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**AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PROTÉGÉS AND
THEIR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MALE MENTORS
IN MAJORITY CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS**

A Dissertation in

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by

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ABSTRACT

This study explores cross-cultural career mentoring experiences of African American male protégés and their mentoring relationships with White male mentors in majority culture organizations. The central research questions examined in this study focused on whether formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships involving White male mentors and African American protégés provide effective career and psychosocial development functions to those protégés. Two semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with each of the five protégé-respondents in this study. During these interviews, the researcher focused on the protégés' childhood, family work ethic, social class, educational attainment, and neighborhood. Also, major career-related themes emerged from the semi-structured in-depth interview data: early shock phase, growth phase, and organizational relationships and connections. After reporting the results to this study the researcher discusses several scholarly and practical implications, as well as recommendations for future research. Extended interviews were concluded with each of the protégés' mentor for informational purposes only. These interviews allowed the researcher to confirm and gain a better understanding of the protégés and self-reported mentoring experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

An American Ideal:

A child is not born to the station of its parents, but with an indefinite claim to all the prizes that can be won by thought and labor. It is in conformity with the theory of equality...to give as near as possible to every youth an equal state in life. Americans are unwilling that any should be deprived in childhood of the means of competition.

— *Lord Acton (as quoted in Kozol, 1991, p. 83)*

An American Reality:

We may no longer afford the doubtful luxury of compromising a common heritage of highest moral values in order that a more provincial and less inclusive code shall continue to operate to the advantage of some, while the legitimate claims of others are peremptorily denied.

— *C. E. Lincoln (1967, p. 26-27)*

Mentoring is a powerful intervention tool for helping a young person transition into any new culture of learning and work. As a complex developmental relationship, career mentoring crosses the generational divide. In many cases it is the experienced, successful mentor who helps socialize a younger protégé into the values and norms of an organizational environment. Mentoring experiences are critical to young persons from minority or marginalized culture groups because they may experience significant cultural differences among the school, workplace, home, and neighborhood environments simply by virtue of their marginality (Fagenson, 1992; Hall, 1976; Ragins, 1997; Thomas, 1989; 1990; Wilson, 1996). Career mentoring has received a good deal of attention over the last 30 years, but the mentoring function has been accentuated in more recent literature (Murrell, Cosby, & Ely 2000; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). Bowen (1985) defines the mentoring as follows:

Mentoring occurs when the senior person (the mentor) in terms of age or experience undertakes to provide information, advice, and emotional support for a junior person (the protégé) in a relationship lasting over an extended period of time and marked by substantial emotional commitment by both parties. If the opportunity presents itself, the mentor also uses formal and informal forms of influence to further the career of the protégé. (p. 31)

The concept of *mentoring* is the pivotal, fundamental principle of this study. The mentor relationship is important for every person in early adulthood. The mentor's primary function is to be that of a transitional figure. That is, the mentor helps the protégé to grow, move, or transition from an uninitiated beginner to a more experienced, accepted, and successful member of the organization. The mentor helps foster the protégé's goals and helps the protégé to take into account how the socio-cultural environment impinges upon him or her (Kram, 1985, 1988; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & O'Keefe, 1978). This is especially true of college students as they prepare for careers in their respective fields.

Career mentoring is particularly significant for minority students because of the challenges that accompany a marginalized group status. Yet, if they are to be mentored in a predominately White organization they are likely to be mentored by Whites. This cross-cultural mentoring dynamic has its own unique strengths and limitations. The focal point of this study is on cross-cultural mentoring of African American males. This is important to examine because of a disturbing college enrollment trend. During the past two decades African American men have been vanishing from undergraduate college and university campuses, as well as professional and graduate programs, in alarming numbers due to institutional policies affecting cost, attrition, academic support mechanisms, and access to technological skills (Anderson, 1990; hooks, 1990; Howard-Hamilton, 1997; National

Research Council, 1989; Wilson, 1980). With the scarcity of African American men at graduate and faculty levels, clearly something is systemically wrong.

