadership positions in state, regional, and national counseling associations. The email contained information about myself (as the researcher) and the purpose of the study, and invited women leaders to nominate a protégé who they considered to be a successful leader in the counseling profession and who meet the set of inclusion criteria previously outlined (see Appendix B).

All nominees were sent a personalized invitation email that contained information about myself (as the researcher) and the purpose of the study (see Appendix C). In cases when nominees met criteria and were willing to participate in the study, a follow-up email was sent to schedule an in-depth interview (via Skype, phone, or in-person, depending on geographical distance and availability). All participants were thanked for contributing to the research project.

In some instances, following the completion of their interview, participants shared the name of another women counselor educator who met the inclusion criteria and who would likely be able to provide an information rich account of her leadership mentoring experiences. Participants were thanked for their recommendation and the identified

women counselor educators were emailed an invitation letter to participate in the study. If they agreed to participate, the same process described above was followed.

Description of Participants

All 10 participants were women counselor educators who earned their doctoral degrees in Counselor Education and Supervision; had prior experience as a protégé in a woman-to-woman mentoring relationship that positively influenced thier leadership development; and, at the time of the study, demonstrated formal and/or informal leadership to promote the well-being of clients and/or the counseling profession. Demographic information for the participants is presented in Table 2 and Table 3, respectively.

Table 2

Personal Demographic Information

Participant	Gender	Age	Racial/Ethnic Heritage	Romantic Orientation	Relationship Status
Participant 1	Female	36	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Unmarried partners
Participant 2	Female	38	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Unmarried partners
Participant 3	Female	45	White/Caucasian	Gay or lesbian	Unmarried partners
Participant 4	Female	37	Hispanic/Latina/o; White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Married
Participant 5	Female	39	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Married
Participant 6	Female	46	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Married
Participant 7	Female	52	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Married
Participant 8	Female	47	Asian	Heterosexual	Married
Participant 9	Female	46	White/Caucasian	Queer	Single, never married
Participant 10	Female	37	White/Caucasian	Heterosexual	Widowed

Table 3

Professional Demographic Information

Participant	Year Entered Profession as CE	Doctoral Degree	Academic Rank	Academic Status	Current Program Accreditation
Participant 1	2014	CES	Assistant professor	Tenure- track	CACREP
Participant 2	2008	CES	Assistant Teaching Professors	Non tenure- track, full- time	CACREP
Participant 3	2008	CES	Core faculty	Non tenure- track, full- time	CACREP
Participant 4	2005	CES	Associate Professor	Tenure- track	CACREP
Participant 5	2007	CES	Associate professor	Tenured	CACREP
Participant 6	2000	CES	Associate professor	Tenure- track	CACREP
Participant 7	2001	CES	Associate professor	Tenure- track	CACREP
Participant 8	1998	CES	Full professor	Tenure- track	CACREP
Participant 9	2008	CES	Assistant professor	Tenure- track	CACREP/ APA
Participant 10	2012	CES	Assistant professor	Tenure- track	CACREP

Note. CE = Counselor Educator; CES = Counselor Education and Supervision; CACREP = Council for Accreditation and Related Educational Programs; APA = American Psychological Association.

Data Collection

Obtaining Informed Consent and Demographic Information

At the onset of the data collection process, participants reviewed and signed the informed consent form (see Appendix D), and were provided a copy for their records. In addition, participants completed the demographic questionnaire that included questions related to their personal identities (e.g., gender, age, romantic orientation), and

experiences as a counselor educator (e.g., academic status, academic rank) (see Appendix E). Demographic data was collected to demonstrate that participants met inclusion criteria for the study, and to offer a profile for participants to better contextualize the findings of the investigation.

The Interview Method

Individual interviews were chosen as the source of data collection because they are a relatively simple and affordable method for gaining access to participant experiences and, in staying true to the purpose of transcendental phenomenological investigations, they honor participants' own words as generative of meaning and knowledge (Hays & Singh, 2012; Moustakas, 1994). The type of interview specifically chosen to align with the purpose of this investigation was the in-depth interview. In-depth interviews entail a relatively long one-on-one discussion between the interviewer and the informant, and are characterized by a level of intimacy that allows for a greater expression of lived experience (on the part of the participant) and the obtainment of a "deep" understanding about a particular phenomenon of interest (on the part of the researcher) (Johnson, 2001). In his discussion about the meaning of the word "deep," Johnson (2001) emphasized that a researcher conducting an in-depth interview commits to moving beyond a commonsense understanding of a particular lived experience among participants in order to "explore the contextual boundaries of that experience or perception, to uncover what is usually hidden from ordinary view or reflection or to penetrate to more reflective understandings about the nature of that experience" (p. 106).

To achieve this aim – that is, a *deep* understanding of women counselor educators' protégé experience in mentoring relationships that have positively influenced

their leadership development – I conducted in-depth interviews that lasted between 60 to 90 minutes via face-to-face or telephone with participants. In cases when it was not possible to schedule in-person interviews for participants who preferred a face-to-face discussion, the interview was conducted via Skype – an Internet software application that allows for face-to-face two-way video and audio conferencing. Dates and times of the interviews were jointly determined to accommodate preferences and schedules.

As discussed by Moustakas (1994), phenomenological interviews should be conducted informally and use open-ended questions to stimulate an active discussion. To promote this conversational tone, Moustakas stressed that it is incumbent upon the researcher to create a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere in which participants feel comfortable to authentically and fully describe their experience with the phenomenon under investigation. One of his suggestions, used in the present investigation, was to begin a social conversation with participants at the onset of the interview. These conversations were brief in nature and intentionally focused on establishing rapport with each participant. Because of the nature and intent of these conversations, they were not included as part of the phenomenological data used for analysis.

Following the brief conversation, I used an interview protocol to begin the interview process (see Appendix F). After a brief introduction, participants were asked to take a moment and recall their protégé experience in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that have positively influenced their leadership development. The following question opened the low-structure, in-depth interview: “In as much detail as possible, please describe your mentoring experiences as a protégé that stand out to you as having a significant impact on your leadership development.” The low-structure format was

chosen because it was believed that participants, by very nature of their professional background as counselor educators, would be able to describe the nature and meanings of their experience without being guided by pre-determined structured questions. For the purposes of elaboration and clarification, additional follow-up questions and probes were used depending on the nature of the information shared during the interview. Interviews concluded when participants confirmed that the shared information sufficiently reflected their lived experience as a protégé in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that positively influenced their leadership development. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed.

Member Checking

Member checking, also referred to as respondent validation, entails taking phenomenological data (such as interview transcripts and identified themes) back to the participants and asking them to conduct a critical review and provide feedback as to whether their account is accurately reflected (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Maxwell, 2013). In this investigation, the preliminary findings from data analysis were provided to participants for their review, a practice consistent with Creswell's (2013) approach to member checking. Member checking results for preliminary findings are presented at the conclusion of this chapter.

Data Analysis

There are various ways for a researcher to carry out the data analysis process in a transcendental phenomenological investigation. Two methods, as presented in Moustakas' (1994) text, are the van Kaam method and the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method. Although logical and sequential steps are outlined for both, the Stevick-

Colaizzi-Keen method was determined to best fit the purpose of the present study because of its emphasis on the disclosure of the researcher's personal experience with the phenomenon under investigation. Additionally, this method has been streamlined and clearly demonstrated in Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell's (2004) transcendental investigation on the essence of the ripple effect among a sample of mentors in a leadership mentoring camp. Their accessible approach, which was embraced in this investigation entailed the following four procedural steps: (a) identify significant statements, (b) cluster significant statements into themes, (c) construct textural and structural descriptions, and (d) identify the ultimate essence of the experience. Each of these successive steps is further delineated below and presented in relation to the data collection process in Figure 1.

Step One: Identify Significant Statements

The first step of data analysis, to identify significant statements, was achieved through the process of horizontalization. Horizontalization entails the treatment of statements in verbatim transcripts as having equal value (Moustakas, 1994). In each transcript, these statements – representing a segment of meaning about participants' protégé experiences in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that have positively influenced their leadership development as counselor educators – were identified.

To develop a systematic process for the identification of significant statements, I consulted with a member of my dissertation committee who is a researcher with expertise/experience in qualitative data collection and analysis. During consultation, necessary skills were discussed related to maintaining organization, exercising perseverance, dealing with ambiguity, and being ethical. These skills were practiced

through the collaborative reading aloud of participant narratives and selection of statements that crystalized or synthesized the meaning of passages. Statements that “stood out” were relevant to participants’ experiences with leadership mentoring; for example, reflecting practices (e.g., mentor functions), relationships (e.g., informal mentoring, formal mentoring), roles (e.g., protégé, mentor), and contexts (e.g., higher education, counseling organizations).

All identified statements (in their narrative form) were listed in a spreadsheet software program, Microsoft Excel, to delineate the breadth of participants’ experiences. Within the spreadsheet, each participant’s statements were listed in their own tab that was identified with their participant number. Statements for all participants were listed prior to beginning the next step.

Step Two: Cluster Significant Statement into Themes

During the second step, the list of significant statements on each tab was carefully and recursively reviewed. Using a reflective process, statements that were identified as irrelevant to the phenomenon under investigation, as well as those that were overlapping and repetitious, were deleted. The remaining statements were the horizons, described by Moustakas (1994, p. 95) as the “grounding or condition of the phenomenon that gives it a distinct character.” Horizons were carefully considered and subsequently clustered into meaning units, or themes, which led to the identification of textural and structural descriptions. To facilitate the clustering process, a new spreadsheet was developed and tabs were designated for each theme. Significant statements were clustered and re-clustered into sub-themes which were designated as columns within the tab. Cells under their respective sub-theme title for each column contained the participant’s statement

proceeded by the participant number in parenthesis. Color coding was used to distinguish participants' statements within the spreadsheet.

Step Three: Construct Textural and Structural Descriptions

The third step entailed identifying textural and structural descriptions from the thematic analysis conducted in step two. Textural descriptions (i.e., “what” was experienced by participants) were identified from a synthesis process of the themes and the significant statements (Moustakas, 1994). Structural descriptions (i.e., “how” participants experienced the phenomenon) were identified through the examination of the textural descriptions from different perspectives, a process called imagination variation (Moustakas, 1994). From these reflective processes on the part of myself (as the researcher), the essence of the phenomenon was captured.

Step Four: Capture the Ultimate Essence of the Experience

The final step of the analysis process was accomplished through intuitive integration. Intuitive integration is the synthesis of the textural descriptions and structural descriptions (Moustakas, 1994). The product of this synthesis is a unified description of the phenomenon that represents the ultimate essence of the participants' experience.

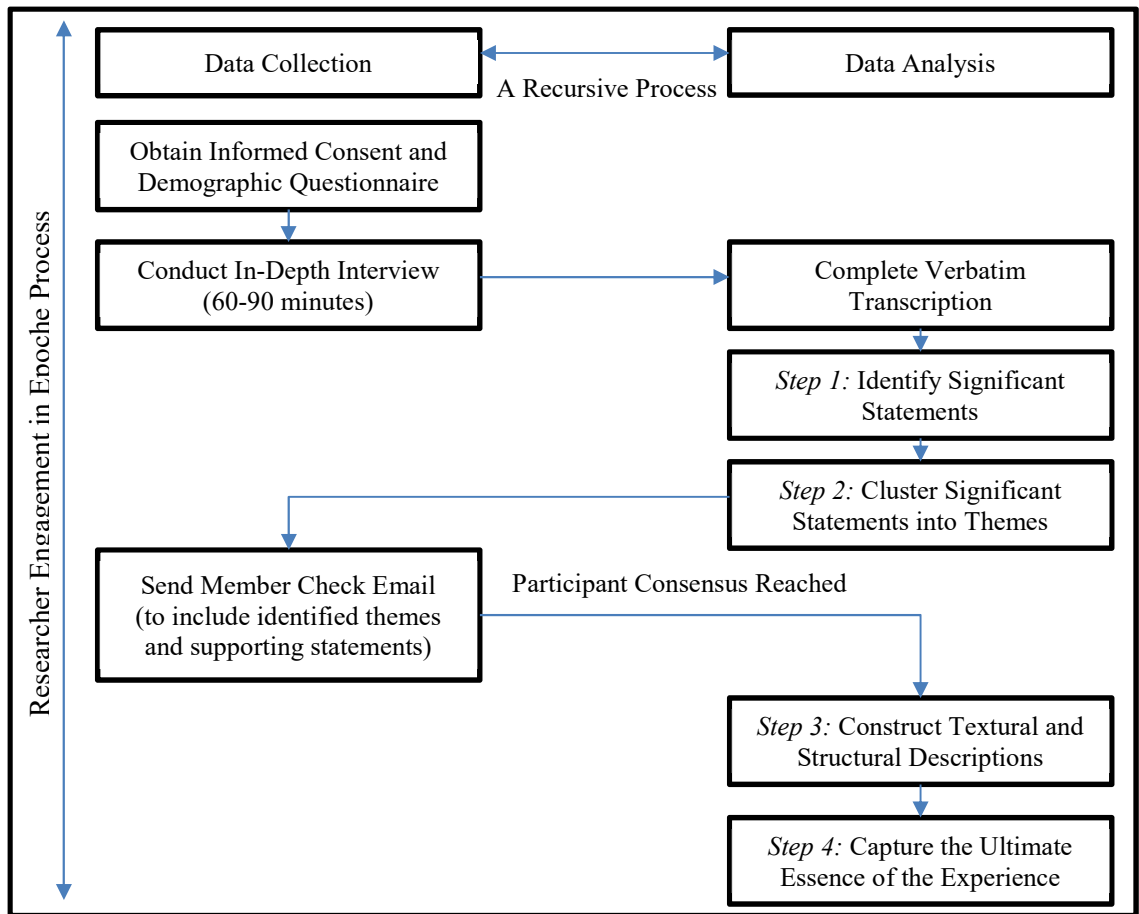


Figure 1. The data collection and analysis process

Establishing Trustworthiness

Establishing trustworthiness is an essential aspect of the evaluation of any research study. The concept of trustworthiness – which has been embraced by many qualitative researchers in preference to positivist, traditional terms such as validity and reliability – speaks to the rigor of naturalistic inquiry and its scientific value (Creswell, 2013; Hays & Singh, 2012; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To ensure the quality of findings in the present investigation, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria for judging trustworthiness were adopted and assessed. Each of these criteria – credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability – and the specific strategies used to achieve them, are briefly discussed below.

Credibility

The first criterion, *credibility*, involves demonstrating that the qualitative findings are believable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two trustworthiness strategies were used to achieve credibility. First, I engaged the Epoche process throughout the investigation to address my subjectivity and to approach the phenomenon of interest with a fresh perspective (for a fuller description, see the “Researcher Subjectivity and Engagement in Epoche” section). Second, I conducted member checks, deemed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to be the “most critical technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314), to ensure that participants’ experiences were accurately described (for a fuller description, see the “Member Checking” section).

Transferability

Transferability, the second criterion, refers to the degree to which the findings can be transferred, or generalized, to other contexts or settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two trustworthiness strategies were used to achieve transferability. First, I used purposeful sampling to obtain participants who were able to provide an in-depth account of their experience with the phenomenon of interest (for a fuller description, see the “Sampling Strategies” section). Second, I provided thick description of the research methodology and design (in the current chapter: “Methods”) and used participant quotes to fully describe the nature and meaning of the particular phenomenon of interest (in the next chapter: “Results”).

Dependability

Dependability, the third criterion, refers to the consistency or stability of findings over time (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To achieve dependability, I used an audit trail for the

cross-checking of the systematic inquiry process. The audit trail provides physical evidence of my research decisions and activities, and thus adheres to my professional and ethical obligation to keep systematic research records (Hays & Singh, 2012). My audit trail in the present investigation included documents such as a timeline of research activities, my reflexivity journal, participant informed consent and demographic forms, contact summary sheets, interview transcriptions, and all drafts of documents relevant to the data analysis process.

Confirmability

The final criterion, *confirmability*, addresses the degree to which the findings can be confirmed by other researchers as an accurate reflection of participants' experience with the phenomenon under investigation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Two strategies were used to achieve confirmability, both of which were previously mentioned: the audit trail and my reflexivity journal. The reflexivity journal, which was kept as part of the audit trail, documented my engagement in *Epoche* and was used to record questions and thoughts that arose during the research process, as well as subsequent decisions that influenced the collection, analysis, and presentation of the phenomenological data.

Member Checking Results for Preliminary Findings

The data analysis resulted in a preliminary classification scheme consisting of five themes: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, Developmental Process, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, Salience of Gender, and Reflections of Mentoring Experience. Additionally, several clear subthemes for each domain were identified. These themes, subthemes, and number of cases that exemplified each theme and subtheme were presented in a table for member checking (see Appendix G).

As discussed in this chapter, participants were sent an email invitation to review the final phenomenological data interpretation and respond to the following questions: (a) Do the findings accurately reflect your experience?, (b) Are there any areas that are unclear or misleading?, and (c) Are there any areas in which you believe my personal biases influenced data interpretation? (see Appendix H). Of the 10 participants, eight conducted a review and provided feedback that indicated participant consensus was reached. Participant feedback regarding the phenomenological findings included the following:

“I have no additional questions, comments, or concerns. The findings are true to my experience and I have no concerns going forward.” (Participant 1)

“I felt that your findings were accurate, clear, and didn’t seem biased.”
(Participant 2)

“Excellent job- what powerful themes!!” (Participant 3)

“As I read through the themes and categories, I hear so much of my experience reflected – even from quotes outside participant 4. I’ve been through the materials a few times now looking for suggestions for you, but I’m coming up blank. It’s not for lack of trying – it’s just that the quotes seem to hang together well and fit the titles given to them. Nothing stands out as missing or inaccurate from my experience.” (Participant 4)

“My statements seem accurate and reflect my experiences ... I do not see places where you influenced the results although without knowing you I cannot say for sure! It looks like you did a great job!” (Participant 5)

“Very interesting results. At first, it was difficult to find my ‘voice.’ I always consider that a good sign since all of the voices resonate with me. I didn’t find anything

that was misleading. Not sure how to respond to our personal biases question since I'm not sure what those are or how you are stating them in your study. More clarification is needed about that." (Participant 6)

"This looks fine!" (Participant 7)

"I think the summary and themes accurately reflect my thoughts. My only reaction would be to mentor-protégé model whereas I see most of my mentorship being more mentor-mentee model. However, I am sure that goes with your theoretical approach to the study." (Participant 9)

All participants were thanked for their review and feedback, and follow-up responses were sent to participants who needed additional clarification (Participant 6) and who posed an alternative view (Participant 9). No additional participant responses were received after the follow-up process that suggested a lack of consensus. Thus, the study themes and corresponding subthemes were retained for presentation in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Chapter IV presents the findings of the current phenomenological investigation derived from in-depth interviews with 10 women counselor educators who shared their experiences as protégés in successful women-to-women mentoring relationships that promoted their leadership development. Additionally, textural descriptions (i.e., “what” was experienced) and structural descriptions (i.e., “how” it was experienced) from the thematic analysis are provided. This chapter concludes with a description of the essence of the experience derived from the synthesis of the textural and structural descriptions.

Study Themes and Subthemes

The data analysis resulted in a classification scheme consisting of five themes: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, Developmental Process, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, Salience of Gender, and Reflections of Mentoring Experience. Additionally, several clear subthemes for each domain were identified. In the presentation of these findings below, participants’ speech was kept intact by using phonetical spelling and ellipses were used to represent breaks in discussion. Additionally, brackets were used to protect the participant identities and to indicate when participants’ statements were altered to promote understanding.

Theme One: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes

All participants reported that they experienced beneficial outcomes as a result of mentoring within various leadership domains. These benefits, both personal and professional in nature, contributed to their growth and development as leaders. Ten subthemes emerged: identity and skill development, research and writing, service to the profession, professional networking and recognition, wellness, self-efficacy and confidence, teaching, transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues, counseling and supervision, and mentoring.

Identity and skill development. All participants identified as leaders in the counseling profession during their interview, with many reporting that their mentors significantly contributed to a “shift” from non-identification to owning strong identities as leaders and counselor educators. For example, Participant 1 shared: “So as many people I think probably have already said, like I never saw myself as a leader. I never would self-identify that way. I think I have a lot of qualities of a leader, but I never thought of it that way.” Remarking on the shift that occurred within her, Participant 1 stated that she owns being a being a leader with a “capital ‘L’” and a “lower case ‘l.’” She went on to explain that the capital “L” represents her formal leadership positions (such as being a faculty member and an elected organizational official) and the lower case “l” represents “work behind the scenes” (such as helping the next generation of leaders get involved).

Mentors contributed to participants’ leadership identity and skill development in numerous ways, with one of the most meaningful being the frequent facilitation of open dialogues about *being a leader* and *developing as a leader*. Participant 3 reported that

her identity as a leader was tied, in part, to “having the conversations week in and week out” about her mentor’s experiences as head of the department. Participant 8 stated that she also talked with her mentor “a lot,” noting that the focus of conversations was on exploring and embracing their leadership style; for example, sharing what servant leadership philosophy and CSI meant to them both. Offering another example, Participant 4 shared that she and her mentor “talked so much” about mutuality, relationship, and hierarchy within leadership, emphasizing that doing so has helped her grapple with her socialized perspective of traditional, hierarchical leadership (which included leaders who did not “look, act, or sound” like her) and her identity as a leader. “I still have a hard time identifying myself as a leader,” she shared. As part of their dialogues with mentors, two participants reported that they focused on developing the following leadership skills: big-picture thinking (or, as they referred to it as, seeing the “bigger picture”) and vision.

