Faculty/Student Perceptions of their Relationship in a Cross-Cultural Academic Mentoring Dyad

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FACULTY/STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR RELATIONSHIP IN A CROSS-CULTURAL ACADEMIC MENTORING DYAD

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

By

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B.Sc., University of the Southern Caribbean, 2013

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Wright State University
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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Amber Daniel ENTITLED Faculty/Student Perceptions of Their Relationship in a Cross-Cultural Academic Dyad BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Science.

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ABSTRACT

Daniel, Amber. M.S. Department of Leadership Studies, College of Education and Human Services, Wright State University, 2016. Faculty/Student Perceptions of Their Relationship in a Cross-Cultural Academic Mentoring Dyad.

Diversity and mentoring are becoming important areas of study in leadership and educational disciplines. While some steps have been taken to conceptualize or delineate how these disparate elements function in higher education, there has been little research into how and where they intersect, namely, when mentoring dyads are comprised of individuals from diverse cultures. In this paper, the researcher shares her discoveries on how a cross-cultural academic dyad works in contemporary settings. She discusses the role of perceptions, expectations and actions–some of the essential ingredients of effective cross-cultural mentoring– which could be utilized as a guide for further study and/or practice. The qualitative case study is based on Kram’s (1985) four phases of the mentoring relationship and Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. The author then discusses how these integrated elements fuel positive cross-cultural mentoring interactions.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

General Background

Anthropologists have studied only those things people could and would talk to them about, with the result that many important things—culture patterns that make life meaningful and really differentiate one group from another—have gone unnoticed or been unreported and brushed aside as trivial…. Beneath the clearly perceived, highly explicit surface culture, there lies a whole other world, which when understood will ultimately radically change our view of human nature (Hall, 1976, pp. 14-15).

In the last decade, diversity has become “an increasingly prominent concern” for stakeholders in every sector (Woehr, Arciniega, & Poling, 2013, p.107). Phrases such as workforce diversity, diversity management, diversity culture, and diversity practices are now commonplace expressions used in many organizations. According to Kennedy (2009), diversity comprises elements of every facet of life, including our thought processes, problem solving orientation, abilities, habits, management flair, ethnicity, cultural backgrounds, and generational wisdom, as well as the varied traditional diversity considerations which define our individual and unique identities. Shore et al. (2009) distinguished that “surface-level diversity, such as race is indicative of deeper-level differences, such as cognitive processes/schemas, differential knowledge base, different sets of experiences, and different views of the world” (p. 118).
Hall (1976) first made the distinction between surface culture and deep culture in his seminal work which laid the foundation for studies in diversity. Hall presented culture as communication and created the cultural iceberg model (see page 15). In the iceberg model, cultural diversity is apparent at the surface level and less apparent— but more meaningful—at the deep, underwater and unseen level. Surface level culture includes what is easily seen or heard such as food, festivals, dress, language, music and other readily observable aspects of culture. Deep culture, on the other hand, is less observable, more complex and multifaceted. Deep culture determines attitudes, values, and relationships with the world (Hall, 1976). In cross-cultural academic mentoring dyads, deep culture has mitigated outcomes with great potency. In many cases, dyad members were unaware that deep culture factored so forcefully in their relationship.

A diagrammatic example of Hall’s cultural theory can be observed hereafter. The diagram shows an iceberg, and depicts how words, actions and artifacts which are observable, are related to an individual or community’s deeper, hidden and subconscious values and beliefs (AFS Intercultural Programs Inc., 2015). The diagram depicts how little of culture is observable. The observable part of culture, or surface culture, is referred to as bring primarily in awareness and accounts for less than one tenth of the bulk of the individual or community’s culture (AFS Intercultural Programs Inc., 2015). The unobservable or hidden aspects of culture, referred to as deep culture by Hall (1976) constitute the greater part of the iceberg and are depicted below the surface of the water. In the diagram, the deep culture aspects of culture are described as being primarily out of awareness (AFS Intercultural Programs Inc., 2015).
Context of the Problem

Many Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) have witnessed greater levels of diversity in their student population than ever before (Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991). Based on the cultural iceberg model (Hall, 1976), increased diversity in student populaces signals a vast diversity in deep culture representation and interactions at IHE. Current statistical data on IHE enrollments confirm that there is greater diversity than ever before on IHE campuses (Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). The current diversity statistics also imply that IHE campuses have become heterogeneous in deep culture attributes.
For example, while graduate enrollment figures for White students have declined and enrollments of ethnic and racial U.S. minority student enrollments have increased, international student enrollments have been the lifeblood of some graduate programs (Patton, 2013). According to trends observed by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2015) minority faculty numbers also are slowly increasing. A similar trend has also been observed in the business world with predictions of greater diversity in workforce composition, according to the United States Department of Labor:

Trends show that whites will be a declining share of the future total population while the Hispanic share will grow faster than that of non-Hispanic blacks. By 2050, minorities are projected to rise from one in every four Americans to almost one in every two. The Asian and Pacific Islander population is also expected to increase. Growth rates of both the Hispanic-origin and the Asian and Pacific Islander populations may exceed two percent per year until 2030. (United States Department of Labor, 2011, pp. 2-3)

Similarly, in 2005, the National Centre for Public Policy and Higher Education reported an expected decline in the part of the labor force considered to be White from 82% to 63% as we approach 2020. Concurrently, an increase in minority labor figures from 18% to 37% was projected by the same source. In the face of this increasingly diversified workforce, over 67% of American business organizations have implemented diversity initiatives in attempts to unite diverse groups in a manner which will enhance organizational outcomes (Zachary et al., 2013). Comparable attempts have been taken in education (Maruyama, Moreno, Gudeman, & Marin, 2000). The expectation was that encouraging greater diversity among decision-making team-players would facilitate
better results through creativity enhancement, boosting innovation, and the introduction of alternative problem solving (Woehr et al., 2013).

The idea that diverse teams would be able to make better decisions since they would be more informed, creative, and innovative was valid, but incomplete (Woehr et al., 2013). Scholars and industry practitioners anticipated that greater diversity would lead to greater success; however, they discovered that in a diverse team, members often interacted with the environment and people involved dissimilarly, since perceptions differed (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Woehr et al., 2013). In some cases, these differentiated perceptions led to reduced team cohesion, diminished team efficacy, and greater levels of conflict (Woehr et al., 2013). It was revealed that diversity presented negative outcomes as well as positive ones, and harnessing the positives of diversity could be challenging due to differences in deep culture (Dovidio, Gaertner, Flores Niemann, & Snider, 2001; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Zachary et. al, 2013).

Resultantly, scholars began to understand the dynamism presented by diversity and based on deep culture as a compound phenomenon, producing constructive (cognitive) as well as adverse (affective) consequences (Milliken & Martins, 1996). At IHEs, growing campus diversity precipitated studies on how diverse groups functioned together (Hall, Cabrera & Milem, Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; 2011; Milem, 2004; Milem & Hakuta, 2000). The authors demonstrated that race served to predict which students worked with faculty. It was found that students from the majority race worked with faculty more often than students from minority groups. The students who worked with faculty were usually the ones who were mentored.
Waldeck, Orrego, Plax, and Kearny (1997) conducted a study of 145 graduate protégés from twelve universities and representing multiple disciplines. They created empirically-based profiles of the mentors and protégés. The profiles revealed that typical protégé were single, White, childless individuals in their thirties, and women were predominant in this group. The mentor was typically a married, White, male in his forties. Further, Waldeck et al. (1997) reported that mentoring dyads were comprised of individuals who were both “Euroamerican/White” (p. 14). They also reported that “the data comprising ethnic minorities are not so positive” and that “African-Americans, Latino/as, Asian-Americans and other ethnic groups remain excluded from mentoring in the academy” (p. 22). The authors underscored the need for deeper understanding of multi-racial dynamics within academic institutions to remedy inequities.

Consequently, investigations were conducted to examine diversity in higher education. However, much of the research focused on the differences between racial/ethnic majority and minority groups (Phelps, Taylor, & Gerard, 2001). In many cases the delineation was “White” compared to “People of Color.” Interestingly, though, there has been little acknowledgement of the deep culture diversity which exists within both of these large assemblages. Although at the surface level individuals belonging to these groups appear to be homogeneous, an examination of deep culture indicates that great diversity exists within each group. Phelps et al. (2001) highlighted the inaccuracy of presenting large ethnic groups as being homogenous, and noted that there existed a dearth of information regarding within-group and between-group attributes of ethnically diverse People of Color populaces in the literature.
Similarly, in the United States of America, “White” usually refers to Caucasian individuals, whose individual heritage may be rooted in English, German, French, Nordic, or other, cultural and familial associations. Each of the heritage-roots carries with it a plethora of customs, rules of thumb, and mannerisms. Embedded in these ancestries are patterns of communication, etiquette and norms. Predictably the “People of Color” designation as a catch-all-phrase to incorporate Blacks, Hispanics and Asians contains even more diversity.

Further, there has been little consideration of how individuals who belong to more than one race are to be accounted for in the dialogue on diversity or cross-cultural interactions. This growing ethno-cultural classification of people has not been addressed, but needs to be since individuals who self-identify as mixed race or bi-racial are projected to triple in number towards 2060 (Perez-Pena, 2015). The Pew Research Centre (2015) identified multiracial Americans as being proudly tolerant youth, comprising a group that was growing three times faster than the rest of the populace. The US Census Bureau (2014) released data from the 2010 census, which indicated that although the entire U.S. population grew by 9.7% since 2000, multiple-race sectors of the population grew by 50% percent or more. The impact that these data will have on deep culture interactions and exchanges at the IHE level cannot be overemphasized.

Interactions and exchanges based on deep culture at the IHE level are even more significant given the recent move toward performance-based funding (PBF) in higher education. Whereas in years prior to 2010 funding was based on enrollment figures, the National Council of State Legislators (NCSL, 2015) signaled that funding will now be pegged against graduation rates. It was hoped that the measure would motivate
institutions to support students’ successful completion of degree programs (NCSL, 2015). Other metrics by which IHE performance will be evaluated include: courses completed, time taken for degree completion, transfer rates, number of degrees awarded, in addition to numbers of low-income and minority graduates (NCSL, 2015). A number of states are currently transitioning to incorporate some elements of performance into their IHE funding arrangements; however 32 states have already fully adopted the PBF model at the IHEs to which they provide funding.

The states’ shift in educational funding strategy has direct implications for IHEs as the student body must now graduate before state funding can be realized. Research indicates that the initial introduction of PBF at the IHE level was fraught with design challenges (Aldstadt, 2012). However, in Washington, Ohio, Indiana and Tennessee, for example, “Performance Funding 2.0” models have been implemented (Aldstadt, 2012, p. 2). The new and improved PBF programs exemplified how the changes in the funding formula were used to: “redirect state priorities and investment; drive institutional adoption of best processes and practices to help more students succeed; and promote significant changes in institutional behavior and resource allocation that do not require intrusive, inflexible mandates” (Aldstadt, 2012, p. 1). In fact, the state of Ohio structured the newer PBF models based on completions to boost IHE financial incentives (subsidies, base allocations and grants) so that minority students benefitted (Aldstadt, 2012). The greater the number of minority and at risk students IHEs successfully graduated, the greater the funding levels realized by the institution (Aldstadt, 2012).

In 2001, Dovidio et al. discovered that students from diverse backgrounds employed a number of coping mechanisms to deal with the differentiated demands of
higher education. These coping activities ranged from grouping together and remaining insulated from the majority culture to complete immersion and assimilation into the majority culture (Dovidio et al., 2001). One of the most effective coping mechanisms students employed, however, was engagement in supportive mentoring relationships (Dovidio et al., 2001; Patton, 2009; Patton & Harper, 2003; Waldeck et al., 1997). The authors described IHEs which have significant minority populaces. At these institutions leaders have acknowledged the value of mentoring for a diverse student body and in many cases have employed mentoring as an effective support program for students from diverse backgrounds (Campbell & Campbell, 1997; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; Kodama & Dugan, 2013; Waldeck et al., 1997).