There is a dearth of professional African American role models and mentors to help young African American youth learn those developmental skills and techniques that are unique to Black survival, adjustment, and planned growth in predominantly White institutions (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999; Dickens & Dickens, 1991). Arguably, “Black development is the process and act of learning those skills and techniques that are unique to both their survival” and their identity (Dickens & Dickens, 1991, p. 366).

Professional developmental challenges in predominantly White organizations can be overwhelming for all young adults, but no less than doubly jolting for young African American men. Clearly, a great deal of research needs to be conducted to determine how best to meet the career needs of African American males. We must discover what other needs may also exist.

Some researchers suggest the single most effective career developmental strategy for supporting college students during this time of rapid transition may be a formal mentoring program that addresses the specific developmental needs of each student (Merriam, Johnson-Bailey, Lee, Kee, & Muhamad, 2001; Pierre, 1998; Dickens & Dickens, 1991; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Levinson, 1978; Schein, 1978). The developmental needs concept (and the notion of communication competency) describes a set of specific demands (knowledge, attitudes, or skills) that must be mastered to progress further in skill acquisition and professional growth. The younger, less experienced person must contend with the demands of increasingly challenging work assignments, coupled with technical training and ongoing feedback, enabling him/her to develop specific,

increasingly complex competencies and experience a sense of accomplishment in a professional role.

The developmental task concept welded with the career intervention of cross-cultural mentoring provides a way of looking at how a given protégé is attaining his or her goals of increasing professionalism and how he or she is meeting the expectations of the workplace organization. A few evaluative questions are as follows: What specific experiences or competencies does the person need to acquire? At what point is she or he experiencing difficulty? What resources might aid his or her career development? Appropriate developmental mentoring function experiences will prepare the protégé to meet emerging developmental tasks and guide the mentor in prescribing (on an individual basis) alternative methods of coping with developmental task challenges.

The African American male protégé mentored by a White male potentially brings all of the above-mentioned developmental needs, plus a host of cross-cultural challenges to both the relationship and the organization. These additional challenges require additional focus and training on the part of both the mentor and the protégé. In the following section on mentoring functions, the multicultural challenge magnifies both the opportunity and the threat to each of the mentoring relationship functions. Awareness and a heightened understanding of the implications of the cross-cultural mentoring context are essential to meeting the additional challenges and structural barriers encountered by the African American male protégé. However, general openness to diversity is insufficient as a strategy to address the complex needs of these protégés.

Researcher's Stance on Career Development

According to Kerr and Cramer (1999), career development is a life-span phenomenon, encompassing a series of life stages in which differing developmental tasks are encountered and operate to influence career behavior in a broad way. Career development, as the term is used in the career literature, refers to the body of research that focuses on understanding the factors underlying free and informed choice or development, the evolution of personal identity in regard to work, and occupational socialization (Kerr & Cramer, 1999; Thomas, 1990; Kram, 1985; Hunt & Michael, 1983). The researcher's position on career development among African American males in this study calls for a thorough understanding of the underlying situational, sociological, and contextual themes that are embedded into the fabric of the factors identified.

African American male career development needs are not dissimilar from the career development needs of the majority culture. There has been relatively little research to determine the difference between the expressed need of African Americans for career development and those of the majority population. However, structural or cultural discrimination, culturally influenced perceptions of the meaning of work, differential availability of career information and guidance, and economics and labor market forces perpetuate and insinuate themselves into career decision-making in various insidious ways among African American males.

Arguably, the breadth of an individual's environment and social position has much to do with his or her career choice or choices that can be considered, made, and implemented. No more vivid an example exists than that of people caught up in our large urban centers, and its air-tight cages of inner city poverty. Poor people are not just rich

people without money. Their life space, opportunity structures, daily social constraints, level and types of validation, representation, and social resource reserves all differ as a function of their social economic position and status.

For that reason, an important factor in the career development of the African American males in this study is the effect of the culture and society on the goals one is conditioned to value. Within this context are found such elements as family income, social expectation, levels of social mobility, and psychological support for patterns of educational, occupational, and career motivation.