In addition to facilitating frequent and open dialogues, participants provided other examples of how their mentors meaningfully promoted their leadership identity and skill development to include: encouraging them to become involved through service and networking, nominating them for awards, providing verbal validation of their leadership potential, and serving as role models and providers of leadership lessons. For example, Participant 2 shared:

And then it really kind of springboarded from there [i.e., her mentor nominating her for awards and getting her involved with CSI] to where I felt like anytime there was an opportunity she was kind of my advocate – introducing me to people, introducing me to opportunities, nominating me for things. And that really made all the difference as far as me developing a strong identity as a professional, um, counselor educator.

Participant 8, who held the cultural view that that “student mode means that I can only learn,” reported that her mentor’s reminders that she can be an equal contributor and expert in the profession contributed to a “powerful and empowering” shift within her that positively impacted her process of becoming a leader. Two participants stated that their mentors served as role models, with one noting that her mentor “espoused the servant leadership philosophy” that she took on as well (Participant 8) and another sharing that her mentors were “very much models in that relational leadership style” who helped her see that she “could be a leader” and in fact “was a leader” (Participant 9). Among the teachings that participants took away from their mentors were: “you don’t have to say yes to everything to have value – you have value in who you are” (Participant 9); “[be] really, really cautious and careful about how to include everyone;” “a little bit of time goes a long way” (Participant 5); “[trust] people to get it done;” and “[express] gratitude” (Participant 8).

Research and writing. Within the domain of research and writing, mentors played a significant role in participants’ development *and* success as scholars in the counseling profession. Many participants reported that they engaged in scholarly collaboration with their mentors, with one participant noting that her connection with her mentor “was really around writing and scholarship” (Participant 4). During these collaborations participants reported that they gained knowledge and skills related to researching, writing, publishing, and editing. And, as a result of these collaborations, a few participants stated that they achieved their first publication. For example, Participant 6, who asked her mentor to work on an independent study with her, shared:

And I told her [the idea], and she felt that it was a good idea, and so basically she helped me learn how to write a- ... at that time and just sit with the literature, how

to...how to go through the literature, how to word it, how to tell a story. Also, she knew what the journal would want, and so my first article ever to be published was in *JCD* [*Journal of Counseling and Development*].

Offering another example, Participant 2 reported: “I did a publication with her in my master’s program. She had a grant and I helped do some data analysis and we wrote the article and got it published.” Participant 1, who expressed to her mentor a desire to work with a group of counseling professionals in publishing a counseling text, stated: “She brought me on as the managing editor, um, and so I was able to like get to know all the writers and authors, and like it was just an amazing experience.”

Many participants also shared that mentors provided them with support for their own scholarly projects and pursuits by connecting them with appropriate resources (e.g., journal articles, organizations, research grants, other professionals), providing consultation and feedback, and serving as sources of encouragement and guidance.

Participant 2 shared that her mentor extended a writing opportunity at a time that she had re-entered into a career in academia to get her back “into the fold” of counselor education. Participant 7 reported that her mentors provided guidance through modeling, noting that they “did a lot of continuing education...even beyond conferences” that influenced her. She shared: “they would all travel around ... just being a leader, you know, leading through their scholarship, which was huge, as well, so I think that was another thing I watched them do, and um, learned to do, as well.”

Relatedly, a few participants reported that their mentors were instrumental in dissertation completion. Participant 5 stated, “she probably gave me the most feedback on my dissertation of anybody on my committee even more than my Chair, um, she spent a lot of time.” This participant further noted that the tone of her mentor’s feedback was

“this great way of complimenting you, um, that encouraged you to keep trying.”

Offering another example, Participant 2 shared that her mentor helped her overcome the struggle to identify a research topic:

I reached out to her [to join the dissertation committee] and she said absolutely. Then, working with her, you know I created a dissertation topic that went on to get a research award at our program and ended up being published in *CES* [*Counselor Education and Supervision*]. It was my first sole ... and I was the lead author on that. So, to have your first lead author being in *CES* was beyond what I could have imagined. That would not have been possible if not for [first name].

Service to the profession. All participants shared that their mentors promoted their engagement in service to the profession within the contexts of counseling organizations and academia. One of the major counseling organizations for service involvement identified by most participants was CSI. Within this organization, at the chapter and international levels, participants reported that their mentors provided them with verbal encouragement to become involved, nominated them for formal positions and leadership development opportunities, and collaborated and consulted with them on leadership projects. For example, Participant 2 reported that she collaborated with her mentor to “revive” their CSI chapter, noting “I came on as a Professional Development Chair, and you know, started planning programs and workshops, and just doing what I could do that I thought would be helpful for the chapter. And so, we spent more time together on that.” A few participants reported that they received support from their mentors to serve as CSI leadership fellows, with Participant 2 noting that in this role she “got to be involved with CSI Leadership Day and Learning Day at ACA.” Participant 8 stated, “I think when I first became a, uh, a faculty member, she encouraged me, she put me on the CSI [international] committee.”

In addition to CSI, participants shared that their mentors actively promoted their involvement in other counseling organizations such as ACA (and its divisions) and CACREP by providing the same types of mentor behaviors (i.e., encouragement, nominations, collaboration, and consultation), as well as serving as a role model. For example, Participant 5 reported, “I’ve done leadership in ACES, um, [formal role] and [formal role] at ACES, and that’s all because [first name] nominated me to do those things.” She also noted that her mentor provided consultation to her while organizing a conference, stating: “she was incredibly supportive in figuring out how to get that done, how to make decisions about budgets. I relied on her, and then I think the conference was a success in part because of her consultation with me.” Participant 6 reported that her mentor’s nomination for a formal organizational leadership position was “just a way of getting involved and, um, you know, learning more about how...especially how the division worked, how ACA worked, uh; but that was another level I did not know.”

Similarly, Participant 8 shared:

she encouraged me to run for, um, [counseling organization] president and of course, obviously, uh, when I won, uh, she was the person I talked to about, "Okay. Now, now what do I do? How, do, how do I run a meeting? How do I, you know, what are things I need to be considering?"

Participant 3 added: “she encouraged me to participate and become part of different organizations, um, as a student member...and that helped me build my basis for leadership skills.” Participant 5, noted that her mentor had her work on an independent project for CACREP. Participant 9 reported that her mentors served as role models for how she serves in organizational leadership, stating:

I may be President or President-Elect or whatever, but what I'm trying to do is be somebody who, who helps everyone else to also feel that they have a voice and mentor them into leadership, because we have to grow and foster new leaders.

A few participants shared that their mentors collaborated with them in service work within the context of their universities. For example, Participant 7 stated her mentor was in charge of a student organization on her campus while she served as the organization's Vice President. Participant 5 reported that her mentor involved her in the admissions process for students.

Professional networking and recognition. Mentors were instrumental in helping most participants network with other counseling professionals and recognizing their leadership contributions. Concerning networking, mentors were described by participants as being “connected” (Participant 3) and able to “open doors” by association alone (Participant 2). As noted by Participant 7, her mentor's introductions “really helped me round out.”

In addition to making introductions, mentors encouraged participants to “go to conferences...And get involved, you know, serve on committees” (Participant 7). More so, they helped participants develop and use their networking skills. For example, Participant 1 reported that her mentor knew her “stumbling blocks” and provided her with encouragement and guidance at a conference so that she could network in ways that were tolerable:

And so she would, she would help, say like, you know, "In order for you to get where you need to go, in order for you to, you know, do what you want to do, [participant first name], like this is part of the deal. Like you have to network, and like let's figure out a way for you to do it and a way that's not hateful.”

Similarly, Participant 4 shared:

I was also incredibly shy and she would do things like find me at a conference and make me go meet somebody. Or start a conversation with somebody about, “Oh well at this time, when this was happening in the field, when we needed this, this is what we did.” I remember her coming up to me and stuffing like, lunch

tickets into my conference badge and saying, “You're going to such and such conference and you're going to sit next to [full name] and you're going to talk to her about this.” Which was very heavy-handed. ... So very much what I needed, I think, to break out of my shell a little bit and also to start, uh, developing relationships and connections and whatnot.

She further noted that if it had not been for her mentor's efforts, “I wouldn't have had those relationships...I don't think I would have had interest, I don't think that I would have had confidence.”

In recognition of their leadership contributions, participants reported that their mentors nominated them for awards and introduced them as someone of importance which, in turn, shaped their views about leadership in the profession and their own views about themselves as leaders. Participant 1, who earned a national award that her mentor nominated her to earn, reported: “I didn't understand what the big deal was, but it's like under ACA. It was crazy and [full name] gave me the award, and I was just like ‘Oh, my gosh.’” Similarly, Participant 10 stated that her mentor's nominations “started with like nominations for like the ACES of Emerging Leaders” and she internally responded with, “‘Wow, you see me as doing that?’” More informally, Participant 9 shared that her mentor introduced her as someone of importance to other professionals which also impacted her view of herself:

[first name] started introducing me as someone. “This is someone who not only talks about [counseling theory name], but walks [counseling theory name].” That was how she started introducing me ... which then that started transitioning my picture and view of myself.

Wellness. Most participants stated that their mentors were active in promoting their wellness, with one participant noting that she “learned the importance of wellness” from her mentor (Participant 8). Also speaking more broadly, Participant 9 stated, “What she's done more for me with regards to leadership development is she has really helped

me see the importance of that kind of work-life balance.” Echoing this sentiment, Participant 3 stated that she learned from her mentoring relationship that “being a good leader or an exemplary leader is going to be wellness.” Participant 7 added: “I think from all of my mentors, they were really good at mentoring balance.” Speaking more specifically about their mentor’s involvement in promoting their wellness, participants reported that their mentors served as role models, had frequent conversations with them about wellness, and provided wellness check-ins.

Many participants reported that their mentors served as role models. For example, Participant 7 reported, “[First name] did the same thing, you know, showed me, you know, I’m going to go to my yoga class now, or, you know ... And she just showed me how she built boundaries around the work, and [First name – a different mentor] is amazing at that.” Similarly, Participant 4 shared that she saw her mentor as “somebody who was managing a life, um, in having her leadership roles and attending to her personal life.” Participant 3 stated, “I could see that she was covering all those areas of wellness. I could kind of track her wellness, and, you know ... And, and I think that’s really important, you know.” In sharing about the impact of her mentor’s attendance to wellness, Participant 1 reported:

And the more I’m into this, the more I realize how important that is. Um, I don’t want to work 80 hours a week and, you know, work myself to the ground. I think that part of what [first name] has helped me see is that good enough is good enough. I know that sounds so trite, but like things don’t have to be perfect.

In addition to serving as role models, many participants shared that their mentors regularly had conversations with them that focused on wellness. For example, Participant 1 shared, “so she would share, um, stories about that, like how she navigates her family and her work and her husband and like all the stuff that she does.” More so, this

participant reported that her mentor would “share strategies that work for her, um, to help me learn how to navigate this [balancing of personal and professional roles].” Offering another example, Participant 2 stated that her mentor supported her emotional wellness, noting:

Her ability to hear me emotionally, I guess just to help me emotionally, sit down and regulate sometimes. To have someone who could help me on the emotional path of counselor education ... And so, I was going through that whole massive transition and emotional world of devastation, and [first name] was there to support me with that.

Other participants noted that they frequently had conversations focused on specific areas related to wellness such as spirituality, physical health and nutrition, stress management, and navigating life transitions (e.g., parenthood, divorce).

A handful of participants also shared that their mentors provided wellness check-ins. Echoing the narratives of other participants, Participant 4 shared that her mentor would inquire about her wellness “quite readily.” Participant 1 reported, “she would just ask like the personal side of things like, ‘Are you taking care of yourself?’, kind of thing, and she would really mean it.” Participant 9 shared that her mentor also asked questions about her wellness such as: “How are things going?”, “What are you doing?”, and “Are you committing too much?”

Self-efficacy and confidence. An increase in self-efficacy and confidence was experienced by many participants because of their mentors providing encouragement and reassurance about their abilities, valuing their opinions and ideas, and providing guidance and opportunities that helped enable them to tap into their leadership potential. Offering an example of her mentor’s encouragement and reassurance, Participant 1 reported, “she will help remind me of the things that I had done before and the things that I had done

that were related to the task and just help me get in perspective.” Participant 5 added that her mentor would share with her, “Of course you can do this,” which promoted her belief that she had something to offer.

A few participants reported that their mentors expressed a valuing of their opinions and ideas. For example, Participant 1 shared about a moment in which her mentor promoted her self-efficacy by deferring to her during a research team meeting:

And she was like, "What do you think [participant first name]? How would you contextualize this, you know, this research idea? How might you go about it?" And then she kind of kept deferring to me and just like I was the expert kind of thing. And I just remember thinking like, "Oh, my gosh, I can do this."... She's deferring to me because she knows I can, and damn it, well, I can too. (laughs) And so there was kind of this moment of like role transition.

Participant 6 reported that in her relationship with her mentors she was “validated for ideas, vision, communicating...”, noting that the validation she received helped her feel confident in pursuing specific aspects of leadership. Participant 9 also shared, “they really made me feel and believe that I mattered and that my voice counted, which then, that then translated for me in giving me the courage to step out of that circle where I felt safe... to use that voice elsewhere.” She further explained that their belief in her and who she was as a person and potential leader gave her the belief in herself and abilities.

In addition to valuing participants’ opinions and ideas, mentors provided guidance and opportunities that helped enable them to tap into their leadership potential. For example, Participant 4 shared, “[she] helped me talk about career options, helped me, um provided me opportunities I wouldn't have understood, or I wouldn't have thought to seek out and really bolstered, um, my confidence and my sense of self and my interests, um, in the field.” Participant 8 reported that her mentor helped to build her confidence by offering her direction, and providing her with encouragement and support, noting:

[First name] was very good at giving direction when you needed direction but she was also very trusting in being able to step back and say, "You know, you got this. I trust that you know how to do this," um, and so I think that, that naturally builds confidence, um, that if [full name] thinks that I can do this, surely I can do this.

Teaching. Within the domain of teaching, mentors played an important role in helping participants pursue their interests, gain confidence in the classroom, and develop their teaching style. Participant 2, who reported an interest in multiculturalism, shared that she was extended an opportunity to co-teach: "My master's program didn't have a strong multicultural program. That was [first name]'s specialty in some ways and a pretty challenging class. So, I spoke with her and she offered to me to teach the class with her." Similarly, Participant 3 shared that her mentor proactively responded to her interest in leadership development by helping her attain a teaching position:

She went out of her way ... So I had a teaching assistantship, but I could have been a teaching assistant for a number of courses, and she made sure that I was able to, at that point, teach my own undergraduate leadership classes so that I could get experience with the material of leadership while gaining teaching experience.

Important to the promotion of participants' confidence in teaching, as well as the development of their teaching style, was their mentor's investment in fostering dialogues about teaching and providing direct feedback. Participant 5 stated, "In teaching, you know, like it wasn't just like 'Oh, print out this lesson' – it was, 'How do we manage this? How do we think about this? Um, what makes a good counselor? What makes a good counselor educator?'" Focusing on the impact of her "unique relationship" with her mentor who provided weekly teaching supervision, as well as feedback from multiple classroom observations, Participant 2 made the following comparison:

And they're [visiting professors in her department] absolutely fabulous, um, you know like, talking to them about their confidence in the classroom, you know,

they're still growing in that. You know they have some experience. I just think that relationship of weekly conversation and dialogue, even though I still had a lot to learn and grow as an educator, I feel like I had my confidence as that educator.

Within a context outside of academia, Participant 9 stated that her mentor served as positive role model. The nature of her mentor's role modeling was described as follows:

And she walks into every meeting and this, again, this model for me and how I try to work in a classroom ... she walks into the meetings and she's like going ... and it's sincere. It's not this formula thing of, "I, I want to apologize if in any way yesterday during our meeting, I offended anyone." And she goes, "I just want to make sure that everyone is in a space where they still feel safe and they still feel comfortable and they still feel not humiliated ..."

Transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues. To promote their successful transition to faculty and navigation of faculty issues, many participants reported that their mentors were valuable role models and sources of support. During graduate training, for example, Participant 5 explained that her mentor openly discussed and role modeled how to navigate politics in academia:

But there was some level of like what you should do, and she was good about not giving us a lot of information about the politics, yet letting us understand how to navigate it. It's a very ... She was very adept at not giving us the details, yet saying, "Here's how we're going to proceed," and so it was really a nice model for me in managing the politics of being on a faculty.

More so, Participant 5 stated: "[first name] valued my opinion, and I think that also facilitated my transition to faculty...because I didn't question my ability to manage admissions."

During the job search process, Participant 2 reported that her mentor provided letters of recommendation, engaged in conversations with her about the role transition, and addressed issues related to self-doubt. In reflecting on her job search process, Participant 2 shared:

But when I look at my recommendation, my recommendation came from [first name] who came from [university name] who has all these connections. I think that my ability ... [first name] challenged me on that. I made the comment one time that I got the interview at [university name] because of her and she really challenged me on that and tried to get me to believe that it was on my own merit. I don't think she'll ever get me to believe otherwise.

Participant 10, who also noted that she experienced self-doubt during the job search process described reaching out to her mentor:

She was also the one that I called, probably one of the first people I've called after my interview at this university 'cause I had just ... it was two days before my dissertation defense and I was just so shaken up and I was like, "Oh my gosh, this is so close together and I don't know what I'm doing. Is this the right thing?" And all of that. And she was so excited, and she ... she has this energy where she'd call me and get enthusiastic, and, um, it helps you just kind of get the sense ... and she always helps me kind of get ... like tap into my sense of knowing.

Once in their faculty position, participants discussed the importance of their mentors in providing advice related to career advancement. For example, Participant 6 stated:

I can reach out to [first name], you know, talk about going up for full professor and some aspect of that. Maybe my university is questioning certain things. How did she negotiate that at her university? Um, it helps, too, that her, her university is a similar size and nature as mine, um; and, and so I, I would seek that out. Um, and that's been very valuable ...

Participant 7 reported, "she's still mentoring me on how to go up for full professor, and, um, you know, she's been a tremendous, um, mentor, and friend. Participant 9 added: "she's become that campus mentor...for me, in a lot of ways."

Counseling and supervision. Mentors also played a role in two participants' leadership development in the domain of counseling and supervision during graduate training through modeling and encouragement outside the context of supervision. As discussed by Participant 4:

she helped me understand what it means to be a counselor. Um, she also brought that very personal element and she would do things like come into our clinic and ask for book suggestions and I remember, and I like to read, and so I remember sitting at the front desk for a clinic and here's this really cool faculty member who's got this all together and she knows all about this and she's asking for book suggestions and I suggest one and she goes and reads it and comes back and talks to me about it. Um, and it was just, very much a connection I felt with her.

In discussing the impact of her mentor's encouragement regarding her leadership development as a supervisor, Participant 5 stated, "I think it gave me autonomy. She encouraged me to take those risks, so like go out and, you know, supervise school counselors."

Mentoring. As an outgrowth of their mentoring experiences, participants reported several outcomes associated with their own mentor practices and their overall views of mentoring relationships in the counseling profession. Most participants discussed how their mentoring relationships contributed to a desire to invest in others – to "pay it forward" (Participant 1) and "give back" (Participant 10). As shared by Participant 2:

I was the keynote speaker for our CSI induction last [time frame] here at [institution name], and I did my whole speech kind of around [first name] and about her mentorship and how much her investment in me really shifted my career path and really my mindset about who I am, as far as wanting to be another mentor for other people.

Similarly, Participant 1 shared: "I am a steward of the profession. And I care, and I... Like professional counseling is it to me, and so I, I think maybe her continuing to invest in me also helps me to continue to grow and invest." Participant 9 added: "I hear other stories of people struggling of not having anybody and things like that, and it's just like I'm going ... but because I have had so many [mentors], I see the value of it so I strive to be one for, for other people in the profession."

In their investments with others, many participants shared that their mentoring behaviors and approach in the role of mentor is intentionally reflective of what they learned from their own mentor(s). Participant 2 shared that her mentor influenced the “grounding” that she uses to guide her investment in students, explaining:

I think it comes more from a professional development mindset, more than a let's just help everybody out kind of mindset ... And so when people need something in my field, I just want to invest in their career development and personal development, because I know how that relationship really formed me.

Participant 5 reported, “I tried really hard to model that as a faculty myself and running our doctoral program and to really think about how, um, I can be more of an accepting of everyone and honoring of their strengths, meaning everyone has a spot.” Other participants also pointed out salient learnings that they have shared with their own students; for example, noting “I try to impart some of the wisdom that I’ve learned from her about balance” (Participant 1) and “I started talking and teaching my own students about being leaders of counselors and that leaders are, you know, um ... you know, we’re ... we are basically servants to our profession.” (Participant 6). A few participants shared that they have adopted their mentor’s relational approach. For example, Participant 9 stated, “And so it's like people have mentored me, so I'm going to commit to doing the same thing and I'm going to do it in a relational fashion, not in a 'how can you serve me' kind of fashion.” Participant 10 added: “She also has a mentorship style with the students so she's given me more ideas on how to connect better with my students.”