Consequently, mentoring has been touted as being essential for graduate student success (Heinrich, 1995; Lechuga, 2011; Patton, 2009; Patton & Harper, 2003). Graduate student/faculty mentoring dyads are effective in bolstering the success of graduate students (Wilde & Schau, 1991; Waldeck et al., 1997). Lechuga (2011) noted that graduate students considered the faculty/student relationship to be one of the most critical determinants of their educational experience. These mentoring successes were even more pronounced for minority students, adding salience to studies in this field (Lechuga, 2011; Patton, 2009).

Wilde and Schau (1991) echoed their interest in the mentoring of graduate students. The topic resurfaced when Hall et al. (2010) and Milem (2004) delved into the complexity of the cross-cultural graduate student/graduate faculty dyads. In instances where cross-cultural dyads are enacted, graduate students and their graduate faculty mentors of diverse ethnic, racial or cultural backgrounds agreed to work together
regardless of the challenges presented by diversity at the deep culture level (Page, 2003; Patton, 2009). Bolstering the need for greater inspection of cross-cultural mentoring relationships, it was discovered that differences in nationality also featured as part of the diversity dynamic of these dyads (Hofstede, 2011; Nielsen & Nielsen, 2012). The deep culture ramifications of nationality have not been featured significantly in mentoring literature; however, if one is to comprehend the mechanics of cross-cultural academic mentoring dyads, national culture must be considered because of the profound impact that nationality adds to the mentoring equation (Hofstede, 2011; Nilsson & Duan, 2007).

Hofstede’s published works (1980, 2001) regarding national culture dimensions are paramount in academic studies about the varied effects of culture on educational outcomes (Gruber, Chowdhury & Reppel 2011; Omanwa, & Musyimi, 2016; Ramaswami & Dreher, 2010; Troelsen, & Laursen, 2014). Hofstede’s publications placed emphasis on national culture dimensions, namely: power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation and indulgence versus restraint. The culture dimensions created a template against which national culture comparisons could be made.

In the national culture dimensions model, culture was defined as “collective programming of the mind” which manifested itself through the nation’s values, symbols, heroes, rituals and other superficial means (Hofstede, 2001, p.1). Using the Hofstede model of national culture, which was typified using an onion analogy (Hofstede, 2001), it became possible to compare and contrast societal cultures along national culture dimensions. Such analysis could prove deeply beneficial in the study of cross-cultural mentoring dyads, since Hofstede makes the distinction between individual values and
societal culture (Hofstede, 2001). The distinction allows for a comparison of the background culture, independent of an individual’s personal and distinct value system. This could potentially alleviate any overlap or confusion between the individuals and the societies being observed in cross-cultural mentoring interactions.

In the last two decades, “a concerted effort has been made to create campus environments that reflect the diversity of the general population, especially with regard to gender and ethnicity” at American universities (Campbell & Campbell, 1997, p.1). Hoover (2013) reiterated that minority populaces at IHEs will increase by 2020 and the ethnic landscape will be irrevocably altered as a result. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) in the Knocking at the college door 2013 report on educational demographics identified birthrates and migration patterns as major factors responsible for changing the racio-ethnic configuration of college populations (Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). For this reason, although upsurges in minority graduates will differ from one state to another, the authors stated that addressing the specific needs of a heterogeneous student body is now a necessity for all colleges and universities.

Prescott and Bransberger (2012) documented that Hispanic enrollment numbers were overtaking Black student enrollment numbers in several states. The authors predicted a decline in the number of Black students nationally by 9% between 2008/2009 and 2019/2020. Concurrently, Prescott and Bransberger predicted a 30% increase in Asian-American and Pacific Islander graduates. With the change in enrollment Hoover (2013) stated that institutional success will hinge on meeting the needs of minority students, especially those from underrepresented groups. And, as Hofstede (2011) and
Nielsen and Nielsen (2012) documented, strides will not be accomplished in IHEs without an adequate negotiation of various strains of deep culture including nationality.

It is essential to consider the impact of mentorship and the mentoring relationship within the diversity/deep culture conundrum because of the wide range of support and career benefits mentors afford their protégés (Green & Bauer, 1995; Kram, 1983). The benefits place protégés within organizations in better positions overall (Green & Bauer, 1995; Kram, 1983). With more minority students than ever before now enrolled in graduate school, and given that their success is now linked to IHE funding, considering the intricacies of cross-cultural mentoring dyads is important.

To be more specific, the benefits that students realized as a result of being engaged in mentoring relationships have been documented by a number of scholars (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Kram, 1988; Levinson, 1978). On the career continuum, some of the benefits include salary benefits, promotion benefits and overall career satisfaction benefits (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1989). According to Fagenson (1988) the benefits also include elevated levels of power, influence and favor within the organization. Kram’s (1983, 1985) studies on mentoring provided seminal insight into the benefits which mentoring accrued to protégés. The author emphasized that protégés derived vocational support developed through mentor coaching on specific aspects of the job as well as psycho-social support in difficult times.

Observing mentoring from another vantage point, Green and Bauer (1995) conducted a longitudinal study of 233 doctoral students who were in mentoring relationships. The objective was to observe the benefits they derived. The authors
determined that the students’ potential for mentoring was prescribed by their attitudes and objective ability at the start of the mentoring program. Another determinant of the students’ potential for mentoring success was the mentoring tools utilized by the mentor such as “coaching, acceptance, confirmation, role modeling, and counseling, protection, exposure and visibility, sponsorship, and challenging assignments” (Green & Bauer, 1995). In addition, student research skills and personal commitment to success contributed to the students’ mentorship potential. The study revealed that the greater the potential of the protégé seemed, the more invested the mentor was in the relationship. Green and Bauer (1995) concluded that “mentoring is more likely for talented newcomers” (p. 558).

In summary, mentorship remains one of the most salient avenues through which graduate scholars derive the best possible outcomes (Green & Bauer, 1995; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Rose, 2003; Scandura, 1998; Scandura & Williams, 2001). Thus, it is important to consider how mentoring dyads work for a wide cross-section of graduate faculty members and their protégés. Moreover, in light of the deep cultural differences now present on IHE campuses, and the fact that funding is now pegged to graduation rates, studies which marry these considerations are now more salient than ever before. This study aims to investigate the perspectives of mentors and protégés who are members of cross-cultural dyads in order to add to what is already known on the subject and to contribute to greater academic outcomes for all graduate students

**Statement of the Problem**
Mentoring is a complex, multifaceted concept (Aguilar-Gaxiola, Noris & Carter, 1984; Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Rose, 2003). The complexities associated with mentoring include, but are not limited to interpersonal dynamics, role expectations, previous experiences, social context and communication skill. It is expected that mentoring dyads will be comprised of culturally, ethnically and racially heterogeneous pairings as IHE become more diverse. Some pairings are efficacious, and some are not (Green & Bauer, 1995; Page, 2003; Patton, 2009; Patton & Harper, 2003; Scandura & Williams, 2001). In order to replicate positive student outcomes, there is a need to understand what accounts for the pivotal mentoring successes which occur when the mentor and protégé are of dissimilar cultural, ethnic and racial backgrounds. Graduate rates are now a determinant for IHE funding which makes this area of study important as IHEs adjust to increased diversity.

Definition of Terms

At Risk Student Population – Students who have with financial need and/or are lacking academic preparation; and/or those in the minority as regards race, ethnicity, and age. (Aldstadt, 2012).

Career Functions – The aspects of the mentoring relationship that enhance career development, including: sponsorship, exposure and visibility, coaching, protection and challenging assignments (Kram, 1983).

Culture – A collective phenomenon –used for tribes, ethnic groups, nations, organizations, professions, disciplines, genders, generations or social classes– where the
collective programming of the mind, differentiates the members of one group or classification of individuals from others (Hofstede, 2011).

**Deep Culture** – The unseen deep-level differences between individuals, which determine values and worldview, such as cognitive processes/schemas, differential knowledge bases, different sets of experiences, and different views of the world (Hall, 1976; Shore et al., 2009).

**Diversity** – The differences between and among individuals and groups, which make them distinctive, encompassing elements from every facet of life; this includes thought processes, problem solving orientation, abilities, habits, management flair, ethnicity, cultural backgrounds, generational wisdom as well as the varied traditional considerations which define individual and unique identities (Kennedy, 2009).

**Dysfunctional mentoring** – A mentoring relationship characterized by distress by one or both parties, where needs are not being met or the dyad is not working as it should (Scandura, 1998).

**Mentor** – An individual who functions as teacher, sponsor, encourager, counselor, befriender, to a protégé (Anderson & Shannon, 1988).

**Performance Based Funding (PBF)** – The idea of linking public investment to institutional outcomes, namely completion of courses and graduation rates (Quinterno, 2012).

**Protégé** – An individual who is being mentored (Fagenson, 1988).
Psychosocial Functions – The aspects of the mentoring relationship that primarily enhance sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in the managerial role (Kram, 1983).

Research Questions

There are two research questions for this study regarding cross-cultural academic mentoring dyad relationships:

RQ1: What factors influence the development of a relationship between a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad?

RQ2: What role challenges are faced by the mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad?

The proposition is that a dyad with cross-cultural members has additional factors that influence the development of the mentorship as well as the roles the dyad members assume, compared to culturally homogeneous dyads.

Assumptions

The assumptions for this study were as follows: (a) study participants were honest in their responses to the questions posed by the researcher and (b) mentor and protégé had navigated deep cultural differences in their relationship.

Scope

The scope of this study was limited to the cross-cultural graduate mentorship dyads available to the researcher at a Midwestern university in the United States. At least
one member of the dyad belongs to an ethnic, cultural or racial minority group. The researcher belongs to a minority group and is entrenched in a number of predominantly satisfying cross-cultural relationships.

**Significance of the Study**

This study will add to the body of literature concerning relationships in cross-cultural academic dyads, specifically from the perspective of deep culture (Hall, 1976). Hall observed that deep culture signaled styles and rules of communication, as well as notions of courtesy, manners, friendship and leadership. Deep culture also affected concepts related to time, self, roles, class, age, and sex. Attitudes toward work, authority, elders, adolescents, age, co-operation, competition and death were also determined by deep cultural norms. These elements feature in mentoring relationships. Hall (1976) stressed that these unseen elements of deep culture—although unseen as with an iceberg—were strongly felt when cross-cultural interactions occurred.

This study is also significant in that it assists in providing a more nuanced understanding of how culture affects the mentoring process in an academic environment. It is now more critical than ever for increasingly diverse IHEs to facilitate efficacious cross-cultural academic mentoring dyads. This is so because mentoring facilitates student success and IHE funding trends include student success as a determinant of level of funding (NCSL, 2015).

**Organization of the Study**

This thesis is comprised of four chapters structured in a manner which allows for a holistic examination of the subject. In Chapter 1, a contemporaneous but brief overview
of the topic is presented. This chapter also contains the statement of the problem, relevant terms, research questions, assumptions, scope and significance of the study. In Chapter 2, a review of literature is presented along with the conceptual framework used throughout the study. In Chapter 3, the research methodology is delineated. This includes reiteration of the research questions, articulation of the research design, review of the subjects, and explanation of the method. Details of data collection and analysis are also covered in this chapter. In Chapter 4, the findings, interpretation, discussion, recommendations and conclusion are presented.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Historically, IHEs acquired state funding based on state determined institutional data for a given year (Aldstadt, 2012; Quinterno, 2010). NCSL (2015) posited that while this funding method enhanced IHE efforts regarding enrollment, it brokered little impetus for IHEs to ensure successful completion of programs. A new method of state funding, Performance Based Funding (PBF), allowed for institutional outcomes to be considered. Since 2014, PBF has been adopted in 32 states (Fain, 2014). PBF allows state priorities and targets to be more closely matched to IHE deliverables such as student graduation rates with emphasis on minority and at risk student groups (Aldstadt, 2012; NCSL, 2015). While each state determines how much, or how little of the IHE funding is linked to performance IHEs are investigating enrollment and success data to uncover areas in need of improvement (Fain, 2014; NCSL, 2015). One area that impacts such studies is the increased student diversity on campuses.