Career development is a part of and interactive with the broader range of human development. It also emphasizes one aspect of socialization, what Borow (1984) calls “occupational socialization” (p. 161). In Borow’s terms,

Socialization is the intricate birth-to-death process by which one acquires one’s view of the human world and its institutions, one’s beliefs, loyalties, convictions of right and wrong, and habitual response modes. The learning is both formal and informal, deliberate and incidental, conscious and unconscious. (p. 161)

The process of occupational socialization as a part of career development, as described throughout this study, speaks to the various factors (psychological, sociological, cultural, political, and economic) that across time result in career identity, decision-making ability, and career maturity. Such socialization processes, as one sees it, have to do with those processes and factors that aid or impede one’s acquisition of the values, knowledge, and skills leading to effective career behavior development.

Defining Career and Psychosocial Development

The research literature on the constructs of career and psychosocial development indicate that the two are closely related. Both are concerned with personal development

of self-understanding regarding one's interests and capabilities and identifying for oneself an appropriate and satisfying role in the world, and especially in the adult world of work.

Career development is defined here as a predictable set of job-related demands, needs, and concerns (competency, credibility, and confidence) that are characteristic of an individual's developmental tasks that coincide with his or her life stage and career experiences. For example, at the outset of an organizational career a young person has concerns about competence, self-worth, and the ability to function effectively in the adult world of work. Research on adult development and career development has established that at each stage of life and career individuals face a predictable set of demands, needs, and concerns, which are characteristic of the self in managing the creative tensions between the self and work commitments (Thomas, 1993, 1999; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, O'Keefe, 1978; Schein, 1976; Super, 1957, 1990). An individual in the first stage of career and adulthood is concerned with the kind of occupation and lifestyle apart from the family of origin.

Psychosocial development is defined here as a patterned set of concerns about identity in a work role that is linked to concerns about competence. Psychosocial development in a work role confirms and supports the role occupant's evolving sense of self. Seeing alternatives and making choices about how to carry out one's role are major developmental tasks in the early career years. For example, clarifying what it means to serve in the role of a news reporter, shift manager, or financial analyst involves confronting the extent to which one will conform to organizational expectations and norms and the extent to which one will conflict with these expectations and norms.

Career and Psychosocial Functions: A Systematic Process

In an organizational context, a mentoring relationship consisting of a more experienced senior person and a newly arriving junior person is a structural relationship that is influenced by the design of work and the quality and range of mentoring functions provided by the mentor. Contained in the context of the organization is the mentor's structural role that offers a range of mentoring functions, to suggest that developmental relationships vary in the ways they support individual development.

A mentor has acquired a wealth of knowledge and experience—even wisdom—during his or her career. One of the most important parts of a mentor's job is passing this information on to the next generation of leaders. This is how organizational mentors expand the capabilities of protégés in the organization, individually and collectively. It is how they get results today and leave a legacy that they can take pride in when they move on.

Career and psychosocial functions provided by the mentor are perhaps the single most important part of expanding a junior person's capabilities. The most effective way to provide a mentoring function that enhances the junior person's career advancement in the contexts of the organization (career function) is to observe a junior person in action and then provide specific useful feedback (psychosocial function). The career function (the act of the assignment) is instigated by the mentor, as the mentor's inevitable next step (providing feedback) is a psychosocial function that enhances the junior person's sense of competency, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role. The mentor's assignment expands the junior person's capabilities in the organization and the mentor's

follow through with feedback points out examples of behavior and performance that are good or that need to be improved.

The mentor's wrestling with challenging the concerns of competency that are brought on by the protégé (a career function), or exploring the pros and cons and alternatives and deciding which ones make sense, increases the junior person's capabilities (psychosocial function). The successful execution of providing career and psychosocial functions to the junior person is a systematic process that is initiated by an assignment that rigorously expands the capabilities of the junior person to engage in dialogue with the senior person, as well as other organization member, in discussing the hows and whats, followed by fluid sessions of questioning and tenacious follow through on the part of the mentor to ensure accountability.