In addition to influencing their own mentor practices, participants reported that their mentoring experiences shaped their views about the importance of, and need for, quality mentoring in the counseling profession, particularly for graduate students and early career counselor educators. For example, Participant 9 reported, “I think we need

more strong mentors in our professional field,” further noting that mentors need to “work from a perspective of the fact that we need to be sensitive to culture and context when we're mentoring and not think one, one size fits all.” In emphasizing the need for reaching out for mentorship to her counseling graduate students who expressed an interest in becoming more professionally involved, Participant 1 shared that she offered the following advice: “if you want to do something, like you need to be proactive and you need to let that person know that you want to learn from them” and “if they ask you to do something, you should do it and do it well. And then they're going to keep investing in you, so it's kind of like this mutual thing.” Participant 7 reported, “I would not have believed it 20 years ago, that this is where I would be now, and so, just, I think it's a critical piece of, um, our profession to provide mentorship to young faculty members.” Offering another example, Participant 8 shared, “I think we need to be more proactive about that mentor relationship,” noting that “you may be a mentor for somebody else, even though it's not official, just by the way you behave.” She further noted, “I think the great mentors are those who value being a mentor.”

Relatedly, participants' experiences with their mentors also influenced their awareness and understanding of the lineage and shared, intimate connections associated with leadership mentoring in the counseling profession. Speaking about her views of her mentor, Participant 2 stated, “I feel like there's a real sense of, when you're interacting with her, of the lineage of mentorship.” Within her mentoring relationship, Participant 8 stated, “We talked a lot about the importance of, of mentoring future generations to know what it meant to be counselors. The importance of history, us knowing, uh, you know, the, how counseling evolved as a profession.” In referring to participation in this

dissertation study, Participant 6 reported, “you probably mi-, may see a pattern of who I recommended and who recommended me.” Also referring to the current study, Participant 9 stated, “I hope, that if you interviewed somebody that I’ve mentored, they would say the same thing about me.”

Theme Two: Developmental Process

All participants described the nature and dynamics of their mentoring relationships. Two subthemes emerged: informal mentoring and formal mentoring. For the first subtheme, informal mentoring, three additional subthemes emerged that reflect how the nature and dynamics of informal relationships change over time: impetus and initiation, initial connection and cultivation, and evolving roles and connections.

Informal mentoring: Impetus and initiation. Participants reported that their mentoring relationships were initiated in the context of their counselor education programs (as students) and through professional connections (mostly as counselor educators). Participant 4 shared that she also had a few mentoring relationships initiated during her undergraduate training. She stated that the impetus for these relationships was her active involvement in courses taught by her mentors, as well as co-involvement in student activities within her university setting.

Within the context of their counseling programs, many participants reported that they intentionally reached out to women counselor educators for connection and support.

For example, Participant 1 shared:

So, she was somebody I kind of like knew about before I was introduced to her, and I already had a sense of like, oh, this person like has it together, could be a resource or like, you know ... I wasn't necessarily thinking of approaching her formally as a mentor, but I knew I wanted to get to know her, kinda thing. Like, oh, she's like a counselor educator and she's, you know ... She's the real deal or whatever. And so I made a point of signing up for her internship section when I

was a master's student because I wanted to get to know her. So, I took the initiative to like put myself out there and try to like, you know, connect with her on some level. And I let her know that I wanted to be her GA [graduate assistant] and like just any opportunity she had. So, I kind of put myself out there, uh, before I was in the doc program.

Participant 2 stated that she reached out to a woman counselor educator in her program and “tried to spend more time with her” because she was feeling marginalized and lacked belongingness:

At the end of that first year, I really just felt like I'd made a mistake. Should I even be here? Should I drop out? Should I transfer somewhere? Um, really kind of doubting myself. And then, the next year, I thought, you know I just really need a mentor. I need someone who can be helpful to me.

A few other participants reported that they invited faculty to serve on their dissertation committees, most notably in the role of dissertation Chair. Participant 4 shared that when she extended the invitation she remembered her faculty member stating, “This is a lifelong relationship. Like if we work together, we work together for life.”

Some participants reported that their mentoring relationships within their counselor education programs were initiated because of admiring and viewing women counselor education faculty in their departments as role models. For example, Participant 6 reported that she was attracted to her faculty member’s “involvement” and “energy” in the profession, noting “she also emulated something that I was becoming, and that was a counselor educator and, um, how to make that work.” Offering another example,

Participant 4 stated:

[First name] was in her first year as a faculty member and I just experienced her as so warm and relatable and she was funny but down to earth and I had a sense that she had lived a bit of a life like I had lived. Um, and that she got that part of my experience. And so I just remember feeling a strong connection to her. I remember feeling admiration for her. Wanting to model myself after her.

In addition to the context of counselor education, many participants reported that their mentoring relationships were initiated through professional connections. One primary context for professional connections identified by participants was counseling organizations. Participant 8 shared:

throughout my career I've had lots of, um, mentors and most of them have been informal in the sense that they, um, were not my professor, were not, you know, but just people that I encountered, um, through connections, uh, either through CSI or ACA.

Participant 4 stated that she reconnected with a former counselor education faculty member while serving as a peer on a counseling organization board, noting, “we reconnected through that, got to know each other a bit better, um, through that and our lives also kind of converged in some ways.” Participant 6 also described forming peer relationships as well:

We really haven't worked together on a lotta things, and we've never written together, um; but it's through our connection with [first name] and thoo- ... through the work with, uh, [counseling organization], um, that, um ... and also being similar in that we both, uh, are career counselor educators and moms and ... or, moms at similar times in our lives. Nobody talked about that as much; and I think as, as a peer mentor ... and I think that's why I tend to seek out more from these peer mentors, that we are going through some similar things, but we're still dedicated to this career in counselor education.

Participant 7 added: “So that was that peer mentoring, and like I said, you know, in my first job, I had colleagues, um, you know, one who I co-taught with, and, you know, we did a lot of women's stuff together.” Offering other avenues for the initiation of mentoring relationships, Participant 9 reported that she connected with another faculty member outside of her department to gain scholarly expertise, as well as with other scholars outside of her university who shared similar scholarly pursuits.

Informal mentoring: Initial connection and cultivation. For many participants, the initial connection of their informal mentoring relationship was more formal and structured, with both parties working together to meet a goal or goals. Over time, the mentoring relationship naturally developed and the connection between participants and their mentors deepened. For example, Participant 1 shared:

I think initially, our relationship was, um, I don't know. It was kind of like transactional or formal. Like she would give me assignments to do as her GA [graduate assistant] or whatever, but as we got to know each other, um, I just felt like she was really taking an interest in my development. ... Through our work together, you know, through me being her GA, I think we realized that we worked well together just in terms of, um, like tasks. Like she would assign me something to do, and I would do it. And so she knew she could kind of completely count on me, and I learned that I could count on her in terms of like she, she wanted to invest in my development, kinda thing. I felt like there was a mutuality to it ...

Similarly, Participant 4 reported that her mentors did more “initiating” and “structuring” at the beginning of the relationship, noting that one mentor was “very heavy handed.” She further stated, “I also think I needed that structure and direction, because I would have been lost without it.” Participant 2 described her mentoring relationship as an outgrowth of supervision on her teaching. “It turned out, I liked her so much, I just wanted to be around her,” she reported.

Also important to participants at the onset of the relationship was their mentor’s encouragement and support. Participant 3 stated that her mentor “was always there to be validating and encouraging,” noting that her mentor focused on her strengths and took a holistic approach to her leadership development. Similarly, Participant 6 reported that her mentoring relationship “developed in a place where, instead of making suggestions to do things” her mentor asked her, “What do you want to do?” and “How are you going to evolve?” She further stated that while her mentor’s approach was encouraging, she also

felt like she needed to prove herself in the relationship because “being a leader was expected.”

Two participants described their initial connection as being more mutual in nature. For example, Participant 9 shared, “they, [first name] and, and [first name], almost from the start, treated me as if, as a colleague in a lot of ways. It was like they valued my opinion.” Participant 10 described the first interaction with her mentor, in which she interviewed her for serving as her dissertation Chair, as follows:

I knew she was, um, interested in the same type of research topics, and, um, but just the first actual face-to-face interview with her ... was so powerful because she tried to ... she ... minimized that power differential and she did such a good job connecting with me. And she shared some personal experiences that were related to my life which were significant and also, you know, convincing me that she ... she could relate to me, she cares enough, um, and she’s invested in a personal way. Like, it ... it just goes beyond the professional piece. So that was kind of my first, um, experience with her, um, with her way of being with her type of mentorship which it just clicked with me.

Informal mentoring: Evolving roles and connections. Most participants reported that over several years their relationship with their mentors evolved in meaningful ways regarding roles and connections. For example, some participants reported that the relationship with their mentor became more collegial, particularly after they graduated with their doctoral degrees. Participant 8 stated, “I think part of it was, um, you know, this sounds so minor but part of it was going from calling her Dr. [last name] to [first name].” Participant 10 shared, “I can sense like where she’s looking at me differently [as a peer], I feel empowered.” Participant 7 reported that while she and her mentor are peers, “I still look to her for mentorship, and she still provides it.” Similarly, Participant 4 stated, “We’ve been peers long than she a mentor and yet she’ll always be a mentor to me.”

A few participants reported that their relationship with their mentor developed, or “merged,” into a friendship following graduation, with Participant 4 equating the relationship with her mentor to that of a family member. “I’m not sure I would have said she was my friend when I was in the doc program” (laughs), stated Participant 8. Among the meaningful efforts this participant recognized her mentor making in the relationship were attending her wedding and celebrating the birth of her children with gifts and visits after they were born. Participant 4 shared that her mentor, who she views “mostly as a friend” began to share more of herself. Participant 2 also stated that her mentor began to “share a little bit more” noting that such disclosures were a shift from the “one-sided” relationship they had that focused primarily on her development and experiences.

While some participants reported being able to more easily continue developing their connection with their mentors after graduation, others reported that it has been a challenge to do so. For example, Participant 3 reported, “We wanted to work on other articles together, um, but the busyness of our field is just crazy sometimes, and she also is now, you know, trying to mentor other students.” She further shared:

It has been hard to connect ever since [graduation]. Um, but when we do connect, when we do have a chance to carve out some time on the phone, it's always very rewarding, and it's ... and it's similar to what we had when I was her mentee.

Participant 5 also reported that she and her mentor have grown apart in the last few years because her mentor “has more students she has to mentor.” Participant 4, who began a relationship with her mentor during her master’s program stated, “we sight each other at a conference every two to three years and we end up having a cup of coffee that lasts a few hours.”

Formal mentoring. A few participants reported that they were assigned mentors within the context of a counseling organization (as part of an initiative) or academia (to receive support as a new faculty). These formal mentoring experiences were described as distinct from their experiences in informal mentoring relationships. Sharing the sentiment of other participants, Participant 7 reported, “the more formal mentoring is, I think, a little bit more challenging, at least in the field.” Participant 6 shared that her mentoring relationship, assigned within a counseling organization, “didn’t quite work” because of her preference for a “more authentic, uh, naturally evolving kinda relationship”:

And so because it doesn’t happen on a regular basis, you know, we’re not talking and communicating and developing that relationship and, you know, the trust pieces that you would ... that would naturally come out of that more consistent type of relationship, just doesn’t happen. And it doesn’t happen quickly; and for me it just sort of falls off. And so ... I mean, uh, there’s certainly a piece of having to be intentional in making those work. Uh, for me, I don’t think I felt like I needed to invest the time to make that work ‘cause I felt they were artificially formed.

Participant 7, who reported that she was formally assigned a mentor in her department, stated that her mentor is “very overwhelmed in her new role” and serves as a “kind of steady presence.” “I miss that energy where somebody involves me, like actually pushes me beyond,” she stated.

Theme Three: Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships

All participants described how the nature and dynamics of their mentoring relationships contributed to their growth and development. In particular, participants’ narratives reflected key contributions needed in effective mentoring relationships. Six subthemes emerged: mutuality, trust, and respect; protégé-mentor goodness of fit; contact and communication; mentor interest and investment; developmental mentor

approach; and mentor qualities.

Mutuality, trust, and respect. The relational components of mutuality, trust, and respect were identified by most participants as being present in their mentoring relationships. In their discussions of mutuality, participants used words such as “mutual,” “egalitarian,” “collaborative,” and “relational” to reflect the bi-directional nature of the mentoring relationship. For example, Participant 1 shared, “It’s mutual. We both benefit from the relationship. It’s not predatory. It’s not one way.” Similarly, Participant 9 reported “it’s a power with kind of dynamic ... not a power over, and so it’s very much that kind of collaborative process.” Benefits experienced in the presence of mutuality included joint learning opportunities, the growth of the mentoring relationship, the expectancy of genuine support during personal and professional challenges, and mattering.

Trust was described by Participant 5 as experienced “loyalty and support” that was “incredibly important” in the mentoring relationship. Relatedly, Participant 1 described it in terms of a mutual reliance: “She can count on me to get things done. I can count on her to get things done.” Participant 3 added: “I really appreciated that [full name] would tell me the truth.” Benefits experienced in the presence of trust included the removal of formal boundaries, relationship sustainability and longevity, the belief that a mentor will serve as a soundboard and offer constructive feedback, and assurance.

As with mutuality and trust, participants provided instances in which they experienced respect in their mentoring relationships. For example, Participant 2 stated that her mentor “respected that just wasn’t the direction I want to go” regarding her decision to participate in a collaborative writing project:

I mean, the publication she had for me, you know, it just never got done. And she never, for a long time we kept talking about it, and about a year after the original invitation, we just kind of stopped talking about it. And she's never brought it up, she's never guilted me about it. I think she knows where my heart is. I'm just not, um, I think I could be a writer, I just never really developed as one. It's just not really my interest.

Participant 3, who shared that she entered the mentoring relationship having had “years in the field” reported, “she respected me and my previous experience.” Pointing to an instance of mutuality, Participant 6 shared that there was “respect for each other, so where we were” in speaking about their roles as mothers:

Like, she wasn't a mom, you know, a biological mom; but she ended up bein' like a mother to a lot of doc students, maybe some master's students as well. And (clears throat), I think that, um, when I became a mom, she respected that. Like, she, she knew that my time, uh, was going to look different than it had before, so the things that were important to me, um, had changed. And, um, so I never felt like she couldn't understand that, even though she had never really experienced it herself in her lifetime. Um, so that was ... I mean I think that mutual respect was there.

Benefits experienced in the presence of respect included mutual valuing and felt acceptance.

Protégé-mentor goodness of fit. Most participants shared that they experienced a goodness of fit, or what some referred to as “a good match,” in their mentoring relationship that was marked by shared commonalities. Participant 6 shared, “There's a lotta things that we have in common, so I think there can be some natural things that occur, um... because of these factors.” Similarly, Participant 3 reported, “We were just bonded on so many levels, and they were all very positive.” Key commonalities identified by participants included holding similar perspectives (e.g., “visions and values around what Counselor Education should be” [Participant 1]), sharing personal and professional experiences (e.g., “career counselor educators and moms and ... moms at

similar times in our lives” [Participant 6]), having similar personalities (“similar in behavior ... just being similar personality styles” [Participant 5]), and sharing similar interests (e.g., “research interests and passions” [Participant 9]).

Offering another reason for goodness of fit beyond bonding over commonalities, Participant 3 reported that she experienced a spiritual connection that was difficult to describe. She stated:

I think that we had something a little beyond that bonding. I think we had something that I don't even know how to express to you ... something greater than the relationship ... There's definitely a sense of something spiritual. Something that spoke to, um, I don't know, um, um, purpose, or um ... I don't know, something very unique and genuine, and um, wonderful ... that I'm not sure what I could tell you about it. But it was something greater than the both of us.

Also focusing on the relationship connection, Participant 2 shared:

I think about the client/counselor relationship and how that fit is important and how mentorship is the same. I think I would have benefited from anybody investing in me a little bit. But I think with my personality, if I had had a super professional person that really had this strong boundary between us and that wasn't able to morph some with me, especially after graduation, I don't know that that would have been as good of a fit with me.

Contact and communication. Contact and communication was identified by most participants as another foundational contributor to successful mentoring relationships. Participant 6 reported “communication as huge” in maintaining her relationship with her mentor. Adding to this, Participant 1 stated, “so part of that sustainability is contact and...*consistent contact over time* [emphasis added].”

Participants reported that time, commitment, and intentionality were central in sustaining contact and communication. For example, in the context of their training programs, two participants reported that they had frequently connected with their mentors, noting: “I was in her office a lot” (Participant 6) and “we spent hours per week

together for, what, three years?” (Participant 3). As another example, Participant 6 shared that she has intentionally reached out to her mentor to touch base:

You know, ever since our kids were born, we’ve been touchin’ base with each other, not that I mean I’m calling her up on the phone; but, you know, when I see her and we’re connecting on that level and sharing, you know, things, and especially, you know, learning from each other on what works ... but, um, I have reached out to her more, you know, versus just happenstance, uh, running into each other. I’ve reached out to her more in the past maybe three years.

Participants also reported that their mentors intentionally reached out to them. For example, Participant 9 stated, “she reached out to me personally saying, ‘I want your voice on this project.’” On a more personal level, Participant 1 stated that, “she has just made time for me, and has continued to check in on me.” Also identified as contributing to sustained contact was proximity (e.g., “remaining in the same region” [Participant 5]) and being in “similar circles” such as CSI and ACA divisions [Participant 6]).

With a focus on the mentor’s role in contact and communication, participants reported that that their mentors were accessible, approachable, and responsive. Participant 10 stated, “I felt like I could go and speak to her whenever about whatever.” Similarly, Participant 3 reported, “she as available and ready to answer any question I had regarding Counselor Education.” Offering a specific instance of her mentor’s responsiveness when she reached out to her mentor for support during a career transition, Participant 4 shared:

I called [first name] and you know [first name] would say, ‘I got an hour driving time!’ And we would call and talk on the phone for about an hour and she really I think helped me have the courage to change my situation.

Participants, in describing their mentor’s responsive style of communication, used words such as “encouraging,” “open,” “straightforward,” and “funny.”

Mentor interest and investment. Most participants experienced a sincere interest and investment on the part of their mentors, with Participant 9 sharing that her mentors were “people I admire and respect...and who are investing in me and doing it differently.” Participant 1 stated:

I think that she still takes an interest in me. I think she wants to help me grow and develop, and so I, I credit her for that. Her, um, I don’t know, the goodness of her heart, I don’t know what it is, but she ... I think she wants to continue mentoring me.

Participant 8 reported that her mentor directly talked about her desire to invest in their relationship, noting: “I still remember her looking at me going, ‘Uh, you do realize that you’re asking me for life ... If I’m your dissertation Chair, if I’m your program advisor this is a lifelong relationship.’” Further stating that her mentor’s interest and investment extended to other mentees, this participant shared:

And I think that’s what made [first name] so, um, I mean, there’s so many mentees out there that, um, would call [first name], um, their mentor and it’s because she valued that relationship. She saw it as her personal mission to develop the counseling profession and the way she developed the counseling profession was not only through her leadership and scholarly works but sort of ensuring that the next generation of counselor educators would be well informed and skilled.

Additional statements made by participants that reflected the sincerity of their mentor’s interest and investment in them included: “I mean she cared for me.” (Participant 5), “And, I look back now, and am like, wow. What a personal investment.” (Participant 4), and “she has my best interests at heart.” (Participant 6).

Two participants reported that their mentor’s investment was marked by a balance of challenge and support. For example, Participant 5 stated, “She challenges you; she encourages you. She pushed me to do things that I didn’t even think about.” Participant

8 also shared: “I think about her, her balance of challenging me, her balance of supporting me, um having high expectations.”

Developmental mentor approach. Many participants shared that they benefited from their mentor’s developmental approach, noting that it helped them “grow” as leaders. Central to the success of their mentor’s approach was consistency, responsiveness, and intentionality over time. Participant 1 reported: “I needed to, you know, have someone that I could develop with. Someone who was able to, you know, watch me over time and help me track my progress and help me see where I needed to grow.” Offering an analogy for her mentor’s approach, she remarked: “I’m almost drawing a good parallel to like, what is it, good parenting ... It’s consistent and responsive.” Similarly, Participant 3 stated: “I needed to, you know, have someone that I could develop with. Someone that was, um, consistent. Someone that was able to, you know, watch me over time and help me see where I needed to grow.” Further, Participant 8 shared: “I think that she probably was very much intentional in knowing what I needed from her and knowing what to give me when I needed it.”

A few participants emphasized the word “process” in their description of their mentor’s approach. For example, Participant 7 shared, “one of my other mentors, um, was [full name], and, you know, she was all about the process and so that was really good for me as well, and that was during my doctoral program.” In describing her mentor, Participant 10 reported, “what was neat about her was that, she suggested some smaller, um, things so it was a gradual process of encouraging me to tap into various leadership roles.” In addition to encouragement, Participant 10 shared that she also experienced her mentor as “tapping into my creativity and to the leadership potential and to ... and

connecting all of these things with my strengths” throughout the mentoring process.

Participant 9 added that her mentors provided her “the freedom to have that developmental process” to confront her “own relational images of, of different things” (e.g., qualifications, capability) that helped her view herself as a professional.