In the last four decades, the student composition of universities in the United States of America has become increasingly more diverse (Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; Patton, 2013). Not only have the numbers of minorities (African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Native Pacific Islanders and Asian-Americans enrolling in IHE increased overall but also alongside these increases, there has been a decrease in the
number of White students enrolled at IHE (Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). The challenge this posed for IHE was that they were now being required to produce institutional outcomes in step with state goals. While individual state goals were unique, some states, such as Ohio, applied weightings to IHE funding based on deliverables such as graduation rates of minority and other groups determined by the state to be at risk (Aldstadt, 2012; Quinterno, 2010). Moving towards the year 2020 and beyond, the challenge of producing institutional outcomes in step with state goals may become even more challenging as IHE student populations become more diverse (Hoover, 2013; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). Despite the challenges, some states are rising to the occasion. IHEs and their diverse student populations are reaping the rewards (Aldstadt, 2012; Quinterno, 2010).

Hoover (2013) documented that IHEs must meet the needs of their diverse student populations in order to remain relevant. One avenue through which IHEs have supported success of minorities at the graduate level is through academic mentoring. Scholars reported that mentoring had a profound impact on institutional outcomes for minorities (Green & Bauer, 1995; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Patton, 2013; Rose, 2003; Scandura, 1998; Scandura & Williams, 2001).

It is not surprising, therefore, that academic mentoring has garnered greater levels of interest in recent times. Resultantly a large body of scholarly work has been done on academic mentoring. Each study was conducted in a unique manner and unearthed an additional dimension of mentoring. Multiple definitions of mentoring have emerged as a result (Green & Bauer, 1995; Patton & Harper, 2003).
Some definitions of mentoring included sentiments of guidance and looking out for a friend: training and assistance, giving developmentally sound advice and tough love (Levinson et al, 1978; Fagenson, 1989; Ragins, 1997). Mentoring has also been defined as a dyadic relationship established by two individuals with consequences for both (Mullen, 1994; Ragins, 1997). While some theorists honed in on the mechanics of mentoring itself for definition, others explored how various independent variables affected the mentoring mechanism (Kram, 1985; Lechuga 2011).

On the other hand, there were scholars who denied the impact of mentoring citing a lack of a single mentoring definition as a weakness (Busch, 1985; Green & Bauer, 1995; Wilde & Schau, 1991). Levinson’s (1978) concept of the mentor as instructor, sponsor, exemplar, counselor, benefactor of moral support and architect of the protégé’s dream was commonly cited in the literature and remains an important definition to date (Busch, 1985; Chao, 1998; Collins, 1983, Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fagenson, 1989; Mullen, 1994; Ragins, 1997). Levinson (1978) described a mentor as typically being an older male in the protégé’s organization who was perceived by the protégé as an older sibling, worthy of admiration and respect. Similarly Higgins and Kram (2001) defined mentorship as the developmental assistance a protégée obtained from a more senior individual within the organization, regardless of gender.

Moving beyond definition to the process of mentoring, Kram’s (1983, 1985) work on mentoring became widely referenced and frequently cited in more recent literature (Busch, 1985; Chao, 1998; Ragins, 1997; Wilde & Schau, 1991). Kram (1983) identified four phases in the mentoring relationship. These phases: initiation, cultivation, separation, and re-definition, were widely accepted as salient stages in the mentoring process.
**Kram’s Four Phases**

Kram’s (1983) initiation stage of mentoring was characterized by both mentor and protégé approaching the relationship with a view of learning each other’s working styles. This phase took place in the first six to twelve months and included mentor and protégé fantasy type expectations regarding how the relationship would develop (Kram, 1983). Fantasy type expectations were described as unrealistic expectations regarding execution of tasks which were based on an imagined, rather than real, ability for excellence (Kram, 1983). If the mentoring relationship did evolve, it transitioned into the cultivation stage. Notably, however, when mentoring relationships did not evolve, protégés perceived the relationship as disappointing and expressed feelings of betrayal, resentment, and discomfort with the mentor (Heinrich, 1995).

Following the initiation phase Kram (1983) described the cultivation phase that lasted from two to five years and was the most intense period of the relationship in which greatest benefits were derived. This phase was characterized by an abundance of psychosocial interactions, such as protégé observation of and learning from the mentor, alongside heavy promotion and protection of the protégé by the mentor (Kram, 1983). The interactions usually proved beneficial to both the mentor and protégé in the short and long term (Green & Bauer, 1995; Kram, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978; Ragins & Scandura, 1997; Scandura, 1998).

Kram (1983) posited that subsequent to the cultivation phase, the formal part of the relationship usually ended, indicating that the relationship had now entered the separation phase. This often occurred due to geographical separation (Kram, 1985;
Ragins & Scandura 1997). In this phase, which typically extended from six to twenty-four months past the cultivation phase, it was not uncommon for the mentor or protégé to be fraught with feelings of anxiety or defiance (Kram, 1983). After the separation stage, the mentoring relationship changed and resembled an informal support or peer relationship, which is the common characteristic of the re-definition phase (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Scandura, 1997). The re-definition phase usually allowed for the mentor and protégé to re-evaluate their interactions and embrace a new relational methodology. Often, but not always, the re-definition phase ended in respectful but distant friendships (Ragins & Scandura, 1997).

Ragins and Scandura (1997) concurred with Kram that the four phases were significant. The stages were also necessary in order for protégés to experience the full spectrum of benefits which mentorship afforded such as vocational career support (salary and promotion benefits) and psycho-social support (power, influence and favor within the organization).

**Kram’s Four Phases in Cross-Cultural Contexts**

When considering cross-cultural mentoring relationships, Kram’s (1983) four phases allowed scholars to examine individual aspects of cross-cultural mentoring relationships at any one of the four points in the relationship. For example, building on Kram’s (1983) theory of an initiation phase in the mentoring experience, some scholars focused on the plight of women in academia, positing the idea that overall women protégés experienced greater difficulty in initiating the mentoring process (Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; Keyton & Kalbfleisch, 1993). The scholars hypothesized, too, that in the
instances where the protégé initiated the relationship, men did so with greater ease. It was recognized that when attempts were made to initiate a mentoring connection, in some cases, deep culture dynamics created a barrier that some women found difficult to bridge (Heinrich, 1995; Wilde & Schau, 1991). Traditional power distance, characterized by autocratic, paternalistic, power relations and the expectation that power was unevenly distributed (Hofstede, 2011) also impacted these relational undercurrents (Ragins, 1997; Wilde & Schau, 1991).

Adams (1992) agreed with this position that some individuals initiated mentoring relationships with acute difficulty. The author indicated that minorities experienced challenges similar to those experienced by women. Other scholars (Blackwell, 1989; Patton, 2009; Ragins, 1997) identified individuals belonging to racial and ethnic minority groups as having further problems initiating the mentoring relationship in addition to the challenges posed because of traditional power dynamics as well as deep culture dynamics. Such individuals had additional difficulty accessing mentors, simply due to the small number of similar racial or ethnic minority group faculty members who could serve in the mentoring capacity (Blackwell, 1989; Kalbfleisch & Davies, 1991; Patton 2009; Patton & Harper, 2003). Interestingly, however, Waldeck et al. (1997) observed that some minorities actually found it easier to initiate a mentoring relationship. The exact cause of this disparity in findings is fertile ground for further exploration. The authors concluded unanimously, though, that there was only one significant predictor of protégé perceptions of difficulty: protégé ethnicity.

Further, it is important to note that establishing a mentoring dyad took many formats in the studies conducted by scholars through the years. In some instances,
“formal programs were administered in which students are assigned to mentors” (Campbell & Campbell, 1997, p.728). In other cases, mentors and protégés developed their relationships naturally, devoid of formal assignments by their institutions (Campbell & Campbell, 1997). However researchers have advised that formally assigned mentorships may be less effective than informally established ones (Chao, Walz & Gardener, 1992; Ragins, 1997).

**Lechuga’s Faculty Roles within the Changing Relationship**

Lechuga (2011) lamented that the literature regarding faculty-student mentoring relationships has been concentrated on undergraduate mentoring or specific types of graduate interactions, instead of looking into how students perceive their mentoring dyads. After interviewing 15 university faculty members representing underrepresented minority groups in STEM fields from the same public US University, Lechuga (2011) formulated a four-tiered depiction of faculty-graduate relationships based on faculty function. The relationships were (a) faculty as advisor, (b) faculty as instructor, (c) faculty as employer and (d) faculty as agent of socialization.

In the role of advisor, Lechuga (2011) noted that faculty mentors perceived academic guidance as an integral part of their remit. However, they reported a greater concern with the emotional and psychological health of their students. Overall health and physical well-being of their students were important areas to which attention was given by faculty members operating in the advisor role (Lechuga, 2011).

According to Lechuga (2011), faculty mentors operating in the role of instructor provided structured and formalized opportunities for learning outside of the classroom.
The teaching or coaching sessions ranged from seminars to clarification of work expectations and overall preparation for success in the workplace. Faculty members viewed this as a mentoring role where soft, inter-personal skills could be shared and honed (Lechuga, 2011).

Lechuga (2011) observed, too, that faculty mentors created work environments for graduate students which required little supervision, but in which students were expected to shoulder grave responsibilities. It was noted that the relationship often changed at this point, with faculty members valuing independence and efficiency most of all (Lechuga, 2011). In the employer role, the softer, caring, side of faculty members seemed to give way to professional standards of scrutiny, increased productivity, space for making mistakes and learning from them. At this time, job preparedness of the graduate student was an additional focus for faculty members.

Finally, Lechuga (2011) noted that faculty mentors provided their graduate students with opportunities for professional development. In this role, as agents of socialization, faculty members actively groomed their graduate students in areas such as public speaking, research, and publication. The faculty mentors also pioneered pivotal graduate student interactions with prominent players within their academic discipline. Lechuga (2011) observed that the faculty mentors desired to cultivate the graduate student’s sense of professional competence, through deliberate, disciplined socialization.

Overall, faculty mentors reported that their interactions with graduate students were both supervisory and developmental. Graduate students were viewed as reciprocal apprentices who could give and receive learning from the faculty/student relationship.
Further, Lechuga (2011) noted that as the individuals in the dyad navigated each of these roles, protégés were evaluated differently by their mentors and mentors were perceived differently by their protégés.

The Graduate Faculty/Student Divide and Cross-Cultural Considerations

Higgins and Kram (2001) advanced that the impetus was on the protégé to form strong-tie relationships. These authors defined such relationships as ones which evoked “emotional affect, reciprocity and frequency of communication” (Higgins & Kram, 2001, p. 269). Thus strong-tie relationships were characteristically reciprocal, mutual and interdependent, resulting in a bond which caused easy access to the mentor and greater mentor motivation to help the protégé. The bond or strong-tie, according to Higgins and Kram, was decided by the protégé’s emotional competence when engaging in help-seeking behavior.

In 1995 Green and Bauer posited a similar emphasis. The authors reported that many protégé’s were accepted or passed over for mentoring based on how talented they seemed to be at the start (Green & Bauer, 1995). Their study established how challenging initiating a mentoring relationship was for protégés. Echoing these findings, Rose (2003) observed that for many graduate students, initiating a mentoring relationship proved to be a daunting proposition due to the intricacy of numerous factors at play in approaching and engaging a mentor. Rose (2003) reported that these factors ranged from past experiences and perceptions, to social context, expectations, roles and personal values based on deep culture.
In recent times it has become common for members of the graduate faculty belonging to the majority racial, cultural or ethnic group, and graduate students from minority racial, cultural or ethnic groups to be paired in academic mentoring dyads (Page, 2003). In general, literature delineating how mentor protégé dyads work when the mentors and protégés are of dissimilar cultural backgrounds is limited (Nilsson & Duan, 2007; Paluck, 2006; Page, 2003). More specifically, the literature delineating the dynamics of how race and deep culture mark the mentoring process in education is meager (Page, 2003). However, there has been some movement towards investigating the protégé perspectives of women and minorities who experience greater difficulty obtaining mentors and greater dissatisfaction with the dynamics of their dyadic mentoring relationships (Adams, 1992; Burke, 1984; Collins, 1983; Keyton & Kalbleisch, 1993; Nilsson & Duan, 2007).