Career and psychosocial functions do not operate as separate silos, or one function separately distinct or apart from the other. Career functions are those characteristics of the relationship (sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments) that enhance the junior person's career advancement in the contexts of the organization. In contrast to career functions, psychosocial functions are those characteristics of the relationship (acceptance, counseling, friendship, and role modeling) that enhance the junior person's sense of competency, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role. The mentor's execution of providing his or her protégé with career and psychosocial functions is a discipline, and is integral to the junior person's career development.

In summary, the skill of mentor is the art of questioning. Asking incisive questions forces the younger person to think, discover, search and further expand his or

her capabilities. The successful execution of career and psychosocial functions is the major job of the mentor. The mentor's successful execution of providing career and psychosocial functions to a less experienced person must be the core strategy in this structural work relationship. If one decides to pick up a penny from the ground, it is physically impossible to pick up the heads side of the coin while physically abandoning the tails side of the coin. The same is true of the mentor providing career and psychosocial functions to a less experienced, junior member in the organization. Those mentoring do not operate as in a vacuum.

Mentoring Functions: A Theoretical Framework

There are three well-known mentoring functions: career, psychosocial, and role modeling. Career functions include tasks, experiences, and assignments related to the workplace and job description. Psychosocial functions of a career-related relationship include ways of relating to others, norms and values, communicating and trust, and a professional identity development. Aspects of mentoring that address both career and psychosocial functions involve role modeling, where the mentor sets an example and the protégé learns the necessary behaviors, attitudes, and values that identify with those of the mentor.

In an organization, all of these mentoring functions combine to create significant changes in protégés as they encounter developmental tasks. How they learn to handle these tasks shape the kind of person each becomes within a workplace organization. The mentoring functions can be summarized in two broad categories: career functions and psychosocial functions (Kram, 1988).

Career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance a protégé's advancement in the organization. These functions include sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging work assignments (Kram, 1988). In concert with career functions, psychosocial functions are possible because of an interpersonal relationship that fosters mutual trust and increasing intimacy. Psychosocial functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance a younger person's effectiveness, clarity of identity, and credibility in a professional role (Kram, 1988).

For this study a psychosocial function includes those aspects of the relationship (acceptance, counseling, friendship, and role modeling) that enhance the junior person's sense of competency, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role. Kram (1988) contends that

role modeling involves a senior colleague's attitudes, values, and behavior provides a model for the junior colleague to emulate. To the extent that the junior colleague sees parts of his current and idealized self, the senior colleague serves as an object of admiration, emulation, and respect. (p. 33)

In this study, the third mentoring function (role modeling) was collapsed as a separate property into the psychosocial function. This decision was made in part because the identified mentors in this study were "legally constrained" from providing information to the researcher regarding certain aspects of mentoring relationships involving minority members. The long-term solution to this problem is to equalize power relationships among groups in organizations by structurally integrating minorities into positions across ranks and departments (Cox, 1993).

Of interest, the inclusion of role modeling as a psychosocial mentoring function property is viewed by scholars as acceptable and fitting (Kram, 1988; Phillips, 1978;

Levinson, et al., 1978; Thomas, 1999). The full range of mentoring functions suggests that developmental relationships vary in the ways they support individual development.

Kram (1988) maintains that role-modeling functions consist of a senior person's attitude, values, and behaviors exemplified for the junior person to admire, respect, and emulate. Role modeling necessitates the senior person setting a desirable example, and the junior person identifying with it. It is a process that has both conscious and unconscious dimensions, where both the role model and the protégé may be unsure of how strongly the protégé identifies with the mentor's modeling behavior (p. 33). Kram categorizes role-modeling functions as elements of psychosocial functions.

Mentoring functions enhance both protégé and mentor advancement and growth. These functions are the essential characteristics that differentiate developmental relationships from other work relationships. Kram (1988) suggests:

Relationships that provide [all aspects of mentoring functions] are characterized by greater intimacy and strength of interpersonal bond and are viewed as more indispensable, more critical to development, and more unique than other relationships. However, relationships that provide only career functions are characterized by less intimacy and are valued primarily for the instrumental ends that they serve in the organization. (p. 24)

Although few, if any, systematic evaluations of informal or formal cross-cultural mentoring pairs have been completed, a partial assessment of their impact raises a number of questions about their value in creating conditions that encourage cross-cultural mentoring (Thomas, 1990). The primary objective of formal cross-cultural mentorship is to successfully help newcomers with multiple differences (e.g., culture, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, and/or sexual orientation in addition to age and experience) gain entry and successful transition into homogeneous organizations (Ragins, 1995).