Also important to a few participants was their mentor’s ability to serve as a model and shift their roles and the structure of the relationships as needed. For example, Participant 1 shared, “she will like verbalize it. Like she’ll say it. And she will mean it and be sincere, and then she demonstrates it.” Speaking about roles, Participant 3 stated: “So she could be hierarchical if she needed to be, or she could be my supervisor if she needed to be ... or if she needed to be my mentor ... or if she needed to be my friend.” Participant 4 stated that at a time she saw her mentor as a “taskmaster,” noting that her mentor knew what she needed; whereas, in other instances her mentor would be sure to “take a time out.”

Mentor qualities. Participants shared effective mentor qualities that were present in their mentoring relationships that promoted their leadership development. These qualities can be grouped under the following terms and phrases: “mentors are relationship-orientated,” “mentors are knowledgeable and task-orientated,” and “mentors are remarkable.” Participants who described effective mentor qualities that fall under the category “mentors are relationship-oriented” used terms such as “helpful,” “encouraging,” “sweet,” “personal,” “well-connected,” “humble,” “welcoming,” “genuine,” “generous,” “giving,” “warm,” “gracious,” and “collaborative.” For the second category, “mentors are knowledgeable and task-orientated,” participants described their mentors using terms such as “efficient,” “path-oriented,” “savvy,” “smart,”

“proactive,” “task-driven,” “intelligent,” and “well-read.” Regarding the last category, “mentors are remarkable,” words such as “awesome,” “wonderful,” “phenomenal,” “amazing,” and “great” were used by participants to describe their mentors. More so, participants highlighted the importance of mentors having a “strong professional identity” and serving as an “exemplary leader.”

Theme Four: Salience of Gender

Many participants shared that gender served as an important component in their mentoring relationships with their female mentors (and for some participants, their male mentors). Additionally, these participants highlighted how their experiences shaped their perceptions about women and leadership, as well as women and mentoring. Four subthemes emerged: motherhood and work-life balance, women and leadership, women and mentoring, and gender comparisons.

Motherhood and work-life balance. Several participants shared that they were positively impacted by their mentors’ role modeling of motherhood and work-life balance, and by the open and transparent discussions that they had with their mentors about navigating various roles such as mother, spouse, leader, and counselor educator. Speaking about role modeling, and echoing the narrative of other participants, Participant 4 shared that her mentor “has been a counselor educator and a very successful leader while raising young children” and that she “needed to be able to see somebody like that.”

For Participant 1, her mentor’s role modeling of motherhood and work-life balance was experienced as “refreshing”:

she works hard but she also has a good life, and she prioritizes her family. And I’m like, “Okay.” And so I think especially as a woman, that’s so refreshing to hear. Like you can navigate this and you can have a family and a partner, and you can have, you know, a Counselor Ed job and be a national leader. Like it doesn’t

have to be perfect, like you know, you just need to just navigate things and be efficient, you know.

Whereas Participant 7, who shared about her mentoring experiences in the '90s, stated that at that time she felt "lucky":

I was lucky that the immediate people, you know, I got to see [first name], and I got to see [first name], you know, do leadership, and that was in the late '90s ... So, um, and also have a life ... And so that balance piece was a huge piece of that, as well.

Participant 2 added that "watching someone try to be a mom and be a counselor educator, you didn't see that as much," further noting that "watching her accept her own path, I think helped me accept my own path, too." Participant 4 shared that watching her mentor actively balance motherhood and career helped her become "more focused," "more intentional," and "much more aware of time" and "consequences" in her engagement in leadership as a mother counselor educator.

In regard to conversations about motherhood and work-life balance, two participants explicitly stated that such conversations were "especially" important in female mentoring relationships. Participant 8, who shared that she was studying counselor education in the '90s, reported: "I think that [first name] gave me the opportunity and almost permission to have that conversation [about having a family as a counselor educator]." Participant 7 stated that her mentor was "very understanding" of her status as a single mother in graduate training and would talk with her about different aspects of motherhood such as "what that looks like and what that means and how challenging it is." Similarly, Participant 2 shared:

Before she had kids and before I was divorced, we talked not a lot about it, but we talked some, and she shared some of her hesitations about being a mom and so did I ... And when she had her daughter, she would openly share about some of

the struggles and her emotional process transitioning to a role that didn't quite feel as comfortable as being a counselor educator in some ways.

Highlighting the importance of reframing experienced struggles, Participant 8 reported that her mentor would point to her strengths related to motherhood and work-life balance: "she would name that [strength] for me, uh, even when I'm struggling 'cause I think that as, as a working mom, we always struggle."

Women and leadership. Several participants shared that they were positively impacted by their mentors' role modeling and "embodiment" of strong female leadership, and by the open and transparent conversations they had with them about challenges women face as leaders in the counseling profession. With reference to gender modeling, Participant 1 shared that "both of us being women I think is, is a big deal" and "meaningful." She further explained:

she can call out the bullshit that goes on in academia. I mean she is a living, breathing embodiment of how to navigate a patriarchal system. And so being able to see that and to know that and to kind of ... I mean I don't do it like with her, but like as a student, I would do that sort of like in proximity to her. Um, and I don't know. It's just ... It's like, it's like you know that expression: you cannot be what you cannot see?

Participant 1 further commented on the importance of her mentor being a woman of color: "I think because she's a woman of color, um, that also helps me to see some of the additional variables that she has to deal with, and I think that helps make me, hopefully, a more intentional multicultural leader as well." Participant 3 also shared that she watched her mentor embody female leadership by stepping into leadership roles "that the other female counselor educators in that department were hesitant to step into" and successfully use a relationship-oriented leadership approach. She explained:

And so she, she always stepped into those roles, and then ... And did a really good job. I mean, my goodness, she ... She really embodied to me that leadership, it ...

Like, it goes all the way from ... It's the one-on-one relationship with the student, but it's also the relationship with all of your colleagues. It's also the relationship, if you're the head of the department, then it's also the relationship between that department and all the other departments.

Also referring to the impact of watching her mentors' leadership approach, Participant 9 added: "I've never had to question that ["a woman can do what I want to do, and what I'm now doing"] because I've had such strong female mentors who all lead in a very relational manner."

In addition to role modeling, participants shared that conversations with their mentor about women's leadership helped prepare them for leadership and normalized their leadership experiences, with Participant 1 noting that such conversations were "absolutely crucial, um, because leadership looks, feels, smells, acts different depending on your race and your gender, and your sexual identity and ability status and all of that." Participant 1 shared that her mentor discussed isms and power dynamics, and named privilege and oppression, in a "very intentional and very appropriate way," noting that "she wouldn't ever say anyone's name or anything like that, but she would bring the issue to the table and she would name it for us." Similarly, Participant 3 shared:

Just the fact that she was honest and truthful with me about what is it really like, and not trying to, um ... You know, she ... She wanted to make sure I was exposed to positives as well as the challenges of what it's like to be in leadership as a counselor educator as a woman.

Participant 4 added:

As a faculty member, she was somebody I could call when I got into a sticky situation or I knew we were having a political situation or a gendered situation or whatever it was. And I could call her and she would understand and she would commiserate, um, and she would usually have some kind of good advice, whether it was something I was ready to do or not.

Participant 4 further shared that her mentor, who she viewed as being “one of the very few women in leadership” during her [mentor’s] generation, would also share stories about “dealing with really hierarchical traditional kind of structures and expectations.”

Speaking about women and leadership more broadly, beyond the mentoring relationship, Participant 3 reported that women’s leadership is a “really important part of our profession” and that “female leaders are under-represented.” Participant 9 shared similar observations, noting that while more women have entered into leadership roles within ACA, “a lot of the leadership in this organization is men, um, even though the field is dominated by women.” Offering a potential explanation, Participant 3 shared, “I think some female leaders in our profession that, it’s challenging for them to be in a leadership position.”

Two participants pointed to women’s increased representation in leadership within the counseling profession. For example, Participant 4 stated, “we have this generational shift where in this current generation of leaders, I think we have a really strong mix of male and female leaders.” Factors identified by participants as important to promoting women’s leadership representation in the counseling profession included female counselor educators’ continued leadership involvement in the profession, recognition from universities about the importance of having women leaders, and women-to-woman leadership mentoring experiences.

Women and mentoring. A few participants discussed women and mentoring using a gendered lens, focusing on topics such as the availability of, and need for, women mentors, and how positive and negative experiences shaped their views about women-to-woman mentoring relationships. As noted by Participant 2, “I think about the younger

female counselor educators coming up and they are reaching out to mentorship.” In sharing her own experience about seeking a mentor, Participant 6 reported: “And so when I got into my doc program, um, there were only three female faculty members, um, and so of course I began to look at our own gender, uh, for mentors automatically.” Participant 8 also highlighted that there were limited women mentors within her reach during the ‘90s and offered the following explanation:

I think part of the reason why I’ve had so many male mentors is that, let’s be honest, there are more men in the counseling profession than women once you get to the higher ups. There’s definitely more women when you’re at the masters level and clinical level.

Participant 8 further shared that she has observed positive changes in the representation of women leaders:

in some ways, your [i.e., the researcher’s] generation of counselor educator and being female is really exciting because there’s so many, you have so many role models in terms of ... Well not so many. You have women who are married, who do have children.

One participant, Participant 10, shared that she experienced a negative woman-to-woman mentoring experience with her department chair, noting that it ended up “destroying my confidence in women and mentoring.” Participant 10 reported that the relationship “shattered” her trust, stating:

So that’s the type of thing where it’s very very tricky because it started as a really good mentoring opportunity for a couple of years, and then I realized that some of that information was just used strategically against some of the other faculty members, and it ends up being used against me.

She further noted that, despite the negative experience, she gained something positive from the mentoring relationship:

So, I think that in that sense, it still had a positive influence from the simple fact that I know that it was not the right ... I don’t care to be involved in that type of mentoring relationship where it’s like, if you have my back I’ll have yours.

Focusing on positive experiences in her woman-to-woman mentoring relationships, Participant 5 reported that her relationships “really changed my perception of women supporting women.” She described her mentor as operating on an “abundance model” rather than engaging in “relational aggression stuff,” noting:

I think there’s something really primal about women edging each other out, and women do that because they’re scared, and [first name] operated from a place of abundance and acceptance and openness versus, um, operating from a place of we have to, like, keep competition out so we can survive.

Participant 10 also viewed her mentor’s approach as important to her leadership development as a woman counselor educator, noting: “So she's not just an outside resource confirming or validating my experience, but she has a way of helping me tap into my own experience and my own way of knowing, which I think is huge for women.”

Gender comparisons. A few participants provided comparisons of their experiences in mentoring relationships with women and men. Whereas one participant, made the following broad statement that suggested a difference in experience: “My strongest mentoring in Counselor Ed is not a woman, so for the purposes of your dissertation...talking about that mentor relationship is not the same” (Participant 9). Those who offered gender comparisons focused on mentor approach and power dynamics.

Concerning mentor approach, Participant 8 reported that women were more personal and men were more business-like as mentors:

[First name-woman] was always good about asking how my, ‘How are you doing? How’s your family?’ Um, recognizing other parts of my life first and then going on to business. Um, I think when I think about my conversations with [first name- first man] it starts off with, ‘I need this book chapter from you. I need this ...’ I mean so it’s much more business-like. Uh, and that’s definitely more with [first name-second man], it’s much more business-like. I mean we,

we've had conversations, uh, at a personal level as well but it's much more, the starting point is let's get down to business. ... So, so much more personal, um – in that woman-to-woman relationship.

Offering a potential explanation, Participant 8 shared that she experienced a stronger personal connection with her woman mentor that was attributed, in part, to “much more contact” (e.g., mentor sending birthday cards, mentor sharing thinking-about-you thoughts), more frequent discussions about the work-life balance, and mentor admiration. In regard to her admiration for her woman mentor, she stated: “I think there's just, there's just something nice about having a female mentor who you can also look up to and respect and realize, you know, [first name] did it. And, and did it well.”

Also speaking to the approach taken by men in mentoring relationships, Participant 9 stated, “When it comes to maneuvering just through the, the policies and procedures of [university name] ... and, and the environment atmosphere there, I've had a couple of other strong mentors, but they've not been women.” Participant 7 added:

You know, [first name-man], I think was very, um, clear about what my potential ... What he saw my potential to be, and I think with [first name - woman] and [first name - woman], they were, um ... I, I, I think I looked at them just, you know, as women, as women in our field, you know, as role models, and, and maybe they were specific [about potential].

In discussing power dynamics, another area of gender comparison, Participant 8 stated:

I would say that, that my relationship with [first name] moved more quickly than collegial ... it definitely started off as hierarchical 'cause she was my major advisor but then shifted to more of a peer relationship where with my male mentors, it's been longer.

She further added: “it's just easy for, for you to sit back and listen to him, take direction from him.” Pointing to the role of gender expectations in mentoring, she offered the following explanation: “I would say it's, it's partly the character of the people who are

my male mentors but also probably, I'm sure these some socialization more at the unawareness level that's happening." Whereas for Participant 10, equal relationships with men were experienced as less comfortable:

And specifically working with men, that's always been with me kind of a struggle where I kind of idolize somebody and I put them kind of on a pedestal and then it's just very hard for me to have an equal relationship. So, um, with her, it was just ... I was just very comfortable.

Theme Five: Reflections of Mentoring Experience

All participants shared reflective statements that demonstrated their deep consideration of, and appreciation for, their experiences in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that promoted their leadership development. These reflective statements were positive in nature and exemplified the ways in which mentoring experiences mattered to participants in their personal and professional lives. Three sub-themes emerged: powerful experience, pivotal influence(s), and gratitude and appreciation.

Powerful experience. The experience of mentoring was identified as "powerful" by several participants, with others noting that reaching out for mentoring was "the smartest thing I ever did" (Participant 2) and "such a really huge part of my life, you know, like my professional life" (Participant 1). Mirroring the experiences of other participants, Participant 3 shared the following about the powerful impact of a strong mentoring relationship on her leadership development:

And I think just having ... just having that relationship it will continue. Like it does live on is what I'm saying. I ... you know, it was definitely a very powerful experience. Because if you don't have, you know, a solid relationship, and then how do you ... I don't know, it's almost like, I'm not gonna say the other stuff doesn't matter, but at least for me, in order for me to have grown as a leader, I needed that piece.

Several participants shared that their mentoring experiences contributed to a sense of belongingness and connection in their departments and in counselor education, particularly during graduate training. For example, Participant 2 noted: “I just don’t think that I would have a sense of family with counselor education. I feel like I belong in counselor education because it was in counselor education that [first name] made me feel like I belonged – that was huge.” Also, Participant 4, who provided a reflection on how her mentoring relationship was an important aspect of her experience as a master’s student stated: “I think when, when I think about how I got started with [first name], I don’t know if [university name] would have felt like home. I don’t know how comfortable I would have felt there.” Outside of the context of academia, Participant 9 shared that she experienced a growth-fostering connection, as well as a desire for additional growth-fostering connections, following engagements with her two strongest women mentors:

when I leave their presence, I feel that zest and energy ... I feel a sense of clarity of purpose in my own value and relationships ... I see the direction of where I want to go. I also know that I want to be in more connections like that. I mean, all of those five good things ... that come from growth fostering relationships that are talked about in RCT [relational cultural theory], I feel when I am in connection with them.

Related to their experienced sense of belongingness and connection, participants discussed how their mentors served as powerful sources of empowerment. For example, reflecting on her mentoring experiences with two women mentors as an undergraduate student, Participant 4 described how they positively impacted her sense of agency:

I think I felt encouraged to explore ... to ask questions. I think I felt like my voice mattered and, and so to me, like it blows my mind. Like I’m not quite sure what I’m doing in college. Because even though I always knew I wanted to go, I never quite knew what it was. Um, and so I’ve got this first-generation student thing that’s going on in my mind and then I hear that my voice matters and when I

say that I want to learn something, they say sure! ... The relationship with [first name] and the experiences with [first name] helped me learn that I could do things and make an impact in the community. Um. I saw that I had some – I wouldn't have called it leadership skills, I would have called it management skills.

Participant 10 shared that her mentoring experience during her doctoral training contributed to a sense of empowerment as a counselor educator:

if I were to sum up the experience in the last few years since I've graduated and moved on, I feel empowered. Like whenever I see her, I'm reminded that she has this influence on me ... and I can also do some of the things, uh, I've done with her, I can also do them by myself, which is ... it doesn't mean that I don't miss her (laughs).

She also shared that her mentoring moments with her mentor have served as resource, noting "because the positive experiences, um, you know, were so powerful and happened also before other negative experiences, I think that I go back and tap into those positive experiences."

Some participants reported that their mentoring experiences positively contributed to the completion of their doctoral degrees in Counselor Education and Supervision, as well as their involvement in the counseling profession. Sharing a reflection about the completion of her doctoral degree, Participant 4 stated: "I think it's hard, um, it's hard for me to separate who and where I am from her ... I can't imagine. I can't imagine having done my doctorate degree without her." Relatedly, Participant 2 shared:

Well I just don't know if I would have ever gotten into the field. I don't know that I would have gotten the PhD. Even when I was doing my dissertation, I had a different Chair and this Chair was not supportive.

Concerning her own level of involvement in the counseling profession, Participant 9 shared that "it [relational cultural theory] has become part of my life's work, and if it hadn't been for those two women and their modeling and their relationship with me, that

wouldn't have happened." Speaking more broadly, Participant 1 reported that her leadership development without mentoring would have been "not absence but just much slower, um, and uh, maybe smaller scale or scope." Similarly, Participant 6 stated: "I would have not been involved at the level I've been involved in with certain things."

Pivotal influence(s). Most participants recognized their women mentor(s) as being a pivotal influence in their lives, both personally and professionally. For many participants, one woman mentor was recognized as a pivotal influence that stood out to them. For example, Participant 1 shared:

I would definitely say that she's the one who shaped me the most, period, like no question. Um, but I have also experienced mentoring from other, from other people. So this is sort of like odd, but she actually wasn't my doctoral advisor ... My actual advisor to me, um, but [first name] is pretty much like it.

Participant 3, who also had other woman mentoring relationships, shared a similar experience: "There's no comparison. [First name] is, like, you know ... sticks out, like, way out." She further added, "[First name] was, well, she was kind of my all-in-one person ... She was like my, yes, my Chair ... my supervisor ... Um, but she was also my friend." In comparing her relationship with this mentor, who she identified as most pivotal, to her mentoring relationship with her Chair, she remarked:

I do not have the kind of relationship with her [first name: Chair] like I do with [first name: most influential mentor]. It's definitely not as personable. It's much more formal. It's definitely hierarchical and yet at the same time, it's very encouraging and supportive and validating. But what I notice is she has some skills I would like to be better at. When I look at [first name: most influential mentor], I can only aspire to be a great leader like her as ... as a woman in counselor education; um, [full name: Chair], I aspire to have some of the skills.

Participant 2 shared that her relationship with one woman mentor was the first time she felt invested in:

it really wasn't until [first name] that I felt like I had my own advocate. And that someone was choosing to invest in me ... I would go to them [other women in the program] for questions, but I never felt like they were trying to develop the holistic me. They supported me, especially my department Chair in the program ... I just never really felt like they were about developing me as a professional who was going to be in this field for years to come; primarily, it was just [first name].

In contrast to participants who recognized the pivotal influence of one woman mentor, three participants recognized the pivotal influence of two or more women mentors in their lives. Participant 9 reported that she experienced co-mentoring:

And so it's, it's a different relationship, but it's almost like if you described a mentor you want, I've got two in one, because they're so closely tied and they do a lot of their writing together, their work together ... And so they've been functioning as joint mentors for me, providing all these different aspects that you might want in, in a mentor, but you know, um, I'm getting this, and they're, they do it together. So it's like they're co-mentoring me.

Whereas Participant 7 stated that "it took a village to move me into leadership (laughing)." More specifically, she recognized mentors, both women and men, within and outside the context of academia. "So it was even this circle beyond the, three professors, that, you know, I just had leaders in the field, you know, do that, um talking about that [potential as a leader]," she stated. Similarly, Participant 4 shared:

I actually have been very fortunate that I've had a number of women who have taken an interest in me throughout my development, um, and have very much influenced the course of my life and the course of my career.

Gratitude and appreciation. Participants used words such as "lucky," "fortunate," and "grateful" in their expressions of gratitude and appreciation for their mentoring experiences. Mentor availability and quality match was one primary focus of these expressions for many participants. For example, Participant 2 shared: "I think most mentors are just who's available and I think I got really, really lucky with that. I'm just thankful that happened to be a good match for my personality." Also sharing her feelings

of luck, Participant 3 stated, “So luckily for me, I understand that I ended up with, you know, one of the best chairs in our whole department ... And, I’m really happy about that.”

A few participants shared that they were lucky and fortunate to experience mentoring from multiple mentors as graduate students and counselor educators. For example, Participant 7 stated, “I think I was very lucky. Um, my mentor in graduate school ... I actually had several.” Focusing on the availability of mentors across her career, Participant 9 reported, “I have been very fortunate to have very strong women role models and mentors throughout most of my prof-, all of my counselor education career.” Similarly, Participant 8 shared:

I have been really fortunate throughout my career I’ve had lost of, um, mentors and most of them have been informal in the sense that they, um, were not my professor; were not, you know, but just people I encountered, um, through connections; uh, either through CSI or ACA. Um, and now I’ve been very fortunate to be mentored by like the greats of [woman - full name] and [man - full name].