In a study of dysfunctional professional mentoring dyads, Scandura (1998) documented that when the immediate supervisor is also the mentor, the power dynamic can breed dysfunction if fear of retaliation and relational distress are extreme. Nilsson and Duan (2007), considering the mentoring relationship from an ethnic perspective, identified the challenges posed by role ambiguity and conflict, which minority protégés experience when placed in such supervisory/mentoring relationships. Power and related oppression dynamics more frequently, than not, played a role in these dysfunctional mentoring dyads. In a number of studies of prejudice and role difficulties among minority supervisees working with White supervisors, scholars observed that minority protégés working with White supervisors felt especially hesitant to ask for clarification regarding the supervisor’s expectations and evaluation methods (Nilsson & Duan, 2007; Page,
In addition, in an academic study comprised of ethnically diverse Black students, cross-racial supervisory relationships were affected by each member’s current or past experiences of prejudice, racism and oppression, or cultural mistrust (Phelps et al., 2001).

Scholars such as Kram (1983, 1985, 1988), Scandura (1998), Waldeck et al. (1997) continued to probe for clues to explain how the mentoring relationship functioned. Focusing on academic mentoring, Schockett and Haring-Hildore (1985) concurred with Kram (1985, 1988), who underscored the tenet that mentors provided protégés with salary and promotional support as well as influence and favor within the organization. Waldeck et al. (1997) delved deeper into the graduate mentoring experience, to discover which students were actually mentored, which professors did the mentoring, and under which circumstances. The studies provided insights into the mechanics of cross-cultural mentoring.

Kram’s (1985) seminal work underscored the efficacy of mentoring dyads, but also identified that dysfunctional mentoring relationships have existed. The relationships were described as being destructive and dissatisfying. In the instances where there were such problems with the mentoring process, the consequences ranged from jealousy and distrust to personal damage (Scandura, 1998). Apart from the need to isolate instances of dysfunctional mentoring, investigating academic mentoring dyads has been a salient undertaking, as faculty mentors directly impacted the learning of their students (Heinrich, 1995; Williams & McClure, 2010), as well as their overall career and psycho-social trajectory (Kram, 1985; Scandura, 1998).
Summary

The evidence that graduate schools are becoming more ethnically diverse coupled with the important role mentorships played in garnering institutional outcomes necessitated this study of cross-cultural academic mentoring relationships. Additionally, the link between organizational outcomes and IHE funding adds salience to the topic. Studies have unearthed a number of dynamics at play within culturally heterogeneous mentoring relationships but more could be done. While the research investigating dyads has been comprised of mentors and protégés of dissimilar backgrounds, few of these studies have focused solely on graduate students.

It was imperative, therefore, that this much-needed focus on graduate student mentorship be addressed in some type of research. Such a need remained cogent since the knowledge gleaned could redound to the benefit of countless individuals belonging to a plethora of diverse minority groups. Ostensibly, such insight could assist in making higher education institutions more prepared for the dramatic change in the ethnic composition of new students, which has been predicted.
CHAPTER III

METHODLOGY AND DESIGN

Introduction

Institutions of higher education have experienced greater levels of diversity through the enrollment of more culturally, ethnically and racially diverse graduate and undergraduate students (Patton, 2009; Prescott & Bransberger, 2012). Since mentoring has been identified as an integral factor attributed to graduate student success (Heinrich, 1995; Lechuga, 2011; Patton, 2009; Patton & Harper, 2003), it was imperative to better understand how the mentoring process was affected when the mentor and protégé hail from dissimilar cultural, racial, ethnic and national backgrounds. Such studies have garnered greater interest since the literature regarding mentoring indicates that the mentoring relationship contributes to student success such as graduation and state funding is related to graduation rates.

The conceptual framework for this study was grounded in the ideas posited by Kram (1983) and Lechuga (2011). Kram (1983) posited that a mentoring relationship passed through four phases of development: the initiation phase, the cultivation phase, the separation phase and the re-definition phase. This study was directed at gathering an understanding of how these phases developed and discovering how, when and why they transitioned from one stage to another in a cross-cultural dyad. In tandem with these
considerations, the research was also aimed at discovering at what point in the mentoring process faculty roles changed according to Lechuga’s (2011) postulation of faculty as advisor, faculty as instructor, faculty as employer, and faculty as agent of socialization within mentoring relationships.

**Philosophical Paradigm**

The philosophical stance for this study was social constructionism– a qualitative perspective, which states that a phenomenon possesses “essence” only through “interpersonal” and “intersubjective” definition –ascribed to the phenomenon –“by people interacting in a network of relationships” (Patton, 2015, p. 121).

A major underpinning of this stance is that an individual or group’s perception of reality determines the consequences the individual or group will face (Patton, 2015). Social constructionists consider “multiple realities constructed by different groups of people” and the “implications of these constructions to their lives, interactions” (Patton, 2015, pp. 121-122), truth, shared meanings and consensus (Patton, 2015).

**Personal Positionality**

The author/researcher was born in a developing country and self identifies as Afro-Caribbean. She spent her formative years up to early adulthood on the island of Trinidad before moving to the United Kingdom, where she lived for five years. While in the United Kingdom, the researcher was exposed to a number of cultures through work and school. She spent a year working in a Jewish community, at a company where 90% of the employees, as well as the owners and managers were Jewish. At the Jewish
company, all employees were introduced to Jewish customs and festivals and were granted all holidays along with the rest of the Jewish staff.

Additionally, the researcher spent three years working with a Nigerian Non-Governmental-Organization (NGO) and became deeply familiar with various aspects of continental African, specifically Nigerian culture, especially the Yoruba tribal norms. Upon her return to her home country, the researcher travelled to neighboring Caribbean islands, spending weeks and months in different locales including Guyana, Antigua, and St. Lucia. After marrying a Caucasian American, the researcher accompanied her husband on academic trips to Germany and the couple currently resides in the U.S.

The researcher is a former high school educator and comes from a family of educators. In the U. S., she has worked with K-12 students and university students in the Midwest. The researcher currently serves as a life coach to two Afro-Caribbean protégé’s. One protégé resides in the U.S. and the other in Canada. Based on this topic, the researcher may be considered a critical theorist, however social construction and interpretivism reflect her worldview. Having had the opportunity to live and work in different places, the researcher has experienced cultural diversity from various vantage points. Additionally, as a graduate student, adjunct instructor, and life coach, the researcher is both a protégé and a mentor.

**Research Design**

Due to the intricacies associated with establishing a fruitful mentoring relationship and the complexities involved in understanding a topic such as diversity, a qualitative approach was used to aid in providing in-depth insights into the dynamic nature of the mentor protégé relationship. The researcher used a descriptive case study
inquiry bounded by one cross-cultural mentoring relationship to understand how members of a cross-cultural academic mentoring dyad perceived the developmental aspects of their relationship. The case study approach “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2002, p. 13). The unit of analysis was the mentoring relationship.

Participants

Graduate students who had been in an extended mentoring relationship from a large, public Midwestern university were recruited for the study. One mentor and protégé dyad from the social sciences discipline and involved in an active mentoring relationship consented to participate. The mentor was female, of Japanese descent, and in the mid-forties age range. The protégé was also female, of Appalachian descent and the same age range of the mentor.

Both mentor and protégé were previously and extensively exposed to various ethnic and racial groups through their jobs where they served individuals from diverse communities. The mentor’s father held an international position and as a consequence the mentor’s family frequently entertained visitors from across the globe. The protégé, on the other hand, was raised in a small town with little diversity; however, her parents stressed racial tolerance and openness as part of her upbringing.

The Midwestern University at which the mentor and protégé were introduced is the same IHE at which they were employed. The university serves a number of communities through its two campuses where roughly 15,000 students were enrolled in
the fall of 2015. The students at the University hail from a wide cross-section of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

**Procedures**

There were a total of three 30-45 minute semi-structured interviews comprised of five pre-planned, open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility for other questions to arise (see Appendix A and Appendix B). The researcher initially met with and interviewed the mentor and protégé individually face to face. Two months later the participants were interviewed together. All interviews were conducted on the university campus, in locations where the parties could communicate comfortably.

Each interview was recorded and transcribed by the researcher. All data were collected according to IRB standards of inquiry for human subjects. There were no payments in exchange for participation. The researcher agreed to share the findings of the study with the mentor, protégé, and their academic department. Member checks of transcriptions and findings were used to contribute to the trustworthiness of the study.

**Instruments**

The semi-structured interview questions were formulated based on the descriptions of the four phases of a mentor relationship (Kram, 1983) and the four faculty roles described by Lechuga (2011). The questions were pilot tested and amended to ensure content validity (see Appendix A and Appendix B).

**Data Analysis**
After transcribing the interviews the researcher analyzed the transcripts of the recorded interviews in order to sort the data according to a priori codes. The a priori codes were grounded in the ideas of Kram (1983) on how the phases of the mentoring relationship developed; the ideas of Lechuga (2011) regarding the changing roles of faculty and student were also heavily considered. A color was applied to each a priori code, and these colors were used to identify the various themes as they were highlighted a hard copy of the data.

Yellow was used to identify the initiation phase; green was used for both the advisor role and expressed student challenges in the initiation phase. Purple was used for the cultivation phase and instructor role; grey was used to identify changes in faculty roles and other perceived phase changes. Teal was used to code for surface culture navigation; red was used for deep culture navigation (See Appendix C and Appendix D). The coding forms (Appendix C and Appendix D) were reviewed by the researcher’s advisor before the codes were applied to the data.

In order to establish the trustworthiness of the study and to inspire confidence in the findings, the researcher included a number of procedures. These procedures addressed the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the study. Together these important elements assisted in the assessment of the value of this study to the field (Shenton, 2004).

First, the researcher adopted and utilized well established qualitative research methodologies, as previously used in comparable studies as presented in the literature review (Shenton, 2004). The researcher also sought to garner an appreciation for the
culture of the specific section of the higher education organization to which the study participants belonged and provided a thick description of same. These measures addressed transferability.

The researcher also seized the opportunity for triangulation through the use of comparisons and contrasts between the existing literature, interview data, and member checks. This assisted in reducing concerns with construct validity since multiple sources was used to understand the same phenomenon, thus bolstering the credibility of the study. To further augment the credibility of the study, the researcher took part in debriefing sessions with thesis advisors at least once per week to discuss alternative approaches, identify flaws in the proposed course of action, and/or identify researcher bias (Shenton, 2004).

To add an additional layer of credibility and confirmability, the researcher developed and maintained a reflective commentary which aided in monitoring the evolving constructions posited by the researcher as the study progressed. The researcher also disclosed all personal and professional information relevant to the study of a cross-cultural mentoring dyad and all funding and permissions were explicitly divulged.

**Context of the Study**

A case study on cross-cultural academic dyads may have caused concern in terms of its transferability and generalizability since the demographic construct and interpersonal dynamics of such a dyad was unique. Nonetheless, the researcher intended to supply a sufficiently full, thick description of the phenomenon and its impinging context (Shenton, 2004) in order to mitigate against the effect of these limitations. The
location in which the study took place may also impact the demographic data gathered. It must be stressed, however, that the purpose of this case study was to develop and simplify a theory rather than classify a sample; thus analytic generalizability existed since the case studies’ findings are generalizable to the theory under investigation (Yin, 2002).