Understanding and eliminating barriers to advancement for various subgroups in the workplace should be of increasing concern to organizations that strive to compete in an increasingly multicultural marketplace. This concern may be addressed with the implementation of effective informal and formal mentoring initiatives.

Informal and Formal Mentoring

Because of the nature of organizations, informal mentoring relationships are generally available to all employees. Informal peer relationships are not normally sponsored by the organization but rather individuals who altruistically devote their time and efforts toward the advancement of another person's career. Formal mentoring relationships are organization-sponsored and supported, while informal mentoring relationships are natural occurrences, serendipitous to both the protégé and the mentor. When cultural differences are present in formal or informal mentoring relationships, an additional dimension is present that must be understood and addressed. The added dimension of cultural difference impacts every level of the organization from personal relationships to informal work groups and formal structure to corporate identity. The African American male protégé and the White male mentor relationship composition is the least studied and, therefore, not well understood.

According to Kram (1988),

In providing career functions, peer relationships aid organizational advancement in providing psychosocial functions. A peer relationship supports an individual's sense of competence in a professional role. (p. 135)

In providing role modeling as an aspect of informal mentoring, relationships may avail the less experienced person with a more senior person setting a desirable example, allowing the junior person to identify with them (Smith & Davidson, 1992). Cross-

cultural role model relationships may be most difficult to find for those who need them most. For example, ethnic minority faculty members who are advanced enough to serve as role models are a relatively scarce resource in PWIs of higher education (Lord & Saenz, 1985).

Ragins (1997) contends there are limitations and strengths to cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Because of the many interpersonal and cultural intricacies of formal cross-cultural mentor-protégé relationships, these compositions may expose the protégé to unintended negative consequences. Dickens & Dickens (1991) suggest as an explanation of their developmental model that cultural stereotyping may interfere with communication, understanding, and development of a warm, trusting relationship. Self-consciousness, defensiveness, hostility, misreading interpersonal signals and compounding misunderstandings can often accompany lack of experience with a culture (p. 43-44). The potential benefits of formal cross-cultural career mentoring relationships have not been fully explored. In Kram's analysis of possible mentor-protégé benefits of formal mentoring (in relation to a linking of mentoring functions), certain conditions can reduce some of the risks of detrimental outcomes such as lack of exposure-and-visibility to a different culture. Kram (1988) states:

First, participation should be voluntary, and some systematic screening procedure should be in use to enhance the decision to participate as well as match mentors and protégés. Second, top management support is essential to convey the serious intent of the program and its importance in developing human resources for the organization. Third, education should be provided in order to increase individual 'understanding' of mentoring functions and interpersonal skills so that self-confidence is strengthened. Finally, flexibility is necessary so that mismatches can be gracefully ended. (p. 185)

Building on these earlier model research studies and more recent works (Hecht, Jackson, Ribeau, 2003; Ting-Toomey, 1999) that have focused largely on communicating

effectively, appropriately, and satisfactorily across cultures, some of the unintentionally negative outcomes of formal cross-cultural mentoring may be avoided. The multifaceted nature of cross-cultural mentoring requires complex solutions to potentially complex obstacles.

Over the last quarter century, a variety of strategies have been used in formal mentoring programs in education, business, and professional organizations (Phillips-Jones, 1997). Interest in organizational formal mentoring programs for women and minorities is expected to gain momentum in the next several years (Thomas, 2001) given the population demographics and the resultant expansion of the workforce.

Several formal mentoring initiatives have been developed by organizations such as the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the National Center for Research on Teacher Learning (NCRTL), the National Education Association, and the American Association of University Professors, as well as a research organization called ChildTrends, which is a nationwide and local youth development program headquartered in Washington, D.C. African American male protégé and White male mentor matched pairs are possible in all of these organizations.