Another important focus area of participants’ expressions of gratitude and appreciation was the time and support offered by their mentors, particularly during times of personal struggle. Recounting her gratitude for an experience with her mentor at a counseling conference, Participant 1 reported:

she knows that I’m dealing with some like personal stuff or whatever. Anyway, so she made time to hang out with me and, um, she was like ‘Well, you know, like I’m always happy to see you. Like I will always make time for you.’ I am just like, ‘Oh, my God.’ You know it’s just like ... And I know she means it, and I’m just, I’m just very grateful.

Offering another account, Participant 5 shared:

I got divorced during my doctoral program from a really bad dude, and so it was a good think, um, but it was, um, helpful to see [first name] sort of navigate that

and talk about how to manage that ... She would talk about those things, like openly with people, and so that felt like really ... I felt lucky to have her.

Participants also expressed gratitude and appreciation for the deep connection they experienced in relationship with their mentor. In describing her appreciation for her unique, felt connection, Participant 3 stated:

I just, you know, have appreciation for the unique relationship that we had. Um, I don't have that with any of my students, and I don't think I probably ever will. Not ... not quite like that, because there was something very unique. Um, there was [first name]. I think that had to do with her, and I think that had to do with me.

Other participants shared feelings of longing that reflected their experienced connection in relationship with their mentor. For example, noting "I miss her very much ... So it's been ... definitely was hard to move away from that." (Participant 3) and "sometimes I really really miss her energy ... and I reconnect with her at various conferences ... I would still be bugging her if I was closer." (Participant 10). Further stressing the importance of connection, Participant 10 stated: "I just, I'm grateful for [first name] and [first name] because otherwise, I'd feel like I'd be pretty isolated in a sense."

The mentors, themselves, were also an important focus of participants' expressions of gratitude and appreciation. As noted by Participant 10, "I'm very happy to have her in ... in my life." Sample participant statements of pride and admiration for their mentors included: "I mean, I was her first dissertation and her first student as a mentor. I have a lot of pride in that; I have a lot of pride in [first name]." (Participant 2); "I admire her. I mean, I just think the world of her." (Participant 9); and "I think she's wonderful so she deserves to be honored, and she really has begun a legacy of counselor educators and really served our field." (Participant 5). Another participant, reflecting on

the influence of her mentor, shared: “I always think when I grow up, I wanna be like her” (Participant 10).

Textual and Structural Descriptions

What did the participants experience through their successful woman-to-woman leadership mentoring relationships? (textural description). When participants talked about leadership mentoring they described a plethora of personal, relational, and professional benefits that they experienced related to their growth and development as persons, counselor educators, and leaders in the counseling profession. Through their connections with their mentors – marked by acceptance, support, valuing, validation, encouragement, and positive role modeling – participants developed knowledge, skills, and awareness in various leadership domains such as identity and skill development, research and writing, professional networking and recognition, wellness, self-efficacy and confidence, teaching, transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues, counseling and supervision, and mentoring. More so, they experienced a sense of relatability with their mentors who demonstrated strong female leadership in the counseling profession while striving for work-life balance, as well as support and guidance in navigating personal and professional challenges associated with their gender and life roles. Gratitude and appreciation was also experienced by participants who having been, and continue to be, positively shaped within their leadership mentoring relationships.

What contexts did participants have this experience? (structural description). Most participants described their leadership mentoring experience as occurring in an informal, one-on-one relationship with an older, more seasoned woman counselor educator in their counseling program. Inseparable from their role of mentor, participants

reported that these women counselor educators also served in other influential roles within the context of counselor education programs such as professor, supervisor, advisor, and dissertation committee member. In addition to the context of counselor education, these mentoring relationships flourished within the context of counseling organizations such as CSI, ACA, and ACES; for example, through service to committees and conference participation.

Participants also shared that they benefited from informal mentoring relationships with women professionals in the context of higher education as students (e.g., being mentored by undergraduate professors) and professors (e.g., being mentored by a department chair or a colleague from a different department). Informal peer mentoring was also identified as a shared experience, with participants reporting that their peer mentors were women counselor educators who shared personal and professional experiences with them. Other forms of mentoring identified by participants, occurring within various contexts (e.g., counseling organizations, academia, and other professional organizations) included joint mentoring, group mentoring, cross-gender mentoring, and formal mentoring.

The conditions of effective mentoring relationships, regardless of their type and the context in which they occurred, were also discussed by participants. Shared conditions (or contributions) to these relationships included the presence of mutuality, trust, and respect; protégé-mentor goodness of fit; contact and communication; mentor interest and investment; a developmental mentor approach; and mentor qualities that positively contributed to the mentoring relationship. These conditions were uniquely

experienced by participants as their mentoring relationships evolved and transformed over time.

The Essence of the Experience

Leadership mentoring for women counselor educators begins with a connection with a leader who is willing to invest and develop their leadership potential through a vertical or lateral relationship built on mutuality, trust, and respect. Leadership mentoring benefits both the mentor and protégé, as well as the counseling profession and those it serves. It occurs over time in various contexts, within and outside the counseling profession, between two or more individuals receptive to the mentoring experience. The essence of the experience is the on-going personal and professional growth and development of women counselor educators who will positively impact others by tapping into their leadership abilities and strengths.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter discusses the findings of this phenomenological investigation which describe the phenomena of mentoring and reveal the role of mentoring in influencing leadership development among women counselor educators in successful woman-to-woman mentoring relationships. The following five themes were identified in the data analysis: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, Developmental Process, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, Salience of Gender, and Reflections of Mentoring Experience. A summary of these findings is discussed in relation to the literature including the counseling literature on mentoring, leadership, and leadership development. Following this section, practice implications on the individual, programmatic, and organizational levels are discussed. Delimitations and limitations of the study, as well as future research directions, are presented. A summarization of the study and its implications conclude this final chapter.

Summary of Findings

This phenomenological investigation makes important contributions to the counseling literature on mentoring, leadership, and leadership development. Importantly, in the wake of a growing interest to empirically examine the contributing factors that influence leadership development among counselors (cf. Magnuson et al., 2003; Meany-Walen et al., 2013), the findings of this study provide evidence to support that mentoring is an effective leadership development pathway for women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators. Additionally, the findings introduce a new term, “leadership mentoring” to the counseling literature for further discussion and exploration.

In the sections below, findings from each theme are summarized and discussed in relation to existing counseling literature on mentoring, leadership, and leadership development.

Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes

The first theme of this study, Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, encompassed participants' statements about the ways in which woman-to-woman mentoring relationships contributed to their growth and development within particular leadership mentoring domains. Ten subthemes emerged: identity and skill development, research and writing, service to the profession, professional networking and recognition, wellness, self-efficacy and confidence, teaching, transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues, counseling and supervision, and mentoring. The identification of these subthemes reflects Paradise and colleagues' (2010) sentiment that "counselors demonstrate leadership and leader behavior in many domains across the broad spectrum of professional behaviors" (p. 47).

Specific to women's leadership development in the counseling profession, particularly among counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators, this study supports Rheineck and Roland's (2008) finding that woman-to-woman mentoring relationships play a critical role in promoting protégés' personal *and* career development. Based on participants' statements, mentoring relationships strengthened their identities as counselor educators and leaders, their beliefs in their capacity to individually and collectively engage in leadership, and the effectiveness of their leadership behaviors within, and across, various leadership domains. These outcomes are particularly important because, similar to women leaders who participated in Black and Magnuson's (2005) study, participants in this study shared that they experienced self-

doubt in their capacity to lead. More so, participants in this study expressed that they did not view themselves as leaders because their behaviors did not align with their understanding of leadership, which for some reflected a more traditional view (e.g., leaders having superior qualities and hierarchical positions that afford them the power to influence followers). Through mentoring relationships, participants in this study echoed the sentiments of women leaders in Black and Magnuson's study that successful leadership is rooted in a desire to serve others, and more so, that leadership efforts flourish in collaborative, empowering relationships in which influence is "exercised *with* people and situations rather than having power *over* people in order to command another person or situation" (p. 340). A focus on service to others also echoes the servant leadership approach (cf. Greenleaf, 2008) adopted by CSI and its members (cf. CSI, 2009; Herr, 2010).

Key to the development and strengthening of leadership attributes and behaviors among participants was their mentors' use of functions that were tailored to their needs within, and across, various leadership domains. Functions described by participants support Kram's (1985) conceptualization of mentoring functions as being career-orientated (to promote career development) and psychosocial-oriented (to promote self-efficacy and identity development in personal and professional life domains). Among the functions identified by participants that were used for both career and psychosocial growth and development were the facilitation of open dialogues, encouragement, providing nominations, verbal validation, role modeling, advice giving, check-ins, self-disclosure, and reassurance and validation. These functions were used across a variety of contexts, most notably within counseling programs and counseling organizations.

Functions identified in this study mirror those identified in Rheineck and Roland's (2008) study on the woman-to-woman mentoring experiences of female counselor education doctoral students. Their participants identified important mentor attributes (or, functions) as important or very important in their mentoring relationships that related to domains identified in this study such as teaching (e.g., "provides advice in teaching"), research and writing ("provides research advice" and "collaborates on projects that may lead to publication"), wellness ("assists me in balancing my personal and professional life"), and transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues ("provides guidance and knowledge regarding the informal rules and politics of the academic environment").

On a broader level, the findings of this theme support McKibben and colleagues' (2017) comprehensive description of counseling leadership dynamics based on their content analysis of empirical articles, conceptual articles, and leadership profiles. First, participant narratives reflect McKibben and colleagues' themes that represent the qualities that define counselor leadership. Specifically, participants reported that, through their mentoring relationships, the following qualities were developed and strengthened: having a strong professional identity (as leaders and counselor educators), developing and facilitating a vision, serving as a model and providing mentorship to others, serving the profession (on local, national, and international levels), dealing with difficulties and set-backs (e.g., professional networking), engaging in leadership-specific cognitive complexity (e.g., seeing the big picture), holding and communicating high standards for self and others (e.g., strong work ethic), embracing their passion for the profession and leadership, engaging in wellness (e.g., work-life balance and self-care), and approaching situations with creativity/innovation. McKibben and colleagues also

found that having a sense of humor (as a value and trait) was an additional quality that defined leadership. While participants did not discuss developing this quality in their relationships, humor was identified as an important quality held by mentors and instances of laughter (particularly when describing interactions with their mentors) were present in the interviews.

Second, participant narratives reflect McKibben and colleagues' (2017) themes that represent qualities of an individual leader that she/he brings to a leadership endeavor. Specifically, through their mentoring relationships, participants were able to witness and demonstrate intrinsic motivation (e.g., deriving personal fulfillment from mentoring others), authenticity (e.g., having a relational orientation), humility (e.g., respecting others), intentionality (e.g., seizing opportunities), dependability (e.g., holding leadership positions), leadership development catalyst (e.g., being influenced by contextual forces such as experiences in professional organizations), openness (e.g., willingness to mentor others), and principles (e.g., having a sense of meaning and caring for others). As noted by the authors, these dispositional qualities reflect "one's personhood rather than concrete skills" (p. 196).

Finally, participant narratives reflect McKibben and colleagues' (2007) themes related to interpersonal skills that leaders use in interactions with others. Specifically, participants shared that through mentoring relationships the following skills were learned and/or strengthened: exercising an interpersonal influence (e.g., empowering others), assertiveness (e.g., saying no), and demonstrating role competence (e.g., teaching and research skills). As with the other themes previously discussed, participants developed these skills over time in their mentoring relationships.

Developmental Process

The second theme of the study, Developmental Process, encompassed participant statements about the nature and dynamics of their mentoring relationships. Two subthemes emerged: informal mentoring and formal mentoring. For the first subtheme, informal mentoring, three additional subthemes emerged to reflect how the nature and dynamics of informal mentoring relationships changed over time: impetus and initiation, initial connection and cultivation, and evolving roles and connections.

Concerning informal mentoring relationships between female counselor education students and female faculty, Rheineck and Roland (2008) found that mentoring was a developmental process that was dependent on students' year in school. This study, too, provides support for mentoring as a developmental process that changes across time. Participants' narratives about the changing nature and dynamics of their informal mentoring relationships align well with Kram's (1983) conceptual model of the phases of mentoring relationships. Among senior and young managers in an organizational work setting, Kram identified four distinct, yet overlapping, successive phases of mentoring to include: (a) *Initiation*, lasting 6-12 months, which is characterized by the establishment of a relationship between the protégé and mentor, (b) *Cultivation*, lasting 2-5 years, which is characterized by the maximum expansion of a mentor's use of career and psychosocial functions in the relationship, (c) *Separation*, a period of 6 months-2 years, which is characterized by structural and psychological changes that significantly alter the established nature of the relationship, and (d) *Redefinition*, occurring after the separation phase, which is characterized by an evolution or ending of the mentoring relationship. According to Kram, each of these phases is shaped by the

needs of the protégé and mentor, as well as the context in which the mentoring relationship occurs, which in turn contribute to differing affective experiences, developmental functions, and patterns of interaction.

Participants in this study shared that the initiation of their mentoring relationships occurred primarily in the context of their graduate training programs (as students) and through professional connections in contexts such as counseling organizations, universities, and field of specialty (mostly as counselor educators). The impetus for these initiations was participants' intentional efforts to demonstrate their desire, and need for, support and guidance by reaching out and making connections with women who were believed to have the capacity to promote their personal and professional growth and development. Similar to participants' experiences during the initiation phase of Kram's (1983) study, participants expressed a strong admiration and respect for their future mentors' capacity to contribute to their development prior to the onset of the mentoring relationship; this was particularly true when participants discussed women counselor educators who had more experience in the profession and modeled attractive qualities in their role. However, for participants whose mentoring relationships were initiated with colleagues (i.e., peer mentoring relationships), shared life experiences and professional tasks and pursuits were identified as the primary contributors to their connection with their future (peer) mentors.

In discussing the connection and cultivation of mentoring relationships, many participants reported that early interactions with their mentor were more formal and structured for the purposes of accomplishing common tasks. Through their collaborations with mentors, participants felt supported and cared for and their mentoring

relationships naturally strengthened as they unfolded over time. Other participants, however, reported that their early interactions with mentors were more mutual and collegial, suggesting that their mentors' behaviors were characterized by less formality and structure. Collectively, these participants highlighted that the range and degree of career and psychosocial functions that were used by their mentors to support their growth and development varied depending on expectations and needs in the relationship. Their experiences have similarities with key turning points that Kram (1983) identified during the initiation phase (i.e., mentor meets expectations that were previously fantasies, opportunities for interaction occur in the relationship around work tasks) and the cultivation phase (i.e., accrue of mutual benefits, more frequent and meaningful interaction, deepening of the emotional bond) of mentoring relationships. It is through these relationships with mentors that participants gained skills and received confirmation and support in becoming counselor educators and leaders in the profession.

After being in the mentoring relationship for numerous years, participants reported that roles and connections with their mentors evolved in meaningful ways. This was particularly true for participants after they graduated with their doctoral degrees in Counselor Education and Supervision. Following graduation, some participants reported that their relationship with their mentor became more collegial with continued mentoring as needed. Other participants reported that their relationship with their mentor merged into a friendship, with one participant stating that her mentor acted in ways similar to a family member. Regardless of the change in roles, many participants shared that they continued to have contact with their mentors on an informal basis. Continued contact was described as easier by some participants, whereas for others it posed more of

challenge particularly in instances when mentors were engaging in mentoring relationships with students. Collectively participants' experiences shared important connections with Kram's (1983) depiction of the separation phase in which there is a disruption in the equilibrium that was established during the cultivation phase and greater independence and autonomy experienced by the protégé. Participants' experiences also share important connections with Kram's (1983) depiction of the redefinition phase as a time in which the protégé and mentor continue to foster the mutual support created in earlier years through continued informal engagement, the mentor continues to support the protégé, and both individuals have achieved peer status. In summarization of the changes that occur during this phase beyond the establishment of a peer relationship, Kram remarked that the protégé is able to function in effective ways without the immediate support of the relationship, thereby demonstrating competence, self-confidence, and autonomy. And, the mentor has the ability to redirect energies toward younger professionals which demonstrates competence and generativity. These changes were reflected in participants' narratives, lending to the widely held notion (with support from the research) that mentoring relationships benefit both the protégé and mentor.

Important to note, the positive tone that participants had in their narratives about informal mentoring experiences was not reflected in their narratives about formal mentoring relationships, suggesting that these experiences were markedly distinct from one another. Participants reported that formally matched mentoring relationships, namely occurring in counseling organizations and academia, were challenging and at times ineffective. Lack of consistent communication, mutual trust, and investment on the part of the mentor to meet developmental needs were identified by participants as barriers to

successful formal mentoring relationships. The lack of presence of these factors lend support to the findings identified in this study as discussed in the next section.

Speaking to the potential disadvantages of formal mentoring relationships for women, Casto and colleagues (2005) asserted that “formal mentoring should not be viewed as a substitute for informal mentoring relationships, especially for women” (p. 333). Their recommendation was made in recognition of research conducted by Ragins and Cotton (1999) which found that (a) women received less mentoring functions in formal relationships (e.g., coaching, role modeling, friendship, social interactions, and counseling) compared to informal relationships and (b) that the type of mentoring functions used by mentors in informal and formal mentoring relationships did not vary for men. However, it is important to note that there are mixed results in the broader literature related to the effectiveness of formal mentoring relationships (Allen et al., 2004) and no found study to date has been conducted on the effectiveness of formal mentoring relationships in the counseling profession.

Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships

The third theme of this study, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, encompassed participant statements about how the nature and dynamics of their mentoring relationships contributed to their growth and development. Specific attributes that were key to the effectiveness of their relationships were identified as subthemes. Six subthemes emerged: mutuality, trust, and respect; protégé-mentor goodness of fit; contact and communication; mentor interest and investment; developmental mentor approach; and mentor qualities. Taken together, these subthemes reflect Rheineck and Roland’s (2008) finding on the mentoring experiences of woman counselor education

doctoral students in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that successful relationships are developmental; holistic; and “sincere, genuine, and enriching, both personally and professionally” (p. 89).

The first three subthemes – mutuality, trust, and respect; protégé-mentor goodness of fit; and contact and communication – highlight the dual roles that protégés and mentors play in the establishment and maintenance of mentoring relationships. Reflected in the first subtheme (i.e., mutuality, trust, and respect) was the importance of the bi-directional relationship, a dynamic that stressed a *power with* vs. a *power over*, mutual reliance and truthfulness, and mutual valuing and felt acceptance. The second subtheme (i.e., protégé-mentor goodness of fit) stressed the role of shared commonalities (e.g., similar perspectives, personalities, and interests) and connections (e.g., a spiritual connection) in contributing to a “good match.” The third subtheme (i.e., contact and communication), highlighted the importance of time, commitment, and intentionality among both participants to sustain connection, as well as other factors such as geographical proximity to one another. The presence of each of these unique factors, contributed to unique, and shared, benefits for participants and their mentors.

Distinguishing a mentoring relationship from a more typical faculty-student relationship, Black and colleagues (2004) asserted that “mentoring is a multifaceted relationship that requires more time, energy, and commitment than typical faculty-student relationships.” (p. 48). In their systematic process for developing a mentoring relationship they share about the importance of accountability, which “includes a commitment to communication, respect, and recognition of each other’s needs” (p. 53).

The remaining subthemes – mentor interest and investment, developmental mentor approach, and mentor qualities – focus on the unique role of the mentor in the establishment and maintenance of mentoring relationships. Participants described their mentors interest and investment as sincere and marked by an approach that was both challenging and supportive, which in turn, contributed to feeling cared for. Mentors' approach was also described as developmental in nature; that is, it was consistent, responsive, and intentional over time across time. Mentors, themselves, were described with words that demonstrated their orientation to relationships (e.g., “helpful,” “encouraging,” and “collaborative”), their orientation to tasks (e.g., “efficient,” “driven,” and “proactive”), and their remarkability (e.g., being “awesome,” “phenomenal,” and an “exemplary leader”).

Indeed, in Rheineck and Roland's (2008) study on mentoring relationships between women, female counselor education doctoral students provided 3-5 words that described their mentors, which highlighted the importance of a relationship orientation (e.g., “challenging,” “affirmative,” “inspiring,” and “reassuring”). More so, participants in their study identified components from a profession perspective (e.g., advice, feedback, guidance, source of information) and personal perspective (e.g., desired for mentor to listen, give respect, and show concern for their welfare) that were important to the mentoring relationship. Leadership attributes and behaviors for women leaders identified in Black and Magnuson's (2005) study fell into three primary domains which included three sub-classifications: personal (e.g., authentic and passionate/tenacious), interpersonal (e.g., compassionate and empowering), and professional (e.g., visionary and intentional). These qualities, too, align with ones identified in this study. Counselor

educators who participated in Hill and colleagues' (2005) study on encouraging and discouraging factors in academia also highlighted the importance of "supportive growth producing interactions with students and other professionals" (p. 38) as extremely important to their overall career satisfaction. Not surprisingly, seven of the 10 factors that they rated as discouraging were related to negative relationships.