The author is both a mentor and a protégé and may be influenced by her experiences in these roles. Finally, there was no interrater reliability as the coding was produced by the researcher. However, the researcher’s academic advisor reviewed the researcher’s codes after they were formulated. This supervisory measure improved trustworthiness.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This case study was aimed at the discovery of how cross-cultural academic dyads work in higher education. More specifically the case was studied to unearth what factors influenced the development of a relationship between a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad and what roles the dyad members played. The case study was set in a medium sized IHE in the Midwest. One cross-cultural academic mentoring dyad participated. Individual and group interviews were used to collect participants’ responses regarding the factors that influenced the building of the relationship and the roles that the dyad members played in the relationship.

The conceptual framework was twofold: (a) that mentoring relationships progressed through the four phases of initiation, cultivation, collaboration and separation according to Kram (1983) and (b) that the mentor faculty played four differentiated roles during the phases: advisor, instructor, employer and agent of socialization as defined by Lechuga (2011).

There were two research questions around which the data collection and analyses were centered.
**Research question 1**: What factors influence the development of a relationship between a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad?

**Research question 2**: What role challenges are faced by the mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad?

The proposition for this descriptive case study is that a dyad with cross-cultural members has additional factors that influence the development of the mentorship as well as the roles the dyad members assume. The findings related to the research questions are presented first. Connections with Kram’s (1983) four phases and Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty role theories are included in the presentation of the findings. A summary of the study is then presented followed by limitations of the study and suggestions for future research. The researcher then presents the conclusion of the study.

**Research Question 1**

The first research question sought to identify factors that influenced the development of a relationship between the mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural academic mentoring dyad. A number of factors emerged as described below.

**Protégé ability to initiate relationship.** For the context of this study, faculty mentors were not assigned to students. Instead students identified faculty members with whom they would like to work. It was discovered that the protégé’s ability to initiate a mentoring relationship was a factor influencing the further development of the cross-cultural academic dyad. The ability to initiate a mentoring relationship was effected by a number of characteristics described by both the mentor and the protégé such as culture, language, perceptions, confidence, and work ethics. The aforementioned factors impacted
the protégé’s ability to initiate the mentoring relationship due to perceptions entrenched in the protégé’s deep culture as described in Hall’s (1976) model. The protégé’s previous exposure to diversity also affected perceptions and influenced the development of the dyadic relationship.

For example, the protégé shared that in the initiation phase, by the end of the first semester “it [the relationship] clicked.” When asked to describe when exactly the relational “click” occurred, or what caused it, the protégé was unable to ascertain in a finite manner when it occurred or what caused it. Meanwhile, the mentor expressed similar sentiments. The mentor noted that the protégé “stood out” as a student. When asked when this became apparent, or to recount the first sighting of this trait, the mentor could not specifically recall, but shared that it was noticeable by the end of their first class together.

**Culture.** The protégé described challenges in early exchanges in forming a deep tie with the mentor due to deep culture differences: “Uhm, the major one would be cultural in that this person is of Asian ethnicity/decent. Her manner of speaking and communicating is uhm– It took me awhile to figure her out.” The protégé explained that navigating communication styles was a major challenge at the initiation phase: “the communication piece of it in our–our manners of communication, and–and understanding what each other was saying, that was probably the biggest hurdle.”

The protégé also expressed that the mentor’s nationality contributed to a comprehension conundrum:
“Uhmnn, [the mentor’s communication style was different from mine] in an American context. What it means to me is more of the facial expression. Uhmmm that just really, originally, I found her really off-putting, very formal while the American style of communicating is generally not very formal.”

The protégé shared how communication improved after she came to know the mentor better: “Uhm but then as we got to know each other, as I got to know her and got to understand her communication style, I didn’t see that at all anymore. I could still see it, but I understood it.”

**Verbal and non-verbal communication.** Sharing even more regarding communication at the deep culture level, the protégé highlighted how much the non-verbal communication made up a large proportion of the cultural ambiguity in the initiation phase.

“It would be more of the non-verbals: not showing expression, ahmmm, being very direct. Uhmmm, I think the expression was part of it because words can mean different things potentially, depending on the visual expression or the body language, and so uhmmm, that--that took some getting used to.”

Word usage also featured in the protégé’s communication challenges in understanding the mentor and establishing a strong-tie relationship. The protégé expressed how this was an issue initially but they were able to work past the challenge: “Uhm… some word usage. Just not context, word order, you know, and also things like that. Saying, ok would you say that again, I’m not quite sure I understand what you meant by that.” These disclosures indicate that deep culture perception was a factor
impacting the development of the relationship between mentor and protégé. The disclosures also underscore the accuracy of Hall’s (1976) ideas of context and non-verbal communication as imperative tenets of deep culture. These nuances were clarified and navigated by the protégé as she attempted to form a strong-tie (Higgins & Kram, 2001) relationship with the mentor.

**Similarities.** Similar demographic profiles affected the development of the cross-cultural mentoring relationship. The mentor and protégé in the study dyad were both female, both single, and “not that far apart in age.” The researcher observed that both individuals displayed serious facial stances when in deep thought. The mentor acknowledged that the similarity of their demographic profile was one of the factors which contributed to the deepening of the relationship.

“I think I connected [with] her very well. Maybe because she’s single and I’m single at this moment as well. And we are not that far apart in age. So there are many things that we… you know, I felt close to her and I think she probably felt close to me too…”

Thus these findings suggest that for this dyad, similarity of demographic profile did influence the development of the mentoring relationship in a cross-cultural academic dyad.

**Work ethic.** Another factor which influenced the protégé’s ability to initiate a mentoring relationship was the protégé’s tenacious work ethic. The mentor expressed that the protégé’s display of a diligent work ethic facilitated the development of the mentoring
relationship: “It’s up to her whether she’s determined or not and then she showed me again… She could do it!” Sharing on the protégé’s work ethic the mentor disclosed that:

Student S had questions a lot, because she would follow up on the feedback on the homework, on the in class activity. It is a weekly process in class and homework. So right after I place the feedback, she always comes back, asks me questions and catch me usually at the beginning of class before everybody comes in. And if I tell her xyz, then she just does everything I tell her.

The mentor also noted that the protégé’s support systems were not as wide or deep as the support systems of some of her classmates, yet her work ethic was strong. For instance, the mentor observed that the protégé had worked hard for everything she accomplished without the backing that others had: “Some of her peers had very prestigious background[s] with almost everybody [holding] MSc/B.Sc. [degrees] in the family. Student S did not have such individuals, and she doesn’t have family member[s] close right now. ”

The mentor further disclosed that she sensed the protégé’s feelings regarding this. And I could sense that she felt the pressure of kind of performing outside of her comfort zone before… previously, because somehow others seemed to be different, coming from a little more prestigious background or something. But she has worked hard all her life, supported herself, everything she has done all herself; which I really recognized and highly praised.
The mentor explained that the protégé’s work ethic made her stand out from among her classmates. The mentor observed that the protégé consistently corrected her errors, when given the opportunity, for instance.

I will give a second chance and there are people who will be doing, or taking that second chance, and there will be people who will not be taking that second chance. Student S is one of the persons who will always grab that opportunity, meaning, she always wants to improve. So, as opposed to some other people who just want to give up, or just not want to redo anything, she will always come back and redo for better. And she will just keep working on that. So I noticed her as good student, good quality, just really nice person.

The mentor affirmed that the protégé’s diligent work ethic, especially in comparison to the work ethic of other class members led to the deepening of their relationship.

I solicited that information, made it available to everyone, pretty much five people, and Student S and the other person grabbed that opportunity, developed a poster, so again she’s trying… as opposed to some other people who don’t try. Maybe there are few differences, I don’t know, but she did and she submitted and she was accepted. I think that’s the time we kinda came closer, so to speak, because of this extra thing she keeps doing.

**Factors influencing the Cultivation phase**

While culture, verbal and non-verbal factors, member similarities, and work ethic were factors which contributed to the protégé’s ability to initiate the relationship, four
factors influenced the further development of the mentoring relationship: expectations of protégé performance, protégé persistence, protégé growth, and protégé success.

**Expectations of Protégé Performance.** In the transition from the initiation phase to the cultivation phase, the protégé recalled some anxiety about meeting the mentor’s expectations: “frankly she scared me a little bit (giggles) ’cuz she has very high expectations, and I wasn’t sure that I could measure up.” The mentor on the other hand was confident that the protégé would perform as expected. The mentor noted the protégé’s progress with assurance, “I did see the change… you know that is different from whether I knew that she is going to make it… which I was sure [of] from the beginning…”

This confident expectation was further exemplified when the protégé was going to be in a foreign country for a few weeks during an academic course presented by the mentor. The mentor knew this beforehand and “designed the course, you know, to allow some flexibility, because I knew she was going to do the work anyway.”

**Protégé Persistence.** The mentor commended the protégé’s persistence regarding meeting expectations.

Persistence is one of them [qualities of the protégé]. And what was to me, special to observe, [was] persistence that doesn’t come out of complete confidence… for lack of [a] better word. You know, there are tons of other people, who... you know, even if there is nothing to brag about they do anyway. Student S didn’t do that, but, had the same quality of those successful people who are persistent and learn from mistakes. So, that was special to me.
The protégé acknowledged that persistence was an important factor that she had honed for a considerable number of years, despite facing challenges: “…I know… I mean… I do see myself as persistent. I’m not a quitter. I’m not a quitter, never have been. But, that doesn’t make it easy sometimes, you know…”

In this dyad, protégé performance and persistence contributed to notable growth, successful performance of tasks (e.g. conference posters), and rewards (e.g. awards at conferences, nomination of mentor for university award by protégé).

**Protégé Growth.** The mentor reported that protégé growth contributed to the deepening mentoring relationship: “…by the end of that class it was pretty much noticeable. She is one of the persons who improved greatly.” The mentor explained that the growth occurred in stages, beginning with the protégé’s mindset:

But her behavior and her perception change came, almost halfway through. And at that time, the remarkable change I think I remember is … you [the protégé] got out of this… frustrating… I want to know this …concrete, this checklist. And if I say something, I know the exact answer…

There were other examples of how the protégé was developing as an academic. The mentor recounted what it was like in the beginning to highlight how much the protégé had grown:

At the very, very beginning….she really wanted to work on every single detail in a very concrete manner and that’s when she called me aside to ask extra questions, but in a way where she’s looking for concrete: well xy = z type of answer, as opposed to something abstract or something she would do creatively
on her own. And every time I encountered with question, or gave her some guidance, she… well we need to shift your thinking now. You need to be thinking like a researcher, you know. You don’t need to please anyone or to follow directions all the time. Now is a time when you’re going to be developing different skills.

At the time of this study the protégé averred that there had been growth; “You know before, it was more of the Type A- have to be perfect type of thing. It’s my… it’s just my development as a human… kind of thing…more so than anything.”

**Protégé Success.** In an academic environment, the faculty and students are tasked with the production of academic papers, posters, and reports. The study dyad was no exception. The dyad members successfully collaborated in the preparation of an academic poster for submission to a national research conference. Not only was the poster accepted but also it was selected to be presented the following year at the national research conference in order to report progress in the research. The success was a factor that continued to influence the development of the mentoring relationship because it was evidence that the relationship was contributing to the protégé’s success. The mentor recounted what transpired at the conference and how the relationship changed as a result:

When she was accepted as one of the highest ones in the research association, by the way, it is a very prestigious one; and she finally came to be the finalist and as she, yeah… She really finished well. But even before we knew the results, I went to that conference with her. I wasn’t planning on it originally, just because she was accepted I decided to go. Just for support, I went there, and I
stayed the whole time at the hotel and we ate meals and we just did so many things together during the conference, just kinda hanging out. But that’s the time she was really comfortable, opening up to tell me her stories, her upbringings, about her family history, and how proud her family is for making this far and making progresses. And some of the struggles she had internally, because of the family history, as opposed to someone who like from millionaire background.

Based on the findings related to the factors that influence a mentoring relationship, Figure 2 represents the process diagrammatically. The interaction and aggregations of culture, verbal and non-verbal factors, similarities and protégé confidence contributed to the protégé’s ability to initiate the relationship. Once the relationship was established, factors such as protégé expectations, persistence, growth, and success further influenced the mentoring relationship beyond the initiation phase.