Salience of Gender

The theme, Salience of Gender, encompassed statements from participants that demonstrated the important role that gender played in their woman-to-woman mentoring relationships; and for some, their relationships with male mentors. More so, this theme encompassed statements that reflected how participants' experiences in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships contributed to their application of a gendered lens in understanding leadership and mentoring for women in the counseling profession. Four subthemes emerged: motherhood and work-life balance, women and leadership, women and mentoring, and gender comparisons.

Participants in this study who identified as counselor educator mothers reported that their mentors positively role modeled being mothers and striving for work-life balance in counselor education. Through role modeling, participants reported that they were able to "see" and "hear" their mentors balance motherhood and career, as well as leadership, in ways that affirmed their experiences and promoted their efforts to do the same. In addition to role modeling, participants stated that their mentors facilitated open and transparent discussions about navigating various roles (e.g., mother, partner, leader, and counselor educator) in ways that recognized struggles and, importantly, reframed them into strengths. Collectively, these participants' experiences support Trepal and

Stinchfield's (2012) findings based on the experiences of women counselor educator mothers that mentoring is an important source of felt support that may be particularly beneficial in navigating unsupportive and oppressive situations.

The experience of gender oppression and lack of support for women in the contexts of counselor education and counseling organizations was ever-present in participants' discussions about women and leadership, with participants referring the existence of glass ceiling (i.e., the intangible barrier preventing women and other non-dominant groups from assuming upper-level positions) and the privileging of hierarchical, traditional structures and expectations that serve to limit women's opportunity to serve in leadership positions. Within their mentoring relationships, participants shared that their mentors role modeled and embodied strong female leadership in ways that challenged patriarchal systems and emphasized a relational leadership style. Drawing on the broader leadership literature, Black and Magnuson (2005) discussed how leadership has historically been understood as a "masculine phenomenon," which in turn, contributed to the privileging of traits characteristic of men (e.g., power, authority) that positioned them as natural leaders. From this perspective, then, women's relational leadership style, rooted in collaboration and mutuality, is not as highly valued. Concerning women's leadership representation in the counseling profession, these authors pointed to evidence supporting the limited formal leadership roles in leading counseling organizations held by women during formative years, as well as the limited recognition they received for their informal leadership contributions. No found research to date has examined women's representation in leadership within the current climate of the counseling profession.

Regarding women and mentoring, participants pointed to the need for available mentors to support women's growth and development, particularly for women early in their careers who will be reaching out to mentorship. In discussing the impact of their own experiences, whether positive or negative, participants pointed to the importance of mentoring relationships being rooted in mutuality, collaboration, and empowerment rather than competition, authority, and divisiveness. Women leaders in Black and Magnuson's (2005) study also identified the vital role that these types of relationships play in women's leadership development. More so, conceptual work in the counseling profession on women's leadership and woman-to-woman mentoring has also supported the necessity of these types of relationships (see, for example, Casto et al., 2005; Hammer et al., 2014; Portman & Garrett, 2005).

Among the few women who compared their mentoring experiences with woman and men serving as mentors, important distinctions were identified regarding mentor approach (e.g., women mentors being more personal and men being more business-like) and power dynamics (e.g., less hierarchical dynamics in relationships with women). In their discussion of the broader literature on cross-gender mentoring relationships, Casto and colleagues (2005) suggested that women in the counseling profession may need to overcome challenges in mentoring relationships with men related to their roles and relations. An identified challenge most relevant to this study is the influence of socialization in maintaining traditional power differentiations within cross-gender mentoring relationships. However, important to note, coming from a social privilege standpoint, participants identified advantages of having a male mentor such as receiving more effective support in navigating university culture and politics. Offering a potential

explanation, Allen and Eby's (2004) study of mentor functions as reported by mentors found that while female mentors indicated that they provided more psychosocial mentoring functions, male mentors indicated that they were able to provide more career mentoring functions.

Reflections of Mentoring Experience

The final theme of the study, Reflections of Mentoring Experience, encompassed statements from participants that demonstrated their deep consideration of, and appreciation for, their experiences in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that promoted their leadership development. Similar to the women counselor education doctoral students who participated in Rheineck and Roland's (2008) mentoring study, the participants in this study shared that their woman-to-woman mentoring relationships were marked by positive, meaningful, and empowering interactions that contributed to personal *and* professional growth and development. Three sub-themes emerged: powerful experience, pivotal influence(s), and gratitude and appreciation.

Many participants in this study identified their mentoring relationship(s) as a powerful experience, supporting Protivnak and Foss' (2009) finding that mentoring was deemed to be the *most important* experience among doctoral students during their training and Magnuson et al.'s (2009) finding that mentoring was deemed to be a *major influence* on satisfaction and success among early career counselor educators. Key to the power, or positive impact, of mentoring for participants in this study was not the functions that their mentor(s) used to promote their personal and professional development; rather, it was the strength of the mentoring relationship itself. One participant reported that her mentoring relationship was growth-fostering and resulted in

the “five good things” discussed in relational cultural theory (RCT; i.e., vitality and energy, capacity and desire to engage in action, awareness of self and others, sense of self-worth, and desire for more connection; Miller, 1986). Within strong mentoring relationships, participants reported that they experienced belongingness and connection within their programs and in counselor education that combated experiences such as isolation and self-doubt about their career decisions, as well as empowerment in their abilities and potential to engage in leadership behaviors. More so, participants reported that mentoring experiences contributed to their completion of their doctoral degrees in Counselor Education and Supervision and positively contributed to their involvement in the counseling profession.

In addition to discussing the powerful impact of their mentoring relationships, participants recognized their women mentor(s) as being a pivotal influence in their personal and professional lives. Their recognition reflects social role expectations for women (i.e., minimize themselves and their accomplishments) and Cashwell and Barrio Minton’s (2012) observation that “leaders in the counseling profession seem quick to credit those who mentored them as a student” (p. 165), and demonstrates how credit has also been quickly given by participants in this study to the women who mentored them as early career counselor educators and throughout their careers. For many participants, one mentor was recognized as a pivotal influence; whereas for others, two or more women mentors were recognized. The experiences of this latter group demonstrate the importance of re-conceptualizing the original meaning of the construct of mentoring as a single dyadic relationship to reflect the contributions of multiple relationships (for a discussion on a developmental network perspective, see Higgins and Kram, 2001). More

so, their experiences may lend support to Casto and colleagues (2005) assertion that, among women counseling students, “having multiple mentors increases the likelihood that most of the students’ needs will be met” (p. 333). Collectively, participants reported that the mentor(s) who they identified as pivotal took an interest in them (e.g., approaching them to collaborate on research/writing projects) and intentionally invested in their growth and development throughout the relationship.

Finally, in reflection of their mentoring experience, most participants provided statements that expressed their gratitude and appreciation. These statements centered around various aspects of their mentoring experiences to include mentor availability and match; receiving mentorship from multiple mentors throughout their career; the time and support offered by mentors, particularly during times of personal struggle; the deep connection in relationship with their mentor; and the mentor themselves. The frequent use of words such as “lucky” and “fortunate” by participants may demonstrate a recognition that their experiences in mentoring relationships are not readily available to all women doctoral students and early career counselor educators. Protivnak and Foss (2009) found that lack of mentoring was identified as a hindering aspect of satisfaction and success among doctoral students, and focusing on the experiences of women counselor educators in academia, Hill and colleagues (2005) identified lack of mentoring as a top 10 discouraging factor that was associated with negative life satisfaction. Collectively, counselor education doctoral students and early career counselor educators have voiced their desires for available mentoring experiences to promote their career success and satisfaction (see Protivnak and Foss, 2009 and Magnuson et al., 2004). As found in this study, quality mentoring experiences – marked by strong connections that

interview personal and professional domains – are needed to promote the growth and development of women counselor education doctoral students and early career counselor educators across their professional careers and personal lives. Therefore, it is vital that counselor educators, counselor education programs, and the counseling profession attend to leadership mentoring to doctoral students and early career counselor educators.

Practice Implications

Implications for the Counseling Profession and its Organizations

To promote leadership development among women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators, leadership mentoring needs to be recognized and endorsed as a professional mandate in the counseling profession. This effort would not only promote women's leadership development by increasing access to quality mentoring relationships, but the leadership development of all counselors in the profession. Two professional documents that would benefit from including leadership mentoring as a professional mandate include the current accreditation standards (CACREP, 2016) for counselor training programs (particularly in sections relevant to the professional identity of masters and doctoral students), as well as the current *Code of Ethics* (ACA, 2014) that guides professional practice (particularly in sections on professional responsibility [Section C], relationships with other professionals [Section D], and supervision, training, and teaching [Section F]). The findings from this study – for example, focused on power dynamics in mentoring relationships and the role of mentoring in shaping strong professional identities – may serve as a resource for future revisions of these, and other important documents, pertinent to professional counselors and their leadership development.

Ongoing efforts are needed within counseling organizations (e.g., ACA and its divisions, CACREP, CSI) to promote the development and maintenance of successful leadership mentoring relationships among leaders and members who have the potential and desire to engage in organizational leadership, particularly for women members serving organizations that have historically lacked women's representation in formal leadership roles. Among the potential avenues to promote these relationships are the offering of mentoring training programs and materials (for mentors, proteges, and mentoring pairs) at professional conferences and on organizational websites, the development and maintenance of effective formal mentoring programs, and the delivery of mentoring awards that include criteria specific to leadership mentoring. Current leadership development initiatives (e.g., ACA Institute for Leadership Training, ACES Emerging Leaders Program, and CSI Leadership Fellow and Intern program) would also benefit from promoting the development and maintenance of successful informal and formal leadership mentoring relationships among awardees and current leaders.

Finally, it is imperative that counseling organizations make a concerted effort to promote the advancement of literature that focuses on mentoring as a pathway for leadership development among women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators. Two means that this can be achieved are the development and advertising of a special section or issue on this topic in relevant counseling journals (e.g., *Journal of Counseling and Development*, *Counselor Education and Supervision*) and the funding of researchers in this area through grants and scholarships. The publication of empirically based guidelines and strategies for providing leadership mentoring to women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators are warranted. These

guidelines and strategies can, in turn, contribute to the development of leadership mentoring competencies for diverse counseling professionals across a variety of settings.

Implications for Counselor Education and Supervision Programs

The findings of this investigation demonstrate the importance of counselor education and supervision programs projecting an inclusive culture of mentoring to promote leadership development among women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators. Similar to sentiments shared in the previous implications section for the counseling profession and its organizations, many of the the practice recommendations discussed below benefit the leadership development of all students and early career counselor educators. These recommendations should also be considered in light of the need for, and benefits of, women's leadership development within the counseling profession.

One avenue to promote a culture of mentoring in counselor education and supervision programs is to provide incentives and necessary supports for counselor educators to engage in mentoring relationships with counseling graduate students in their departments. The offering of incentives and supports may serve to increase the availability of mentors for women counseling students, and promote the effectiveness of these relationships on women's leadership development. Informally, counselor educators should be verbally encouraged to provide mentoring and their successful mentoring activities should be acknowledged and celebrated within faculty meetings (e.g., via routine check-ins) and the broader program (e.g., displaying research and writing projects developed in mentoring relationships). Equally important, personal and programmatic barriers to providing mentoring (e.g., culture of competition, gender biases) should be

discussed and addressed in collaboration between faculty and administration. Formally, mentoring should be included in job descriptions for new counselor education faculty and as a required activity for tenure and promotion. Counselor education faculty should also receive formal recognition for their contributions as mentors such as awards given by the CSI chapter, program, or broader college or university; release time; and financial compensation. Required trainings for engaging in gender-sensitive mentoring relationships with women is also recommended. Taken together, these aforementioned informal and formal efforts demonstrate that mentoring activities among counselor educators are revered as highly as other aspects pertinent to evaluation and success such as scholarship and teaching.

Another avenue to promote a culture of mentoring in counselor education programs is to ensure that discussions about leadership mentoring are infused in the program curriculum. These discussions may be particularly beneficial within introductory courses (e.g., Introduction to Professional Counseling) for master's students and advanced seminars for doctoral students that promote their leadership development in ways that align with current CACREP (2016) standards. Topics worthy of discussion include the benefits of mentoring for leadership development, as well as ways to initiate and maintain successful mentoring relationships. It is recommended that published counseling articles on mentoring guidelines and strategies that are more general in nature (e.g., Black e al., 2004; Borders et al., 2012; Warren, 2005), and that are specific to mentoring women (e.g., Casto et al., 2005; Hammer et al., 2014), be listed as required readings. More so, available mentoring opportunities within the program and broader counseling profession should be explored and encouraged within courses.

Finally, the development and offering of formal mentoring programs within counselor education programs may be another avenue to promote a culture of mentoring for women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators. These programs may be geared toward establishing and maintaining mentoring relationships between faculty (as mentors) and counseling graduate students (as protégés), seasoned faculty (as mentors) and early career counselor educators (as protégés), as well as doctoral students (as mentors) and master's students (as protégés). More so, for early career women counselor educators it may be useful to establish formal programs within the department and the broader college or university to promote the formation and maintenance of peer mentoring relationships. It is recommended that these mentoring programs be developed in ways that are appealing, practical, and sensitive to the unique needs and experiences of women. Additionally, it is recommended that they be continuously monitored and evaluated to measure their effectiveness in promoting leadership development among women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators.

Implications for Counselor Educators

Counselor educators play a crucial role in serving as mentors to women counseling graduate students, as well as to their women colleagues, particularly within the contexts of academia and counseling organizations. As exemplified in this study, mentoring relationships are an effective pathway to promoting women's leadership development. To ensure that women in the counseling profession receive quality mentoring experiences, it is important for counselor educators to personally and publicly endorse the importance of leadership mentoring for this population.

Prior to initiating connections with potential women protégés, counselor educators need to adopt a mentor mindset to prepare themselves to become a successful mentor. It is important that counselor educators take a realistic and balanced perspective of leadership mentoring, taking into consideration factors such as their availability and accessibility, willingness for authentic and genuine engagement, and ability to establish and maintain appropriate boundaries that are essential to successful mentoring relationships. Black et al. (2004) offered important questions to facilitate a systematic approach to self-assessment related to these areas, as well as for the assessment of the environment in which mentoring is desired to take place, that can serve as a helpful guide. Specific to female junior faculty who believe that they lack seasoned experience to serve in the mentor role, Casto et al. (2005) recommended that attention turned to what *can* be offered in the mentoring relationship.

To initiate a connection, counselor educators should take advantage of opportunities to reach out and extend themselves as a mentor. Some of these opportunities will be more straight-forward; for example in situations when women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators are actively seeking feedback and guidance to further promote their own leadership development. However, it is important to take into consideration that potential protégés who hold these “rising star” attributes and appear to be “on the fast track to career success” are more likely to be mentored – a phenomenon which has been understood among mentoring scholars as the “rising star effect” (cf. Singh, Ragins, & Tharenou, 2009, p. 11). Casto et al. (2005) recommended that counselor educators dedicated involvement in extending mentorship to women students “on the edge” who demonstrate what many might deem as less desirable

characteristics of a protégé (e.g., shyness, lack of assimilation to department culture).

Without mentoring being extended to these women, as well as women early career counselor educators who are viewed in similar ways, their leadership potential remains untapped and the profession does not benefit from the realization of their leadership contributions.

At the onset of the mentoring relationship, counselor educators are encouraged to facilitate open and frank dialogues with potential protégés about various topics pertinent to the development and maintenance of a successful mentoring relationship. Specific outcomes of these dialogues can include the identification of expectations and responsibilities of each participant, the establishment of a plan for routine contact and communication, and the setting of leadership development goals geared toward the protégé's growing edges within particular leadership domains that were identified in this study. Through dialogue, it is also important to explore existing power dynamics and to address how appropriate boundaries will be established and maintained.

Mutually beneficial, empowering interactions with protégés are critical to fostering the mentoring relationship over time. In these interactions, mentors should intentionally aim to promote women protégés' personal and professional development by utilizing psychosocial- and career-related mentoring functions that are individualized to their leadership development. Importantly, mentors should affirm proteges' experiences that are salient to their gender and other intersecting identity variables, and assist protégés in navigating and overcoming "isms" and oppressive practices that they may face in their leadership endeavors. Hammer and colleagues (2014) proposed the utility of using relational strategies in mentoring relationships with woman counselor education faculty

that are rooted in RCT as a conceptual framework. Developed by Miller (1987), RCT stresses the importance of establishing and developing growth-fostering relationships which, in turn, result in both parties experiencing the five good things: vitality and energy, capacity and desire to engage in action, awareness of self and others, sense of self-worth, and desire for more connection (Miller, 1986). In conceptualizing mentoring from an RCT perspective, Portman and Garrett (2005) stated that “mentoring builds the foundation for a relational system that changes the sociopolitical climate of individualism (agenticism) to a collectivistic (communal) climate in dealing with others” (p. 287). According to these authors, to appropriately nurture women’s leadership development in the counseling profession, mentors should learn the principles of RCT and use them to guide their mentoring practices.

Implications for Women Counseling Graduate Students and Early Career Counselor Educators

Given the instrumental role that mentoring plays in women’s personal and professional development, particularly in regard to their leadership development, women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators are encouraged to actively seek out and select mentors. It is important to develop a meaningful relationship with a mentor who is more experienced in the profession. While having one mentor may suffice, more benefits may be accrued as a result of initiating leadership mentoring relationships with two or more mentors. To begin this process, it is important that women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators adopt a protégé mindset so that they can embrace the mentoring process. Mentoring should be taken seriously, with reflection given to mentoring needs and leadership goals,

expectations, responsibilities, as well as personal strengths and limitations that will can be brought into a mentoring relationship. As previously mentioned, Black et al.'s (2004) article offers important questions, acting as a guide, to facilitate a systematic approach to assesses one's self and the environment in preparation for engagement in a mentoring relationship.

Mentors should be selected carefully. Women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators are encouraged to identify desirable qualities in a mentor; for example, qualities related to relationships (e.g., mentor being helpful and collaborative), tasks (e.g., mentor being efficient and proactive), and the mentor themselves (e.g., mentor demonstrating strong professional identity and leadership). Identifying similarities with a potential mentor (such as similar research interests, personality, and beliefs about leadership) is equally as important. This aim may be accomplished by learning about a potential mentor (e.g., reviewing faculty information on her/his department website, reading a publication that she/he produced, asking for feedback from colleagues about this person) and reflecting on shared experiences with her/him (e.g., as a student in her/his class, following a discussion at a conference, or as a professional colleague). Considerations related to contact and communication are also important, as close proximal contact and ongoing communication (generally face-to-face in nature) contribute to successful mentoring relationships. As a listhmus test for readiness, women counseling students and early career counselor educators should ask: Do I have a natural feeling of gravitation toward this potential mentor?

To initiate a connection with a potential mentor, women counseling graduate student and early career counselors are encouraged to be proactive. Casto et al. (2005, p.

333) recommended to potential women graduate students that they “become a visible presence” in their department by attending social events, lectures, and meetings. Women counseling graduate students should also consider actively joining, or helping to establish, a CSI chapter in their program to create possibilities to form mentoring relationships with fellow students, the chapter faculty advisor, and other members and leaders of the organization. These possibilities may also be realized for both women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators through engagement in key counseling organizations that outwardly express a commitment to promoting mentoring and leadership development such as ACA, ACES, CACREP, and CSI. Engagement in casual dialogues and expressing a desire to work on joint project are good ways to “test the waters” and explore the potential of a mentoring relationship. Prior to having a conversation about the possibility of entering a mentoring relationship, which is recommended to clarify needs and expectations, women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators should examine whether these interactions were marked by factors such as mutuality, trust, and respect that contribute to successful mentoring relationships.

At the onset of establishing a mentoring relationship, women counseling graduate students and early career counselor educators serving as protégés should openly share their mentoring needs, leadership goals, and expectations with their mentor. In preparation for joint review and discussion, it is recommended that these needs, goals, and expectations be written out. Consideration of each of the various leadership mentoring domains identified in this study (e.g., identity and skill development, research and writing, service to the profession) is encouraged. Also, crucial to early discussions in

the mentoring relationship are protégés' appropriate disclosures about experiences related to their personal and professional growth, such as the impact of intersecting identities and roles (e.g., as a women, mother) to facilitate greater mentor awareness and understanding, both of which contribute to adopting an affirmative approach.

To continue fostering the mentoring relationship, women counselor educators and early career counselor educators serving as protégés should engage in behaviors that demonstrate value and appreciation for the relationship and their mentor. For example, protégés are encouraged to request specific feedback and guidance related to specific aspects of their leadership development (e.g., requesting that mentor observe their teaching, review a manuscript draft), utilize the feedback and guidance received, and share their successes with their mentors. Protégés are also encouraged to recognize their mentors efforts by nominating them for awards within their department, university, or organization. Simple thank-you's and sharing special moments (e.g., taking a new job, birth of a child) are other ways to foster the relationship as it unfold over time. A final suggestion for protégés is to consider utilizing the experiences learned in their mentoring relationship to serve as a mentor for counselor leaders who have yet to realize their potential.

Delimitations and Limitations

At the onset of the investigation, I delimited this investigation to women counselor educators who have experienced woman-to-woman mentoring as influential to their leadership development because of the salience of gender in mentoring relationships and leadership development in the counseling profession. To further delimit this phenomenology, I chose to primarily focus on women counselor educators' experience as

protégés because the role of protégé is uniquely distinct from the role of mentor. Other identity variables (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, romantic orientation) and contextual variables (e.g., type of institution, program accreditation, geographic location) were not selected as delimitations because the aim of the study was to identify the nature and meaning of mentoring relationships that have influenced women counselor educators' leadership development using a breadth of protégé experiences. Although these factors may have contributed to an individual's experience, they are viewed as contextual factors and are not central to one's development and experience as a protégé in leadership mentoring. Another important delimitation worthy to note was the focus on woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that were experienced by women counselor educators as *successful* in promoting their leadership development.

This study has several limitations worthy of mention. First, because the method entails a subjective component (as with any investigation), researcher bias is an inherent concern. Although researchers using transcendental phenomenology engage the Epoche, it is difficult to fully achieve. Second, because the sample was chosen to be more heterogeneous it may be more difficult to capture the essence of the experience. Third, in contrast to other phenomenological approaches, transcendental phenomenology does not consider the impact of the sociopolitical and cultural context on the researcher's interpretation of the text, but rather identifies the ultimate essence of a phenomenon through participant voices in and of themselves. Fourth, this study does not reflect the experiences of African American women. Finally, the findings of this investigation do not lend themselves to replicability. As with all qualitative investigations, it is incumbent upon the reader to determine the extent to which findings may be applicable in her or his

world. An ultimate aim of this research was to describe mentoring experiences that have influenced leadership development among a particular sample in hopes that findings will promote dialogue and practice amongst professional counselors, counselor educators, and counseling scholars.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research focusing on women's leadership mentoring in the counseling profession is needed. This study may serve well as a guide to researchers interested in further understanding this phenomenon among more homogenous populations within specific contexts. For example, studies using a similar or alternative methodology may focus on women who are in graduate training at the master's or doctoral level in CACREP-accredited (or non-accredited) programs, women who are early career counselor educators in counselor education programs, women professional counselors who are serving in leadership roles within counseling organizations/agencies or the broader community, and women of color. Findings from these empirical investigations may yield similarities or variations with the findings of the current investigation than can contribute to a greater understanding of women's leadership mentoring.

A more in-depth exploration of this study's themes and sub-themes may also contribute to our understanding of women's leadership mentoring in the counseling profession. For example, studies focused solely on the leadership domains and outcomes identified in this study could expand our understanding of dynamics in women-to-women mentoring relationships that contribute to protégé leadership development. Regarding the developmental nature of mentoring relationships, future work could further examine protégé experiences within informal and formal woman-to-woman mentoring

relationships to identify variables that contribute (or inhibit) leadership development. With a particular interest in the role of gender in mentoring relationships, future research could examine women protégé experiences within same-gender and cross-gender relationships to also identify variables that contribute (or inhibit) to leadership development. A further exploration of factors that contribute to successful woman-to-woman mentoring relationships, as well as unsuccessful mentoring relationships, is also needed. Relatedly, a deeper understanding of how disconnection and tension in mentoring relationship are experienced and navigated is warranted. Regarding the overall impact of leadership mentoring, it would be beneficial to explore the experiences of women counseling students/professionals who did not having leadership mentoring, as well as the experiences of women counseling students/professionals who have had negative mentoring experiences.

Future research should also seek to explore the experiences of woman mentors. For example, research is needed to explore how they view leadership development and the ways in which they promote leadership development in their mentoring relationships. An exploration of the benefits and challenges of serving as a mentor is also warranted. Studies including both the mentor and protégé in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships may also achieve a broader understanding of women's leadership mentoring in the counseling profession.

Finally, future research on leadership mentoring within the counseling profession should also explore the experiences of other unique sub-groups (e.g., persons of color, men) in various contexts (e.g., school settings, clinical settings, academia). Specifically, research should focus on their experiences as proteges, mentors, or both. Findings from

these studies can contribute to mentoring, leadership, and leadership development literature in the counseling profession and promote effective leadership mentoring practices to prepare the next generation of counseling leaders.

Conclusion

The primary purpose of this study was to illuminate the phenomena of mentoring and gain a deeper understanding of the role of mentoring in influencing leadership development among women counselor educators. Guided by a transcendental phenomenological framework, in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 women counselor educators with experience in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that positively influenced their leadership development. The data analysis resulted in a classification scheme consisting of five broad themes: Leadership Mentoring Domains and Outcomes, Developmental Process, Contributions to Effective Mentoring Relationships, Salience of Gender, and Reflections of Mentoring Experience. The findings of this study advance counseling research in the areas of mentoring, leadership, and leadership development by demonstrating the critical pathway that mentoring serves in promoting leadership development among women graduate students and early career counselor educators. With this knowledge, current and potential women protégés and mentors, counselor education and supervision programs, and counseling organizations can promote effective leadership mentoring practices to promote women's leadership development. Additional research is warranted to extend the findings of this study to promote effective leadership mentoring practices that foster rewarding leadership journeys among this population.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL



Office of Research Administration

Akron, OH 44325-2102
t: 330-972-7666
f: 330-972-4850
e: ora@uakron.edu

uakron.edu/research/ora

NOTICE OF APPROVAL

Date: December 11, 2015

To: Jessica Headley,
School of Counseling

From: Sharon McWhorter, IRB Administrator

IRB Number: 20151209

Title: The Influence of Mentoring on Leadership Development Among Women Counselor Educators: A Phenomenological Investigation

Approval Date: December 10, 2015

Thank you for submitting your IRB Application for review. Your protocol represents minimal risk to subjects and matches the following federal category for exemption:

- ☐ **Exemption 1** – Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices.
- ☒ **Exemption 2** – Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior.
- ☐ **Exemption 3** – Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior not exempt under category 2, but subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office.
- ☐ **Exemption 4** – Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens.
- ☐ **Exemption 5** – Research and demonstration projects conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine public programs or benefits.
- ☐ **Exemption 6** – Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies.

Annual continuation applications are not required for exempt projects. If you make changes to the study's design or procedures that increase the risk to subjects or include activities that do not fall within the approved exemption category, please contact the IRB to discuss whether or not a new application must be submitted. Any such changes or modifications must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

Please retain this letter for your files. This office will hold your exemption application for a period of three years from the approval date. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond this period, you will need to submit another Exemption Request. If the research is being conducted for a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, the student must file a copy of this letter with the thesis or dissertation.

☒ Approved consent form/s enclosed

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APPENDIX B

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Dr. *[Last Name]*,

My name is Jessica Headley and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision Program at The University of Akron. I am writing to request your assistance with my phenomenological investigation on women counselor educators' experience in leadership mentoring.

I would appreciate if you could recommend a protégé with whom you have worked and consider to be a successful leader in the profession. The inclusion criteria are:

- (a) woman counselor educator who holds a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision;
- (b) has experience as a protégé in a woman-to-woman mentoring relationship; and
- (c) currently demonstrates leadership, formally or informally, to advance the counseling profession.

With your permission I would share with your protégé that you recommended her for participation in the study. Thank you for your consideration.

Warmly,
Jessica A. Headley, M.A., LPC
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education and Supervision Program

The University of Akron
School of Counseling
302 Buchtel Common
Akron, Ohio 44325-5007
Email: jah66@zips.uakron.edu

APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT INVITATION EMAIL

Dear Dr. *[Last Name]*,

My name is Jessica Headley and I am a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision Program at The University of Akron. I am writing to invite you to participate in my phenomenological investigation on your experience in leadership mentoring. You were recommended as a possible participant for this study by *[name of nominator]*.

Through your participation, I hope to better understand the influence of mentoring on leadership development among women counselor educators, fulfill the requirements of my doctoral dissertation, and address a gap in the existing counseling literature.

Eligibility for study inclusion:

- (a) current woman counselor educator who holds a PhD in Counselor Education and Supervision; (b) experience as a protégé in a woman-to-woman mentoring relationship that positively influenced her leadership development; and
- (c) currently demonstrates leadership, formally or informally, to promote the well-being of clients and/or the counseling profession.

Should you meet the above criteria and agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in an individual interview lasting between 90-120 minutes and a member check. You can choose to participate in a follow-up and/or member check interview, lasting no more than 30 minutes.

This study has been approved by The University of Akron Office of Research Administration (IRB protocol # 20151209; phone: 330-972-8311).

If you are interested in participating, please reply to me at jah66@zips.uakron.edu. If you choose to participate, you will be given an informed consent form which describes your rights and the procedures of the study in more detail prior to the interview.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Warmly,
Jessica A. Headley, M.A., LPC
Doctoral Candidate, Counselor Education and Supervision Program

The University of Akron
School of Counseling
302 Buchtel Common
Akron, Ohio 44325-5007
Email: jah66@ziips.uakron.edu

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Before providing your consent to participate in this investigation, please carefully read the statement below that provides information about the study and participant involvement.

Title: “The Influence of Mentoring on Leadership Development Among Women Counselor Educators: A Phenomenological Investigation”

Principal Investigator: Jessica A. Headley, M.A., LPC, Doctoral Candidate

Dissertation Advisor: Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich, Ph.D.

Affiliation: Counselor Education and Supervision Program, The University of Akron

Introduction/Background/Purpose:

This investigation is being conducted to better understand the influence of mentoring on leadership development among women counselor educators, fulfill the requirements of the principle investigator’s doctoral dissertation, and address a gap in the existing counseling literature. Should you agree to participate, you will be 1 of 8 participants (at minimum) in this study.

Procedures:

Participants will be asked to voluntarily participate in one face-to-face interview lasting between 90-120 minutes, and to engage in one round of member checking. In particular cases, participants may be invited to voluntarily participate in a follow-up and/or member check interview, lasting no more than 30 minutes, to obtain additional information.

During these interviews the principle investigator will be seeking meaningful, in-depth descriptions that include your personal thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, as well as particular individuals, contexts, and events that are connected to your experience.

All interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed. Data from the transcribed interviews may be used in a publishable dissertation, manuscripts, and presentations following the completion of this dissertation research.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:

Participation in research is voluntary. You have the right to decline to participate in this study without penalty. Should you agree to participate, you have the right to cease participation at any time without penalty.

Risks:

During the interview process, you may share personal information that causes discomfort. You have the right to decide what you would like to share during the interview process.

Benefits:

You may experience direct benefits as a result of your participation in this study, such as an enhanced understanding and meaning of the influence of mentoring on leadership development.

In addition to potential personal benefits, your shared experience will help the primary investigator better understand the influence of mentoring on leadership development among women counselor educators, fulfill the requirements of her doctoral dissertation, and address a gap in the existing counseling literature. Filling this gap will enhance a broader understanding of leadership mentoring in the counseling profession and inform current practice.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the research process within the limits of the law. Your identity will be known only to the principle investigator and dissertation advisor. Audio recordings and documentation with identifying information will be stored in a secure location. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of research participants in the writing of this dissertation and the dissemination of its findings.

Contact Persons:

If you should have any questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints about this study, please contact Jessica Headley at 216-225-8954 (jah66@ziips.uakron.edu) or Dr. Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich at 330-972-6851 (vfs@uakron.edu).

If you should have any questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints concerning your participation and rights in this study, and prefer not to talk to someone who is part of the research team, please contact Sharon McWhorter, the IRB Administrator, at The University of Akron Office of Research Administration at 330-972-8311.

Informed Consent for Research Participation

I have read this consent form and agree to be a participant in this study entitled, “The Influence of Mentoring on Leadership Development Among Women Counselor Educators: A Phenomenological Investigation.” I also grant permission to the investigator to digitally record the interviews. I am aware that I can cease participation at any time without penalty.

Participant’s Signature

Date

Investigator’s Signature

Date

APPENDIX E

DEMOGRAPHIC FORM

Please answer the following demographic questions and return this form with your informed consent.

1. **Gender** (select one):

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

2. **Age:** _____

3. **Racial or ethnic heritage** (select all that apply):

- ☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black/African American
- ☐ Hispanic/Latina/o
- ☐ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White/Caucasian
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

4. **Romantic orientation** (select one):

- ☐ Bisexual
- ☐ Gay or lesbian
- ☐ Heterosexual
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

5. **Relationship status** (select one):

- ☐ Single, never married
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Unmarried partners
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Divorced

6. **The year you entered the profession as a counselor educator?** _____

7. **Doctoral degree** (select one):

- ☐ Counselor Education and Supervision
- ☐ Counseling Psychology
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

8. **Academic rank** (select one):

- ☐ Assistant Professor
- ☐ Associate Professor
- ☐ Full Professor
- ☐ Distinguished Professor
- ☐ Professor Emeritus
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

9. **Academic status** (select one):

- ☐ Tenure-track
- ☐ Non tenure-track, full-time
- ☐ Non tenure-track, part-time

10. **Is your program CACREP-accredited?** (select one):

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Seeking accreditation

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Brief Introduction:

Thank you for being here to discuss the role that mentoring has played in your leadership development as a woman counselor educator. I would like to hear about significant experiences that stand out to you while you have served as a protégé in successful woman-to-woman mentoring relationships. This will be a focused and informal discussion.

If you should have any questions during the process, please feel free to ask me. I want you to feel comfortable with the process and your participation.

Before we begin, I want to emphasize that it is your decision about when and how much to share during the interview. Do you have any questions at this time?

Let's get started.

Invitation to Engage in Self-Reflection:

Please take a moment and recall your protégé experience in woman-to-woman mentoring relationships that have influenced your leadership development.

Opening Research Question:

“In as much detail as possible, please describe your experiences as a protégé that have significantly impacted your leadership development.”

Potential Prompts (adapted from Moustakas, 1994, p. 116):

- Who has influenced your leadership development the most?
- Please describe the nature of your mentoring relationship?
- How did the experience affect you? What changes do you associate with the experience?
- Would you like to share any additional reflections before we end the interview today?

APPENDIX G

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FOR PARTICIPANT REVIEW

Table 1

Themes, Number of Cases, and Sample Participant Statements

Theme or subtheme	<i>n</i> of cases	Sample participant statements
1. Leadership mentoring domains and outcomes		
Identity and skill development	9	<p><i>"I think part of my [leadership identity] development with her was, um, I guess I'll say like formal structured, and part of my development with her was like informal unstructured." (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>"And then it really kind of spring-boarded from there to where I felt like anytime there was an opportunity she was kind of my advocate – introducing me to people, introducing me to opportunities, nominating me for things. And that really made all the difference as far as me developing a strong identity as a professional, um, counselor educator." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"My identity as a leader, I think, is also tied into getting that experience [organizational involvement], but also having the conversation week in and week out about ... I regularly asked her, 'What is it like to be the head of this department?'" (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>"[First name] would want to talk about that [leadership identity]." (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>"through her mentoring, uh, and through her expectations, um, i- ... you know, it ... you were gonna be a leader of some sort." (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>"It took me a while to say, oh yes, I am a leader, even if I don't necessarily follow a male model of leadership." (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>"I think that, you know, if you talk to any of her ment-, mentees, we all have a strong counselor identity and that comes largely from her." (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>"their mentorship and their leadership is what's led to my development of my leadership style." (Participant 9)</i></p>

		<p><i>“I think the entire experience has been also about kind of crystallizing who I am and where my strengths were, and how these strengths and my new identity fits in with being a leader.”</i> (Participant 10)</p>
Research and writing	9	<p><i>“she brought me on as the managing editor, um, and so I was able to like get to know all the writers and all the authors, and like it was just an amazing experience.”</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>“working with her, you know I created a dissertation topic that went on to get a research award at our program and ended up being published in CES.”</i> (Participant 2)</p> <p><i>“Whether we were working on administrative paper work, an article, um, we're doing something for the department, teaching strategies, supervision models ... It ... Whatever the topic was, we ... We were able to closely work on it and with big success.”</i> (Participant 3)</p> <p><i>“I mean it really was around writing and scholarship”</i> (Participant 4)</p> <p><i>“she probably gave me the most feedback on my dissertation of anybody on my committee even more than my chair, um, she spent a lot of time.”</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>“she continued to mentor ... mentor me that way: what scholarship, what research I was doing, doing research together, writing together.”</i> (Participant 6)</p> <p><i>“they would all, you know, travel around, and you know, [first name-woman] with her group work, and, um, [first name-woman] and [first name-man] with ethics and legal stuff, and so just being a leader, you know, leading through their scholarship, which was huge, as well, so I think that was another thing that I watched them do and, um, and learned to do, as well.”</i> (Participant 7)</p> <p><i>“she's been a mentor for me ...in developing me as a researcher in academia”</i> (Participant 9)</p> <p><i>“her mentoring started specifically related to, um, [specialty topic] and I've asked her for some resources, and I consulted with her on my dissertation on [specialty topic] and, um, some of, you know, whenever I fell off my grounded theory.”</i> (Participant 10)</p>
Service to the profession	10	<p><i>“she was really instrumental in getting me involved in CSI.”</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>“I got to be involved with the CSI Leadership Day and Learning Day at ACA in [location]. So I did that kind of through her.”</i> (Participant 2)</p> <p><i>“She also encouraged me to, um, join in the, um ... You know, try to seek out other committees, like through my counseling organization ... ”</i> (Participant 3)</p>

		<i>"[first name] was the one who encouraged me to run for CSI chapter President." (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>"I relied on her, and then I think the conference was a success in part because of her consultation with me." (Participant 5)</i>
		<i>"that's just a way of getting involved and, um, you know, learning more about how ... especially how the division worked, how ACA worked, uh; but that was another level I did not know." (Participant 6)</i>
		<i>"She was also in charge of the student organization that I was vice president of." (Participant 7)</i>
		<i>"she encouraged me to run for [counseling organization] president and then, you know, when, when I won she was there with me, um, supporting me, helping, giving me advice on what I should do." (Participant 8)</i>
		<i>"[First name] and [first name] then brought me into this organization, this fold." (Participant 9)</i>
		<i>"Dr. [last name] kind of groomed me into, you know, starting to see myself more involved with the [counseling organization]." (Participant 10)</i>
Professional networking and recognition	7	<i>"she would encourage me to, um, to network in ways that I can tolerate, because I really used to just hate networking." (Participant 1)</i>
		<i>"To have [first name] back you opens doors." (Participant 2)</i>
		<i>"she's definitely connected in and can usually find someone that you need, um, for whatever it is." (Participant 3)</i>
		<i>"I was also incredibly shy and she would do things like find me at a conference and make me go meet somebody." (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>"[First name] introduced me to various people, and really helped me round out ..." (Participant 7)</i>
		<i>"[First name] started introducing me as someone" (Participant 9)</i>
		<i>"I believe the first couple of months, um, I think it also started with like nominations for like the ACES of emerging leaders." (Participant 10)</i>
Wellness	8	<i>"she helped model, um, that it's really important to take time for yourself, for your family or to step outside of, um, the professional work or professional leadership." (Participant 1)</i>
		<i>"To have someone who could help me on the emotional path of counseling education." (Participant 2)</i>
		<i>"I could see that she was covering all those areas of wellness" (Participant 3)</i>
		<i>"she would talk about wellness and physical health and nutrition and stress management and always had something that she was</i>

		<i>doing, um, as a way of making sure that she was living her life well.” (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>“I think that, um, it’s very, very strong and, um, served as a good role model for sort of making the course and protecting yourself in, in like let’s say a personal relationship, so, um, divorce and, you know, meeting new people, and she’s given me a lot of good advice about those things.” (Participant 5)</i>
		<i>“I think from all of my mentors, they were really good at mentoring balance ...” (Participant 7)</i>
		<i>“I learned the importance of wellness from [first name].” (Participant 8)</i>
		<i>“What she’s done more for me with regards to leadership development is she has really helped me to see the importance of that kind of work/life balance.” (Participant 9)</i>
Self-efficacy and confidence	7	<i>“maybe like a self-efficacy piece on those, like just helping me ... helping me get that sort of internal like, ‘I know I can do this task.’” (Participant 1)</i>
		<i>“Helped me talk about career options, helped me, um provided me opportunities I wouldn’t have understood, or I wouldn’t have thought to seek out and really bolstered, um, my confidence and my sense of self and my interests, um, in the field.” (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>“I think what that did was her like, “Of course you can do this,” kind of like really believing I had something to offer.” (Participant 5)</i>
		<i>“again, just being validated for ideas, vision, communicating, um, if I ... if I didn’t have that validation from those folks, um, then ... a-, and, and learning from them as role models as well, then I, I wouldn’t feel confident to pursue specific aspects of leadership.” (Participant 6)</i>
		<i>“[First name] was very good at giving direction when you needed direction but she was also very trusting in being able to step back and say, “You know, you got this. I trust that you know how to do this,” um, and so I think that, that naturally builds confidence, um, that if [full name] thinks that I can do this, surely I can do this.” (Participant 8)</i>
		<i>“And I am like going, they really made me feel and believe that I mattered and that my voice counted, which then, that then translated for me in giving me the courage to step out of that circle where I felt safe... to use that voice elsewhere” (Participant 9)</i>
		<i>“there was something about her that I just knew I was like, you know, she has that very genuine and very engaged way that always like, it’s like, ‘You know, if she sees me doing this, I can do it.’” (Participant 10)</i>