![Figure 2](image-url)  

**Figure 2.** Factors that influence development of mentor and protégé relationship in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad.
Confirmation of Kram’s Four Phases

The participant responses indicated that only the first two phases on Kram’s four phases, initiation and cultivation, occurred for the dyad under investigation. Further, although these phases posited by Kram (1983) did indeed occur, they occurred without mentor or protégé being cognizant of their development.

The initiation phase endured as long as the dyad members were in the classroom setting. The cultivation phase was evidenced in this dyad when the relationship transitioned from formal classroom based interactions to interactions regarding a doctoral poster competition. The mentor recounts that the protégé “grabbed that opportunity, developed a poster, so again she’s trying—as opposed to some other people who don’t try.” The mentor also signaled that it was at this point that she perceived the existence of the strong-tie between her and the protégé (Higgins & Kram, 2001).

An interesting observation was that although Kram’s model describes the strong-tie being formed in the initiation stage (Higgins & Kram, 2001), the mentor in this dyad only perceived it during the cultivation stage. Additionally this mentoring relationship, while only at the cultivation stage, displayed other facets of Kram’s model in small—but notable—measures. The mentor and protégé met in a classroom/instructor setting, and this was no longer the case, so there was some separation. The protégé referenced this separation, but only mildly so, affirming confidence in her mentor’s accessibility:

but I know [stressed with increased volume by protégé], I still know that I could contact her with any questions and she’ll respond quickly and supportively. I’m
not to the point where I’m doing statistical analysis yet, so–or even developing my model—but I know that when I’m ready she’s going to be available to me.

Although the mentor and protégé were no longer in the classroom together at the time of the study, Kram’s separation phase was not evident. Kram’s separation phase was defined by a geographical distance and end to collaborative work. The protégé did consider some separation to have occurred, however, due to the fact that she and the mentor were no longer in classes together: “We don’t have as much contact now, because we’re not, I’m not in a course of hers; however, she has agreed to be on my dissertation committee.” But, in keeping with Kram’s theory, the protégé admitted that she felt no distance between herself and her mentor:

I still feel connected because I know that I could contact her right away. I mean, I know that if I contact her she’s going to respond, so it’s, it’s not really a feeling of distance. I do also see her in a professional sense at occasional meetings and things like that, just to say ‘Oh hey how are you?’—things like that. ‘How is your program going? How’s your dissertation going? Where are you at?’—So you know, I don’t feel any distance.

There was also some evidence that the mentor and protégé had re-defined their relationship. They had already transitioned to collegial friends although they were still in the cultivation stage. This was reflected in statements by the mentor such as:

Uhmmmm, it [the mentoring relationship] became more informal, I would say, more personable, you know, it’s a shift from formal to informal. And maybe, we
started to talk more about personal issues, or the personal life…Uhhhh, some of the stories in the past, that kind of thing.

Meanwhile, the protégé noted that while she would not call the mentor by her first name “the relationship is definitely more collegial.”

Based on observations regarding the interactions of this dyad, Kram’s first two phases are more fluid than static. As the relationship progressed, elements of Kram’s model associated with later developmental phases began to emerge. Even if the relationship is still in an earlier phase such as cultivation, elements of separation and redefinition are already coming into play. The relationship has not yet transitioned to the separation phase or redefinition phase.

Research Question 2

The second research question sought to identify what role challenges were faced by a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural academic dyad. According to Lechuga (2011) mentoring relationships are categorized by the faculty member’s behavior in four roles: advisor, instructor, employer and agent of socialization. A number of challenges were articulated by the mentor and protégé as their cross-cultural mentoring academic dyad continued. The challenges they described are detailed below.

Navigating Faculty Roles

Lechuga (2011) posited that dyad members navigate a number of roles during the mentoring relationship. The case study dyad confirmed this assertion. The mentor in the case under study referred to these changing roles as turning points: “I have certain turning
points that I could see, well… after coming out of the first course and you [protégé]… decided for another course, and you signed up for that… That’s another turning point. Ok, she’s serious about it.” The mentor shared that there were other turning points that were identified as the dyadic relationship progressed. One turning point occurred when the protégé returned from a trip overseas:

[The protégé] came back and the first assignment or second assignment [grades] came back and [the protégé] didn’t do quite well… and then that was a completely optional process, she could have given up. She didn’t. So it’s another turning point.

The protégé, on the other hand, was unaware that role changes were occurring as the mentoring relationship progressed. She observed that this was because the shifting of roles was a seamless process: “You know I don’t think it was necessarily a concrete break between any of them. It was just a growth as we began to know each other more.” The protégé disclosed that “only in retrospect I would say yes” sometime after the role changes had been effected, she observed that there had been a shift in faculty roles and her responses to the shifting faculty roles.

We would retrospectively look back at where we started and say “Wow, we’ve all come a long way” and “Man, I really hated [that topic] at first”… And yeah… so I would say it’s something I’m cognizant of, but was not necessarily cognizant of the time.

**Challenges faced in navigating the advisor role.** The first faculty role Lechuga (2011) revealed was the advisor role. In this role the mentor expresses concern not only
about the protégé’s academic trajectory but moreover the protégé’s “psychological and emotional health,” (Lechuga, 2011, p. 763). In this role Lechuga observed that mentors felt responsibility for the protégé’s wellness. Lechuga posited this role as being the first of the four faculty roles enacted by mentors and experienced by protégés.

There was evidence that the advisor role was exhibited in the mentoring relationship under study. It was interesting to note, however, that the advisor role occurred only after other faculty roles (instructor, employer, agent of socialization) had already been fulfilled. Still, the caring actions described by Lechuga (2011) as characteristic of this role were displayed in the study dyad and the protégé attested to this.

I’ve had several classes with her, uhm three, four, three classes with her, in [that subject]; which is a very difficult subject. And she’s just been very supportive of my learning in that area even though it’s very difficult for me.

The mentor observed that there was no early display of caring actions indicative of the faculty as advisor role occurring in the initial stages of the relationship; however, the protégé did make a self-disclosure to the mentor regarding a medical condition. This disclosure did not result in caring interactions between mentor and protégé but did engender respect and admiration for the protégé by the mentor:

You know, [it] appear[s] to be that she is a special person, you know, quite frankly there are many who would… I hear all kinds of things as you could tell, University instructors, anybody who might be teaching, there are so many people who die during the semester or quarter. I don’t mean to be disrespectful, some of
this is not quite really true. Errr, this is your third grandfather… but Student S is clearly not one of those people.

**Challenge of lack of familiarity.** In the faculty as advisor role, Lechuga (2011) described the mentor as being concerned about the protégé’s emotional and physical wellbeing at the start of the relationship. This role was experienced as an extension of the academic advising function and according to Lechuga (2011) occurred in tandem with providing advice regarding courses and career options. The cross-cultural dyad under study displayed evidence of this faculty role in operation. It was observed, however, that members of the dyad needed time for their mentoring relationship to evolve well beyond the initial stages before this role became operational.

The members of the mentoring dyad under study shed further light on the way roles developed, observing that roles were “very formal” in the inception of the relationship. “Initially it was very transactional. It was very much student to authority, student to professor.”

As the mentor and protégé spent more time together, the formalities were relaxed. The protégé recalled how the changes occurred as time progressed.

I would say that over the three semesters I did coursework with her and I mean, from then to now, it is much more of an inter-personal relationship. Uhmmm, there’s much more comfortable interaction, we joke, we laugh, we uhmmm, we talk about personal things, family things, not super-personal but you know, its more collegial.
Given the deep and national dimensions of culture that were at work in this cross-cultural dyad, it is apparent that the crossover into personal matters could not be facilitated at the very start of the relationship, but later, after the dyad members had built a greater level of rapport. The assertion that the rapport had to be established first rests on the sentiments of the protégé expressed when she described the mentor as being “cold” at first, and the admission that the protégé was “scared” of the mentor. Later the protégé recanted by stating that while the mentor remained the same in her communication style and manner, she no longer regarded the mentor as “cold” or “scary,” rather, she “could understand” the mentor.

Although the relationship between the mentor and protégé did become “more collegial,” the collegiality occurred in stages and some formality remains. For example, the protégé explained why she continued to address the mentor formally (Dr. followed by her surname) rather than use her first name: “Because that’s not acceptable, I mean… So… you know… I don’t do that! You know, that’s just not what’s done! So, you know, there’s still that … level there…”

Sharing more on the faculty as advisor role and the mentor’s display of concern for her overall wellbeing, the protégé expressed the view that the initial advising role was “…more just along the lines of …[the mentor] always available when I had questions, always willing to take the time if I said I don’t understand this can we talk about it again. Ahhhhmmmm, you know…” The protégé disclosed that she thought it fitting for other roles to be actively pursued before the caring described by Lechuga’s (2011) faculty role of advisor commenced:
Caring for me is just a little more personal. For example, and its jumping ahead, even just recently… We went to lunch today, and the purpose of the lunch, although we were going to be talking about my program, was to find out how things are going in my office… So that is more caring… How are you doing? How are things in your office? Are there things you’re concerned about? Whereas originally, it was more of a, definitely a professor/student …type of thing.

Responding to this assertion by the protégé, the mentor proffered that displays of concern for the protégé’s overall wellbeing may have come later due to the presence of other “students who were … needier… than Student S.” The mentor explained that the needier students were given more attention in the initial stages of the professor/student relationship. The protégé, on the other hand, appeared to be resilient, strong and coping well with the subject area. The mentor shared how the protégé displayed these qualities: “So right after I place the feedback, she always comes back, asks me questions and catch me usually at the beginning of class before everybody comes in.”

Based on the aforementioned discourse, the study dyad faced the challenge of lack of familiarity in negotiating the faculty as advisor role. The interactions posited by Lechuga (2011) to occur in the advisor role only happened in this case, after 2-3 semesters when the dyad members had become more familiar with each other after and after a strong working relationship had been established.

**Challenges faced in the faculty as instructor role.** Lechuga (2011) refers to the faculty as instructor role as one in which the mentor provides the protégé with opportunities for learning outside of the classroom. In this role, the faculty member is
concerned about ensuring that the protégé has been given every chance to learn and perfect the subject under study. The mentoring dyad under study displayed facets of this role through one-on-one meetings before class as well as through a volunteer club. The club was voluntary and it was formed so that members could delve deeper into the academic discipline than the syllabus allowed. The mentor related that the club met “once for the month to continue on the research skills. She [the protégé] was always on that group.”

In this mentoring dyad, the mentor and protégé initially met when the protégé signed up for a class. Their initial interactions were strictly instructional. The protégé described the initial dyadic exchanges as being “very transactional,” “student to authority,” and “student to professor.” The protégé shared that at the beginning of the relationship communication was a challenge. The protégé disclosed that one facet of the communication challenge the mentor and protégé faced as they navigated the instructor/student roles was related to the academic field of study.

Also part of the variable originally and still is, you know, the area where we collaborate is her expertise area and I’m still learning and I have to stop and still think for a while. She’s very patient though uhmm so...you know, I would say those were some of the difficulties.

**Challenges regarding mentor classroom/instructional strategies.** Another challenge the protégé faced as she and the mentor navigated the faculty as instructor role arose from the classroom instructional strategies utilized by the mentor. The protégé shared that some of her classmates had difficulty overcoming this challenge.
We did have some folks in the class who just ran for the hills, because #1: They don’t like _____[course subject omitted] and #2: They just wanted it to be fed to them… and to always be right, which never happens…

The protégé on the other hand quickly adapted to the mentor’s instructional style and learned what to expect from the mentor in the classroom.

I mean, she’s not a warm fuzzy… In class, she’s not a … kitten person…you know. She’s not a warm, fuzzy, kitten person who’s gonna spoon-feed and make you feel better about it. She’s gonna say no, that’s not right. Fix it!