Teaching	4	<p><i>"I spoke with her and she offered to me to co-teach the class with her." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"She went out of her way ... So I had a teaching assistantship, but I could have been a teaching assistant for any number of courses, and she made sure that I was able to, at that point, teach on my own undergraduate leadership classes so that I could get experience with the material of leadership while gaining teaching experience." (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>"in the teaching, you know, like so it wasn't just like, 'Oh, print out this lesson' - it was, 'How do we manage this? How do we think about this? Um, what makes a good counselor? What makes a good counselor educator?' (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>"again, this model for me and how I try to work in a classroom" (Participant 9)</i></p>
Transition to faculty and navigating faculty issues	6	<p><i>"she brings just 2000 letters of recommendations for different jobs and different adjunct positions." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"She was very adept at not giving us the details, yet saying, 'Here's how we're going to proceed,' and so it was really a nice model for me in managing the politics of being on a faculty." (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>"I can reach out to [first name], you know, talk about going up for full professor and some aspect of that." (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>"she's still mentoring me on how to go up for full professor, and, um, you know, so she's been a tremendous, um, mentor, and friend." (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>"she's become that campus mentor ...for me, in a lot of ways." (Participant 9)</i></p> <p><i>"She was also the one that I called, probably one of the first people I've called after my interview at this university 'cause I had just ... it was two days before my dissertation defense and I was just so shaken up and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, this is so close together and I don't know what I'm doing. Is this the right thing?'" (Participant 10)</i></p>
Counseling and supervision	2	<p><i>"she helped me understand what it means to be a counselor." (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>"She encouraged me to take those risks, so like go out and, you know, supervise school counselors." (Participant 5)</i></p>
Mentoring	9	<p><i>"I am a steward of the profession. And I care, and I ... Like professional counseling is it to me, and so I, I think maybe her continuing to invest in me also helps me to continue to grow and invest." (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>"I was the keynote speaker for our CSI induction last [time frame] here at [institution name], and I did my whole speech kind of around [first name] and about her mentorship and how much her investment in me really shifted my career path and really my</i></p>

mindset about who I am, as far as wanting to be another mentor for other people.” (Participant 2)

“I think about that, and um, you know, I think about what I learned and how I can impart that.” (Participant 3)

“I tried really hard to model that as a faculty myself and running our doctoral program and to really think about how, um, I can be more of an accepting of everyone and honoring of their strengths, meaning everyone has a spot.” (Participant 5)

“it’s how I started talking and teaching my own students about being leaders of counselors and that leaders are, you know, um ... you know, we’re ... we are basically servants to our profession.” (Participant 6)

“I definitely am very aware and model that, so when, you know, doctoral students come with me to conferences, I’m like, ‘hey, hang out with me for a bit, and I’ll introduce you to people,’ and you know, so I, I do kind of the same. I had really good models, so I do kind of the same thing for them.” (Participant 7)

“We talked a lot about the importance of, of mentoring future generations to know what it meant to be counselors. The importance of history, us knowing, uh, you know, the, how counseling evolved as a profession.” (Participant 8)

“I think they’ve strengthened me as a mentor of students, but also as an educator of counselors.” (Participant 9)

“I think that, um, just the ability to give back, to not stay just focused on what do I need as a mentee, but also looking at like out of what I’ve learned, what can I offer back.” (Participant 10)

2. Developmental process

Informal mentoring

Impetus and initiation

10

“she was somebody I kind of like knew about before I was introduced to her, and I already had a sense of like, oh, this person like has it together, could be a resource”; “So I took the initiative to like put myself out there and try to like, you know, connect with her on some level.” (Participant 1)

“I really struggled finding my place there in the program.”; “And so, when she came on board I just kind of reached out to her.” (Participant 2)

“I’m not sure how I got matched with [first name], to be honest with you, I think [first name] picked me.” (Participant 3)

“[First name] was in her first year as a faculty member and I just experienced her as so warm and relatable and she was funny but down to earth and I had a sense that she had lived a bit of a life like I had lived.”; “it wasn’t until years later that we ended up on the

		<i>[counseling organization] board together and reconnected through that.” (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>“she came in and said, ‘I’ve heard good things. I’m willing to be on your committee without even really knowing [you] based on what I’ve heard.’” (Participant 5)</i>
		<i>“I think the majority of the ones I have are more naturally forming ... within the context.” (Participant 6)</i>
		<i>“Well, I guess as a doctoral student, you kind of have a say in who you pick to be your mentors, you know, who you gravitate towards.” (Participant 7)</i>
		<i>“you know I’ve been really fortunate that throughout my career I’ve had lots of, um, mentors and most of them have been informal in the sense that they, um, were not my professor, were not, you know, but just people that I encountered, um, through connections, uh, either through CSI or ACA.” (Participant 8)</i>
		<i>“[Specialty area] is what’s connected me to a lot of people who are mentors in my life.” (Participant 9)</i>
		<i>“the relationship with, um, with [first name] started in, um, [year] when I first contacted her to interview her, um, to be my dissertation chair” (Participant 10)</i>
<i>Initial connection and cultivation</i>	8	<i>“I think initially, our relationship was, um, I don’t know. It was kind of like transactional or formal.” (Participant 1)</i>
		<i>“she did the immediate supervision about my teaching. And so, just spent a lot of time together through that.” (Participant 2)</i>
		<i>“this was as a doctoral student, I told her that I was interested in my leadership developing.” (Participant 3)</i>
		<i>I knew she had an expectation for me that if I was to work with her, I would be in the field as well and I would be advocating for our profession” (Participant 4)</i>
		<i>“our relationship developed in a place where, instead of, um, telling me to or making suggestions to do things, it was, ‘[Participant first name], what do you’ ... ‘What do you want to do?’ ‘How are you going to evolve?’” (Participant 6)</i>
		<i>“She’s also a really good friend of mine” (Participant 7)</i>
		<i>“they, [first name] and, and [first name], almost from the start, treated me as if, as a colleague in a lot of ways. It was like they valued my opinion.” (Participant 9)</i>
		<i>“that was kind of my first, um, experience with her, um, with her way of being with her type of mentorship which it just clicked with me.” (Participant 10)</i>
<i>Evolving roles and connections</i>	10	<i>“and then now, just as a peer, I think it’s just gotten a little bit ... maybe a little bit less formal.” (Participant 1)</i>

			<p><i>"She began to share a little bit more with me about her own stressor, which for a long time was very one-sided about my development and my experience and my jobs." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"Well, it changed in that we weren't working on my dissertation any longer." (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>"We've been peers longer than she a mentor and yet she'll always be a mentor to me." (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>"I think I started to be more, um, not equal with her because I don't know if that would happen, but certainly, I felt like I could say more of what I was thinking or more of what I was wondering about as far as, you know, I became [counseling organization name] president." (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>"and then after I graduated, we were in close communication because I, I went ... went to a very small program." (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>"I was very respectful when I, you know, was still a student, and yet, you know, and then when I became their peer, um ... And then, they're mentoring me about how to mentor others." (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>"And then over the years the, the relationship developed more, um, and it, it, it evolved to be more collegial, um, I think towards the end of our relationship, uh, we were friends." (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>"I also think that that relationship has developed into a point to where, um, it's changed some in that, um, more colleagues than it is that mentoring relationship ... to the, at this point in time." (Participant 9)</i></p> <p><i>"I can sense like where she's looking at me very differently, I feel empowered." (Participant 10)</i></p>
Formal mentoring	3		<p><i>"I participated in something, um, within CSI, too, with a formal mentor; and that just ... it didn't quite work." (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>"the more formal mentoring is, I think, a little bit more challenging, at least in the field." (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>"I know I've worked with her and she's great but she's also ... like I wish she would actually, you know, maybe even push me more or involve me more, but I still like, I have to be the one kind of reaching out and saying, 'How about we do this? What do you think about this?'" (Participant 10)</i></p>
3. Contributions to effective mentoring relationships			
Mutuality, trust, and respect	8		<p><i>"it's mutual. We both benefit from the relationship. It's not predatory. It's not one way." (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>"I think she just, you know, respected that that just wasn't the direction I really wanted to go." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"I needed to have someone that I could trust." (Participant 3)</i></p>

		<p><i>"[first name] made it pretty, I mean, we had certain things that we had to do, um, but it was quite mutual in our decision-making process, it was quite mutual."</i> (Participant 4)</p> <p><i>"I think that she can trust me, and I can trust her."</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>"there's a reciprocity there that I think is very important in those relationships."</i> (Participant 6)</p> <p><i>"it's a power with kind of dynamic ...not a power over, and so it's very much that kind of collaborative process."</i> (Participant 9)</p> <p><i>"we've been there for each other, you know, you know, through some of the professional challenges and personal challenges."</i> (Participant 10)</p>
Protégé-mentor goodness of fit	9	<p><i>"we have similar ... kind of a similar vision or values around what counselor education should be"</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>"I think one of the pieces that fit so well for me was it was just a good match."</i> (Participant 2)</p> <p><i>"clearly it was a really good match."</i> (Participant 3)</p> <p><i>"I think with [first name], for the first time I saw somebody who was relatable."</i> (Participant 4)</p> <p><i>"I think just being kind of similar helps us, like having some ... How do I say? Like we're just similar in behavior in ... Yeah, just being similar personality styles."</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>"There's a lotta things that we have in common, so I think that there can be some natural things that occur, um, because of other factors."</i> (Participant 6)</p> <p><i>"with [first name], I was just really lucky, because it was a really good match."</i> (Participant 7)</p> <p><i>"we have a lot of similar research interests and passions, just she comes at it from a sociological perspective while I come at it from a psychological perspective."</i> (Participant 9)</p> <p><i>"She's just very very active and just very involved in the profession and um, she and I think, um, similarly on so many issues."</i> (Participant 10)</p>
Contact and communication	9	<p><i>"part of sustainability is contact and, you know, um, sort of a consistent contact over time."</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>"We spent hours per week together for, what, three years?"</i> (Participant 3)</p> <p><i>"we spent a good amount of time in more recent years processing our professional, um, obligations and experiences."</i> (Participant 4)</p> <p><i>"I guess just being, being intentional about being connected and... having some proximity helps."</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>"I think it was the consistency, like, constant communication."</i> (Participant 6)</p>

			<i>"she gave me great advice, too." (Participant 7)</i>
			<i>"she just was sort of a constant, uh, person I could go to and ask questions." (Participant 8)</i>
			<i>"You feel like, when you get an email from her, that she's hugged you through cyberspace, and it's just absolutely incredible." (Participant 9)</i>
			<i>"And then, overall speaking about the experience over the next, um, four years and really it's continued beyond that, um, I ... I believe that the ... the ... the things that come to mind, um, are specifically related to the fact that I felt like I could go and speak to her whenever and about whatever." (Participant 10)</i>
Mentor interest and investment	9		<i>"Part of it is I think she does still take an interest in me." (Participant 1)</i>
			<i>"[First name] did a lot of things for me that I didn't ask for because I didn't know what to ask for." (Participant 2)</i>
			<i>"So the first thing that I can that I noticed was, you know, I think she was only required to meet with me for an hour a week, but she made sure that we had at least two hours a week." (Participant 3)</i>
			<i>"I think, um, she invested and I felt encouraged through that investment." (Participant 4)</i>
			<i>"She pushed me to do things that I didn't even think about." (Participant 5)</i>
			<i>"She has my best interests at heart. She wouldn't recommend it if she didn't." (Participant 6)</i>
			<i>"I still remember her looking at me going, 'Uh, you do realize that you're asking me for life,' that she said, you know, 'If, if I'm your dissertation chair, if I'm your program advisor this is a lifelong relationship.'" (Participant 8)</i>
			<i>"People I admire and respect ...and who are investing in me are doing it differently." (Participant 9)</i>
			<i>"Like she saw some of the things that I did as initiative and as, um, potential leadership, um, um, roles, and I did not see that." (Participant 10)</i>
Developmental mentor approach	7		<i>"I'm almost drawing a good parallel to like, what is it, good parenting ... it's consistent and responsive." (Participant 1)</i>
			<i>"I needed to, you know, have someone that I could develop with." (Participant 3)</i>
			<i>"that's I think what I needed developmentally and then over time I need something a little bit different developmentally." (Participant 4)</i>
			<i>"one of my other mentors, um, was [full name], and, you know, she was all about the process and so that was really good for me as well, and that was during my doctoral program." (Participant 7)</i>

		<p><i>"I think it was very developmental." (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>"But they also, it was that they allowed me the freedom to have that developmental process." (Participant 9)</i></p> <p><i>"what was neat about her was that, she suggested some smaller, um, things so it was a gradual process of encouraging me to tap into various leadership roles." (Participant 10)</i></p>
Mentor qualities	8	<p><i>"she's so wonderful." (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>"she's just been a very stabilizing force." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"she's very efficient and path-oriented in a way that is helpful." (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>"she was spontaneous, she had this sense of humor." (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>"She's so sweet" (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>"She is such a force." (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>"She is a, um, been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize a couple of times, just this phenomenal person." (Participant 9)</i></p> <p><i>"She's also very genuine and comes through very genuinely." (Participant 10)</i></p>
4. Salience of gender		
Motherhood and work-life balance	5	<p><i>"I think especially as a woman, that's so refreshing to hear. Like you can navigate this and you can have a family and a partner, and you can have, you know, a counselor ed job and be a national leader." (Participant 1)</i></p> <p><i>"I think having that space to explore all of the different life roles, while trying to balance family and marriages and work, you know, that's just a piece that especially with some of the female-to-female mentorships is really really important." (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>"But she also, like, initiated from the very beginning, um, these conversations about motherhood and teaching, um and identity and I saw her as somebody who was actively working to balance it." (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>"She was very understanding, and I would talk to her about motherhood, and um, you know, what, what that looks like and what that means and how challenging it is, and so it was more than just ... We, we talked more than just about ethics." (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>"we have had conversation about balancing, um, you know, the, the mom role, the spouse role, with the counselor educator role." (Participant 8)</i></p>
Women and leadership	7	<p><i>"I think because she's a woman of color, um, that also helps me to see some of the additional variables that she has to deal with, and I think that helps make me, hopefully, a more intentional multicultural leader as well." (Participant 1)</i></p>

		<p><i>“[First name], you know, she was, and still is, in that department, you know, she was really the only person who I feel embodied a strong female leader...and she was not afraid.” (Participant 3)</i></p> <p><i>“I look at [first name]'s generation and, you know, she was one of very few women in leadership.” (Participant 4)</i></p> <p><i>“I guess for me, what has always impressed me is I think that women sometimes get a bad rap when they advocate for themselves or they advocate ... or they sort of say they want something, then they look like ... Men look like they're, um, determined and successful, and women, I get the sense that if I was like, “Oh, yeah, I want to run for that office,” everyone would be like, ‘Really?’ ”; “And so I feel like [first name] has been a great example of how to ask for what you want and, and not necessarily ... and talk about how you will do good and how you will work hard versus feeling like I can’t ask.” (Participant 5)</i></p> <p><i>“I think we touched on the fact that, you know, that having those leadership mentors, and, and mentors who fill multiple roles, and one of them was leadership, uh, development, has made me a better mentor, and how critical that is, especially for women.” (Participant 7)</i></p> <p><i>“It's really gratifying to see so many more women involved in leadership, within ACA and the counseling profession.” (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>“There, yes, we've had women in the last few years, but it's still, they're, a lot of the leadership in this organization is men, um, even though the field is dominated by women.” (Participant 9)</i></p>
Women and mentoring	5	<p><i>“I think about the younger female counselor educators coming up and they are reaching out to mentorship.” (Participant 2)</i></p> <p><i>“when I got into my doc program, um, there were only three female faculty members, um, and so of course I began to look at our own gender, uh, for mentors automatically.” (Participant 6)</i></p> <p><i>“I've been in counselor education for almost 20 years so in the '90s, there weren't many female mentors out there, and my relationship with [first name-woman], [first name-man] and [first name-man] all started in the late '90s.” (Participant 8)</i></p> <p><i>“I've had a department chair who ended up kind of destroying my confidence in women and mentoring.” (Participant 10)</i></p> <p><i>“[First name] or [first name] or some of the folks that I've gotten to work with has really changed my perception of women supporting women.” (Participant 5)</i></p>
Gender comparisons	4	<p><i>“[first name-man], I think was very, um, clear about what my potential ... What he saw my potential to be, and I think with [first name-woman] and [first name-woman], they were, um ... I, I, I think I looked at them just, you know, as women, as women in our field,</i></p>

5. Reflections of mentoring experience

Powerful experience

7

you know, as role models, and, and maybe they were specific.” (Participant 7)

“I will say that [first name-woman], my relationship with [first name-woman], I would say is much more personal, uh in that we had more conversations about our personal life. Um, and I had those with [full name-man] and also [full name-man] but those came later.” (Participant 8)

“I mean, there’s research out there, there’s work out there about being women in faculty and women in, in academia. Um, still not paid as much, still not given as much respect” (Participant 9)

“And specifically working with men, that’s always been with me kind of a struggle where I kind of idolize somebody and I put them kind of on a pedestal and then it’s just very hard for me to really have an equal relationship.” (Participant 10)

“So it’s, it’s very powerful.”; “I think it would have been slower and maybe smaller scale without her.” (Participant 1)

“it’s actually a pretty powerful story, I think.”; “I feel like I belong in counselor education because it was in counselor education that [first name] made me feel like I belonged – that was huge.” (Participant 2)

“I’m never going to forget her or stop thinking about her.”; “it was definitely a very powerful experience.” (Participant 3)

“I think it’s hard, um, it’s hard for me to separate who I am and where I am from her.”; “there’s so much I could take away. Maybe it’s just the power of relationship and the best kind of people, and believe in people.” (Participant 4)

“I mean significantly, um, that I would not have been involved at the level I’ve been involved in with certain things, um...if it had not been for those.”; “I haven’t studied mentoring specifically; but it, it comes up every time I study something else (laughs).” (Participant 6)

“I see the direction of where I want to go.”; “It has become part of my life’s work, and if it hadn’t been for those two women and their modeling and their relationship with me, that wouldn’t have happened.” (Participant 9)

“And yeah, just very powerful, um, um, influences in...in my professional and personal life.”; “And she kept up this enthusiastic, energizing, um, empowerment process to where, you know, whenever I, I got myself organized, I was like, Wow! This is, this is really powerful.” (Participant 10)

Pivotal influence(s)	8	<p><i>"I would definitely say that she's the one who shaped me the most, period, like no question. Um, but I have also experienced mentoring from other, from other people."</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>"I just never really felt like they were about me developing as this professional who was going to be in this field for years to come; primarily it was just [first name]."</i> (Participant 2)</p> <p><i>"in talking about this, this is quite a different ... There's no comparison. [full name] is, like, you know ... Sticks out, like, way out"</i> (Participant 3)</p> <p><i>"So I wouldn't be where I am without her. There's just no way."</i> (Participant 4)</p> <p><i>"I think [first name] is probably the most significant."</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>"I think it took a village to move me into leadership (laughing)."</i> (Participant 7)</p> <p><i>"she was a huge part of why I was in leadership, uh, professionally."</i> (Participant 8)</p> <p><i>"they've been functioning almost as joint mentors for me, providing all of these different aspects that you might want in, in a mentor, but you know, uh, I'm getting this from this person from here, and I'm getting this, and they're, they do it together."</i> (Participant 9)</p>
Gratitude and appreciation	8	<p><i>"I'm just very grateful."</i> (Participant 1)</p> <p><i>"I think most mentors are just who's available and I think I got really, really lucky with that."</i> (Participant 2)</p> <p><i>"So luckily for me, I understand that I ended up with, you know, one of the best chairs in our whole department, um, but it ... And I'm really happy about that."</i> (Participant 3)</p> <p><i>"I think she's wonderful so she deserves to be honored, and she really has begun a legacy of counselor educators and really served to serve our field."</i> (Participant 5)</p> <p><i>"I think I was very lucky."</i> (Participant 7)</p> <p><i>"I've been very fortunate to be mentored by like the greats of [full name-woman] and [full name-man]."</i> (Participant 8)</p> <p><i>"I have been very fortunate to have very strong women role models and mentors through most of my profe-, all of my counselor education career."</i> (Participant 9)</p> <p><i>"It's just, I'm grateful again for [first name] and [first name] because otherwise, I'd feel like I'd be pretty isolated in a sense."</i> (Participant 10)</p>

Note. The total sample included 10 participants.

APPENDIX H

PARTICIPANT EMAIL REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

Dear Dr. *[Last Name]*,

I am writing to request your feedback on my final data interpretation of the phenomenological data for my dissertation, “The Influence of Mentoring on Leadership Development Among Women Counselor Educators: A Phenomenological Investigation.”

Please see the attached table that provides an overview of the study findings to include themes, subthemes, and sample participant statements. The sample statements for Participant *[number]* reflect your shared experiences.

I am particularly interested to know the following:

- (a) Do the findings accurately reflect your experience?,
- (b) Are there any areas that are unclear or misleading?, and
- (c) Are there any areas in which you believe my personal biases influenced data interpretation?

If you could please share your feedback for each question listed above by *[date]*, I would greatly appreciate it. As a token of my appreciation, please plan to enjoy a \$20.00 Amazon gift card following completion of your review.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact me via email (jah66@ziips.uakron.edu) or phone (216-225-8954).

Thank you very much for you time and commitment to my dissertation.

Sincerely,

Jessica A. Headley, M.A., LPC

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