The protégé asserted that although the mentor was tough in the classroom, she also provided the mechanisms through which the challenges in the classroom could be overcome. “She was very difficult in class, but at the same time shared what we could improve upon, how we could improve upon it; [she] was willing to accept re-dos [and] provide more feedback.”

**Challenges navigating the faculty as employer role.** In the faculty as employer role, Lechuga (2011) asserted that the faculty member placed priority on protégé precision and ensured that the protégé could meet the standards of the discipline. In the case study dyad, the mentor’s execution of the employer role caused a shift in the level of demand placed on the protégé’s knowledge and proficiency in accomplishing tasks. The academic demands placed on the protégé, as the mentor fulfilled the faculty as employer role, included strict adherence to timelines, procedures and professional, academic, and industry standards with regard to conference papers, posters and research. Increased
pressure to perform with excellence was placed on the protégé in the mentor’s execution of Lechuga’s (2011) faculty as employer role.

**Challenge of poor protégé self-perception.** In response to the relational shift into the faculty as employer role, the protégé was forced to make adjustments to her self-perception. The case under study demonstrated that once the shift in protégé perceptions occurred, the faculty as employer role operated more freely. For example the protégé remarked that “I would describe myself now as a… now as an emerging researcher, where I would not have called myself a researcher previous[ly]. I mean, I even think I said in earlier classes, I’m a practitioner, not a researcher.”

The mentor explained that earlier in the relationship the protégé did not hold a positive view of her ability and it was imperative that there was a change in mindset: “…That was her mentality and I said no, I think you can do this.” The mentor also “thought that Student S [the protégé] wasn’t aware of her potential.” The protégé admitted that this was true. She affirmed that she would not have attempted some assignments if the mentor had not encouraged her. “I wouldn’t have done it if she [the mentor] hadn’t said specifically, I think you should do this. I wasn’t going to it.”

The mentor was instrumental in others ways during the navigation of the faculty as employer role. The mentor revealed that as a faculty member she paid close attention to “individual differences… that could lead into each person’s strength.” The mentor was of the view that this attitude was particularly pivotal for the development of the protégé’s positive self-perception.
I believe my role as an educator is to flip that coin to the other side. There’s a… you know, usually strengths and weaknesses are usually the different sides of the same coin. So if a student feel that this is a weakness, my job is to flip it to the other side… to let them see the strength.

The mentor and protégé in the case study were able to successfully address the protégé’s initially low self-perception. The protégé’s new and improved self-perception made navigating the faculty as employer role more manageable.

**Challenge of insufficient knowledge.** As roles shifted and the employer role came into play, the mentor displayed the greatest interest in proficiency. The protégé had to display confidence and proficiency in the knowledge she already had in order to navigate the faculty as employer/student as employee role effectively. This knowledge/proficiency and the protégé’s confidence in the knowledge/proficiency affected the role negotiation process as well. As the relationship continued, the protégé moved beyond the unsure hesitance of not knowing to a place of confident knowledge. She expressed it this way, “… although I’m not an expert researcher, I think that I can converse intelligently about research. You know, I just think that I see a difference there…” The protégé was eager to also share another “really good example.”

We met together earlier today after lunch to talk about my… the way I’m processing my model and what I want to study, and I can now say with much more confidence—this is what I want to study. This is how I want it to look. This goes to this… Instead of, this goes to this, right?
Conversely, the mentor felt that the protégé’s knowledge was in its infancy and the protégé, like other graduate students, would most likely accomplish even great things with time. “They are potentially, very much potentially, [poised to] exceed me in many ways. That’s what I see. So, I have a profound respect for those who have made it this far and who will go beyond.” The mentor explained that she was always aware of how great her graduate students will be: “…students will be my colleagues and I have said that from the beginning. I have always, you know, that end, that they have not seen yet.” The mentor knew that in her varied roles, she facilitated this process immensely, but she still kept the final destination in mind.

I know in the process of dissertation writing, I still have to play my role, and that will be so, but it’s more and more towards collegial relationship, and then how to make this workplace better together type of… that’s what I envision that it’s gonna be shifting towards.

**Challenges navigating the agent of socialization role.** In the agent of socialization role, Lechuga (2011) posited that faculty members train protégés in the activities and norms of their discipline. By doing so, mentors inculcate the required, professional persona befitting of the discipline in their protégés (Lechuga, 2011). In academe, mentors prepare their protégés for the varied aspects of appearing at academic conferences. The protégé described this benefit: “Ahmmmm…. In terms of the networking and the conference work, like I said earlier it’s enhanced the professional socializing…”
Support. Information gleaned from the study, signaled the need for mentors to provide adequate levels of support to protégés as dyad members navigate the agent of socialization role. It was discovered that while mentors aim to mold protégés into practitioners worthy of their vocation, without ample support the goal of socialization will not be reached. The protégé in this case study shared how the mentor’s support and encouragement to do her first conference caused her to see herself as a true academic researcher:

The conference experience was definitely a joy… one that I would not have expected. I don’t consider myself a researcher, but in that sense I was viewed as a researcher, a qualified researcher (giggles). You know, so having a faculty to push me to do that, not just say here’s an opportunity, but to say you should do this…

The protégé went further to explain the full impact that the conference experience had on the relationship that already existed between herself and the mentor:

I would say that the conference experience, the support she provided, the belief she had in me that I could do it, and that she was pleased that I was pursuing this chance, that was probably when I really started to consider her a mentor, versus a professor

The preceding quote highlights how integral support is for a protégé if the mentor is to effectively function in the agent of socialization role. This role challenge was adequately met by the members of this dyad, due to the quality of support the mentor provided to the protégé.

Confirmation of Lechuga’s Faculty Roles
The anecdotes provided by the participants also indicated that four faculty roles existed, but surfaced in a different order from the order originally posited by Lechuga (2011). Lechuga (2011) posited that caring actions were displayed by mentors in their initial faculty role of advisor. However, the study subjects explained that this caring, advisory behavior was exhibited later, after the faculty role of instructor, evidenced by tutoring outside of the assigned classroom time, had already been established. The study participants explained that this faculty-instructor role deepened their relationship and opened the way for caring exchanges.

It is possible, however, that academic mentors and protégés could have their first interactions while they are not in a classroom environment. If this is the case, the subsequent initiation phase (Kram, 1983) will occur outside of the faulty as instructor role (Lechuga, 2011). In the instances where the mentoring relationship was initiated outside of an instructor/student setting, the development of faculty roles may more closely resemble the trajectory outlined by Lechuga (2011).

While Lechuga’s (2011) model posits the order as faculty as advisor, followed by faculty as instructor; the observation of interactions between the members of this dyad begged the question. How often did caring actions linked with the advisor role come before the out of classroom teaching/learning activities described in Lechuga’s instructor role? One case study provides insufficient data to adequately address this question, however it does allow for the question to be raised in future research.

In the faculty as instructor role both mentor and protégé committed time to a club which met outside of formal class time:
She [the protégé] proceeded to take another, really elective class with me, then she stayed with me for another opportunity, which is not even a class, just a research club. Just completely voluntary type of opportunity. We met once for the month to continue on the research skills. She was always on that group.

As the relationship grew both inside and outside the classroom, Lechuga’s (2011) agent of socialization role also came into play. The mentor recounted that the protégé had the choice to accept or ignore the challenge: “There was opportunity came up from looking for the doctoral students’ research design posters. So I solicited that information, made it available to everyone, pretty much 5 people” the protégé “grabbed that opportunity, developed a poster, so again she’s trying… as opposed to some other people who don’t try.”

During the preparation for the conference the faculty as employer role came into force. The mentor set deadlines, provided guidelines and the protégé delivered. However, the protégé explained that during this period, qualities related to the advisor role, such as support and caring were evident. According to the protégé it was only at this point that she felt the urge to enter a strong-tie relationship (Higgins & Kram, 2001) with the mentor.

The conference preparation in itself was indicative of the agent of socialization role according to Lechuga’s (2011) definition. Lechuga described this master-teacher role as one where the faculty member encouraged the graduate student to present at conferences and engage in activities that would benefit the academic/professional
fraternity. In this role, the faculty member encouraged the graduate student to shift into the professional persona. This is exactly what happened to the protégé in this dyad.

It is interesting to note that Lechuga’s roles (2011): advisor, instructor, employer and agent of socialization overlapped in the dyad. The roles might happen in isolation but they might also happen concurrently. The agent of socialization role, although initiated, had not yet been fully developed. However, one may argue that Lechuga’s (2011) faculty roles: advisor, instructor, employer and agent of socialization are never really completed sequentially. While they do mature and change or surface and diminish as time goes on, all four roles will be present in wholesome mentoring relationships at different times.

Summary

In this study, the researcher investigated the factors which influence the development of a relationship between a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad based on Kram’s (1983, 1985) four phases of the mentor relationship and Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. It was discovered that the relationship had only passed through the initiation phase and was still in the cultivation stage with glimmers of subsequent phases emerging. Further, it became apparent that the first two phases, initiation and cultivation, are fluid, not static, in this dyad. During each phase there appeared to be a re-definition of the relationship which led to the advancement to another phase of the relationship, or opened up possibilities for dyad members to explore a new role.

Noteworthy is Kram’s definition of the re-definition stage as occurring after the separation phase, when dyad members became distant but collegial friends. In this study,
the dyad had not fully come to the phase of the mentoring relationship, however there was evidence that some re-definition had already begun to occur. For example the protégé recounted that:

With this professor I would say initially it was very transactional. It was very much student to authority, student to professor… From then to now, it is much more of an inter-personal relationship. Uhmmm, there’s much more comfortable interaction, we joke, we laugh, we uhmmm, we talk about personal things, family things, not super-personal but you know, it’s more collegial.

The researcher also investigated the role challenges faced by the mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad based on Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. It was discovered that the protégé did experience a number of challenges relating to awareness, self-perception, self-confidence in her knowledge, time and support.

It was noted that the roles that mentors navigate could occur individually or simultaneously. It was also observed that the roles never truly came to an end once a mentoring relationship was established. Rather they matured and surfaced or disappeared, as needed for the duration of the existence of the mentoring relationship. In fact, Kram’s (1983) model causes one to question if mentoring relationships ever end, even after the agent of socialization role has matured.

With regard to how Kram’s (1983) four phases interact with Lechuga’s (2011) faculty roles, this dyad experienced the initiation phase (Kram, 1983), while the faculty as instructor role (Lechuga, 2011) was being enacted. The initiation phase (Kram, 1983)
continued with some redefinition while the faculty roles of employer, agent of
socialization and advisor (Lechuga, 2011) were enacted. The dyad transitioned to the
cultivation phase (Kram, 1983), where faculty the roles of employer, agent of
socialization and advisor (Lechuga, 2011) continued to be exercised. Table 1 summarizes
the sequence of events with regard to phases (Kram, 1983) and faculty roles (Lechuga,
2011) for this dyad.

Table 1
*Interaction of Kram’s (1983) phases and Lechuga’s (2011) faculty roles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentoring Phase</th>
<th>Faculty Role Described</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiation Phase</td>
<td>Instructor Role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation Phase</td>
<td>Employer role*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redefinition</td>
<td>Agent of Socialization role*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advisor role*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation Phase</td>
<td>Employer role*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agent of Socialization role*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advisor role*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * denotes that elements of multiple roles are occurring simultaneously

The interaction of these phases and roles suggest that the mentoring relationship
in this dyad were constantly changing in step with the protégé’s academic maturity. The
data suggest that the mentoring relationship was strong enough to withstand and
accommodate the changes. Through utilization of Kram’s (1983) phases and Lechuga’s
(2011) roles the relationship was able to transition from infancy to deeper levels of
maturity.

The findings signaled that deep culture and cross-cultural considerations
influenced the initiation phase. As the relationship transitioned to the cultivation phase
and the faculty roles changed with greater ease, cross-cultural navigation of deep culture
became second-nature to the members of the dyad. They interacted with greater understanding of each other’s deep culture. For example, the protégé shared that in the initiation phase she was scared of the mentor and considered her cold. Later, however, the protégé said “I don’t think she’s cold at all! I originally thought that but uhm, as our relationship has grown, I don’t think that at all.”

Indubitably, the protégé’s role in advancing the mentoring relationship is momentous and has been documented by some authors. Green and Bauer (1995) highlighted the protégé’s role in engaging the mentor as being critical to the development of the dyadic interaction. Higgins and Kram (2001) also underscored the protégé’s role in the development of the mentoring relationship. While Green and Bauer (1995) surmised that protégé attitudes and objective abilities at the start of a mentoring relationship determined their potential for successful mentoring relationships; Higgins and Kram (2001) placed the responsibility of forming close, strong-tie bonds on the protégé. Green and Bauer (1995) also discovered, however, that in cross-cultural dyads, mentors’ attitudes also have a pronounced effect. In this study, the mentor held a distinct attitude regarding the protégé’s ability to succeed; “She could do it… Once again she is showing me she is serious.” The mentor’s attitude fostered persistence and diligence in the protégé.

In addition, tools or activities utilized by the mentor determined a protégé’s mentoring potential, according to Green and Bauer (1995). The authors identified tools or activities as sponsorship, protection, challenge, exposure, counselling, acceptance, confirmation and coaching. In this dyad, there was evidence to suggest that sponsorship,
challenge, exposure, acceptance, confirmation and coaching were used by the mentor to engage the protégé throughout the relationship.

The mentor’s and protégé’s perceptions of each other contributed to the success of their cross-cultural mentoring dyad. Whether the mentor perceived the protégé as diligent or indolent affected the dyadic interactions. The mentor described diligence as seriousness: “… the class was somehow divided into people who were just not going to do it, and try to look for [an] easy ride, and just to keep doing that… as [compared] to people who were taking this process seriously. And she is one of those who is serious about the process.” Conversely, whether the protégé perceived the mentor as transactional or transformational also affected dyadic interactions. A transactional mentor “is more instrumental using rewards or punishments to motivate subordinate efforts” while a transformational mentor “inspires and excites followers to perform through visionary leadership” (Glynn & DeJordy, 2010, p. 125). In this case study the mentor demonstrated transformational mentor behavior in her consistent positive reinforcement of the protégés’ persistence. As a result the protégé saw herself as a budding professional in the field: “I would describe myself now as a… now as an emerging researcher, where I would not have called myself a researcher previous[ly].”

Limitations

This descriptive case study inquiry bounded by one cross-cultural mentoring relationship collected the dyad members’ voices regarding their relationship. The researcher described efforts to improve the trustworthiness of the study in the methodology chapter; however, researcher positionality and participants’ positionality
could have contributed to misunderstandings about the relationship. The study participants were still developing their relationship, which had not passed through all of Kram’s (1983) phases or Lechuga’s (2011) faculty roles. This presented a further limitation for this study inquiry.

The study was limited to a single dyad and describes narrow concepts of cross-culture such as ethnicity, communication style and rules regarding familiarity. This limitation could have been addressed by widening the pool of study participants to include other cross-cultural dyads. By including other cross-cultural academic mentoring dyads in the study inquiry, other facets of cross-culture at play in academic mentoring could have been observed.

Future Research

The future research recommendations are organized according to themes central and specific to this inquiry. These themes are: culture, Kram’s (1983) four phases of the mentoring relationship and Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. An additional recommendation is posited for non-academic environments.

Culture. The descriptive case study was focused on cross-cultural interaction in academia at the IHE level. The findings of the inquiry opens up possibilities for other studies pertaining to culture. These considerations may include, but are not limited to:

- Expectations as an element of culture in mentoring
- Ramifications of travel and living abroad on mentoring in culturally homogeneous dyads
- The impact of national culture dimensions (Hofstede, 2001) on mentoring
- Cross-generational mentoring
- Cross-gender mentoring
- Mentoring across social classes
- Mentoring of bi-racial and multi-racial individuals

**Expectations.** Expectations as a unique facet of mentoring relationships is a distinctive area where future research may contribute to understanding cross-cultural mentoring dyads. In the current study both mentor and protégé had expectations of each other, the relationship and outcomes that the relationship would produce. The expectations expressed by study participants could be compared with actual outcomes, then assessed to determine how this affected the further development of the mentoring relationship.

**Ramifications of living abroad on culturally homogeneous dyads.** Drilling even deeper, this study allows consideration for future research regarding how shifts in deep culture due to foreign exposure or living abroad may affect interactions in mentoring dyads comprised of individuals from culturally homogenous backgrounds. These findings could stand alone, or be compared to studies of other culturally homogenous mentoring dyads where foreign exposure through living abroad existed. These studies could be compared with Hofstede’s (2001) national culture dimensions and Hall’s (1976) cultural iceberg model.

**The impact of national culture dimensions on mentoring.** Hofstede’s (2001) national culture dimensions based on nationality could form the basis of another set of studies comprised of both culturally homogeneous and culturally heterogeneous
academic mentoring dyads. Researchers could compare the differences between dyad members’ cultural dimensions: power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long term orientation and indulgence in order to glean further cross-cultural mentoring insights (Hofstede, 2011). It is possible that such studies could aid in eroding existing cultural assumptions regarding how specific groups relate to the constructs of time and personal space for example (Hall, 1976). The observations made from such study inquiries could allow for a more informed path toward harmonious and successful cross-cultural mentoring interactions.

Cross-generational mentoring. An inquiry to investigate how individuals belonging to dissimilar generations relate to each other in mentoring dyads may prove beneficial to the field. This is so because individuals are leaving the workforce later in life. Others are re-entering the workforce after time away from it. The result is that more generations are interacting with each other in generational roles which may be “switched.” It may prove beneficial to observe how older protégé’s interact with mentors who are generations younger, for example.

Cross-gender mentoring. Future research pertaining to how mentors and protégé’s interact when either member of the dyad is of different gender may unearth further insights into how the field of mentoring could be improved for all individuals.

Mentoring across social classes. A study of how mentoring across social classes affects members of mentoring dyads may also uncover aspects of mentoring which have not yet been investigated in great detail.
Mentoring of bi-racial and multi-racial individuals. The multi-racial categorization of graduate students has largely been untouched in the literature. Bi-racial and multi-racial student populaces can be addressed as specific groups in future research. For example, studies could be conducted to observe how bi-racial students self-identify in a cultural context, using Hofstede’s (2001) national culture dimensions. A comparison could then be made of the similarities and differences between bi-racial and single racial graduate students. Data from the mentoring dyads to which bi-racial students belong could also be compared to data from the mentoring dyads to which single-raced students belong for similarities and differences. The current study under investigation posits a rationale for investigation into how bi-racial and multi-racial student groups impact cross-cultural mentoring theory.

Kram’s (1983) four phases. The study also facilitates further study into mentoring dyads where Kram’s (1983) four phases have already been experienced and completed. In future studies, emphasis could be placed on how participant perceptions of the mentoring relationship changed through each phase and what these relationships were like after these phases had expired. Conversely, this study allows for the consideration of longitudinal studies which will begin when the mentor and protégé begin their relationship and follow mentoring dyads as they progress through all of Kram’s four phases.

Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. Similarly, further studies could be conducted to observe dyads in which Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles have run their course or longitudinal studies could follow dyads to collect evidence of all roles. The possibility of conducting research across a number of universities and other academic
organizations in order to measure how closely the findings of this study match a larger population of cross-cultural academic mentoring dyads is also plausible, given the emphasis of this research.

**Non-academic research considerations.** While the considerations of future research thus far have been academic, similar studies could be conducted in business contexts to compare how mentoring dyads are developed in other settings. In fact, Kram’s (1983) work upon which much of this study is based was grounded on mentoring in the world of work, but with general applicability for other contexts. Lechuga’s (2011) framework was strictly academic, however, and there may be less opportunity to apply the four roles attributed to faculty mentors, in non-academic mentoring settings. The possibility exists, nonetheless, for the data gleaned from academic mentoring dyads to be compared with the data gleaned from business mentoring dyads. Such a comparison could prove deeply beneficial to the field of mentoring.

**Conclusion**

The descriptive case study analyses provide thick descriptions of an existing cross-cultural academic mentoring relationship. The researcher identified factors which influenced the development of a relationship between a mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad. Kram’s (1983) four phases of the mentor relationship were used as the conceptual framework. At the time of the study, the relationship had passed through the first phase (initiation); the second or cultivation phase was still in process as indicated by the mentor and protégé’s continued contact and collaboration through the doctoral dissertation process. The study dyad demonstrated that Kram’s
(1983) four phases of the mentoring relationship (initiation, cultivation, separation and re-definition) did indeed exist. The study dyad had experienced initiation and cultivation to occur in the manner as described by Kram (1983). It was also observed that although the relationship under study was still in the cultivations phase, elements related to the separation and re-definition phases had already begun to influence the yet developing relationship. The study dyad demonstrated that some flexibility existed in the progression of Kram’s (1983) four phases.

Investigations were also conducted into the role challenges faced by the mentor and protégé in a cross-cultural, academic mentoring dyad based on Lechuga’s (2011) four faculty roles. All four roles: advisor, instructor, employer and agent of socialization were observed. The protégé disclosed that as the mentor shifted roles, she too, had to shift roles, which confirms Lechuga’s (2011) theory that both mentor and protégé navigate the changes in roles together. The analyses revealed that the mentor recognized the need for the shift and signaled these shifts through increased assignments, tasks, expressed expectations and support. The protégé was adept at discerning that a shift had occurred and tenaciously fulfilled the required tasks, actions and expected levels of performance. These elements caused the relationship to continue to grow and develop in a positive manner.
REFERENCES


Ragins, B. R., & Scandura, T. A. (1997). The way we were: Gender and the termination of mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 82*(6), 945-953. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.82.6.945


## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase/Role Studied</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Initiation phase</td>
<td>Who initiated your relationship (was it you/ the other person/ were you assigned to the relationship)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Initiation phase</td>
<td>What was it like when you first started working together (what were your thoughts/ feelings/ concerns/ joys)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cultivation Phase</td>
<td>If the relationship has changed from then to now, how has it changed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Faculty Roles</td>
<td>How would you describe your manner and role at the start of the relationship and how would you describe your manner and role in the relationship now?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Initiation Phase</td>
<td>What, if any, were some of the inter-personal, cross-cultural differences you needed to understand/appreciate when the relationship started?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Cultivation phase</td>
<td>If there are any such differences which affect the relationship today, how would you describe them (the differences) and their impact?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

QUESTIONS FOR THE JOINT INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role To be Studied</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Advisor Role</td>
<td>What caring interactions, if any, could you remember from the very start of your relationship?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Instructor Role</td>
<td>If you engaged in any additional tutoring activities outside of formal assigned classroom sessions with each other, what were they?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Employer Role</td>
<td>How did your relationship change after the student/you became proficient at performing required tasks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Agent of Socialization</td>
<td>Has your relationship impacted your social life in any way—through enhanced opportunities for casual socializing, networking or volunteering for example?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Phase Change</td>
<td>What was it like each time you recognized that your relationship was changing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Role Change</td>
<td>Were there signs or indicators that you needed to adjust your role in the relationship?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

COLOR CODING USED WITH QUESTIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>4. Faculty Roles</td>
<td>How would you describe your manner and role at the start of the relationship and how would you describe your manner and role in the relationship now?</td>
</tr>
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<td>What if any, were some of the inter-personal, cross-cultural differences you needed to understand/appreciate when the relationship started?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Cultivation phase</td>
<td>If there are any such differences which affect the relationship today, how would you describe them (the differences) and their impact?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX D

## COLOR CODING USED WITH QUESTIONS FOR THE JOINT INTERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Interview Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Advisor Role</td>
<td>What caring interactions, if any, could you remember from the very start of your relationship?</td>
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<td>Has the relationship impacted your social life in any way—through enhanced opportunities for casual socializing, networking or volunteering for example?</td>
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<td>What was it like each time you recognized that the relationship was changing?</td>
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</table>