Business and professional organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, and community-based youth development programs face greater changes and challenges than ever before. These challenges include how to attract and retain dedicated employees, how to transmit the organization's culture and practices, and how to establish a positive public image (Higgins, 2000). For many organizations, formal mentoring programs have become the career intervention tool of choice (Phillip-Jones, 1982).

Today, formal mentoring takes many forms and is practiced for many different reasons. We can see it in the relationship between master and apprentice, or in relationships such as Big Sisters and Big Brothers. Equally, we can see mentoring in the relationship between a successful entrepreneur and his or her protégé. Common to all these relationships is a partnership between two people, where the mentor (who possesses a greater of skills, knowledge, experience and professional relationships) works collaboratively with a protégé (who is looking to enhance his or her skills, knowledge, experience, and professional relationship) in a mutually beneficial process. While there is, by definition, a certain inequality in the mentoring relationship, there is also a necessary mutuality. Both the mentor and the protégé bring different but valid perspectives to the process. Both gain from the relationship, and both parties are equally accountable for the success of their interactions (Kram, 1985).

The African American male protégé brings perceptions of attitudes, attributes, stereotypes, competence and experiences, in addition to developmental needs and cultural challenges, into a cross-cultural mentoring relationship. He also brings a rich constellation of assets unique to him as an individual to the organization. The White male mentor brings a lifetime of perceptions of attitudes, attributes, and stereotypes, as well as perceptions of competence and experiences to the relationship. When the mentor possesses cross-cultural mentoring skills and talent, he makes an immediate contribution that exponentially adds value to both the protégé and the organization. These individual cultural expectations, experiences, and influences augment the existing corporate culture. By their very presence, African American men activate these strong but silent undercurrents. These undercurrents are remnants of our social ideas and realities.

Cross-Cultural Mentoring at PWIs

As we move into the 21st century, there is mounting evidence that PWIs of higher education must become more attentive to the career intervention of cross-cultural mentoring (Bowman, Kite, Branscombe, & Williams, 1999; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998; Ragins, 1997, Thomas, 1989; Thomas, 1990). One of the most frequently reported problems faced by women and minorities in organizational settings is limited access to or exclusion from informal interaction networks (DiTomaso, Thompson, & Blake, 1988; Fernandez, 1981; Irons & Moore, 1985; Kanter, 1977; Lincoln & Miller, 1979; Ragins, 1997; Ragins & Cotton, 1991; Ragins & Scandura, 1993; Thomas & Gabarra, 1999). These informal interpersonal networks often provide the means to increasing responsibility, privilege and power within the organization. Whenever association with those who are ascending the corporate hierarchy is impeded by cultural diversity, members of minority groups are at a significant disadvantage and the organization fails to benefit from the full range of perspectives these marginalized workers can offer. The African American and White mentoring pair are a quotient source of talent that is too often underutilized.

Cross-cultural mentoring relationships are a fact of life for minorities in PWIs (Ragins, 1997). Such relationships allocate a variety of instrumental resources that are critical for job effectiveness and career advancement as well as expressive benefits such as friendship and social support (Tichy, 1981). Networks that are too limited produce multiple disadvantages. These disadvantages include restricted knowledge of what is going on in the organizations and difficulty in forming alliances, which in turn are associated with limited mobility (Brass, 1985; Ibarra, 1993; Ragins, 1997; Thomas, 1990;

Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). Naisbitt, in his 1982 study predicting megatrends in the 1980s and 1990s, said that anyone not having access to these workplace career relationship networks would almost certainly be operating at a serious deficit.

According to Redmond (1990), the majority of faculty teaching at PWIs are well aware of the fact of cultural diversity, but some may believe the only way to accommodate these differences involves lowering expectations or standards and simply ignoring culture-based advice. Redmond contends:

When examined, this position is often related to insecurity and fear of the unknown, since many faculty have had little experience in close cross-cultural relationships, either as children or as adults. Culturally diverse students possess rich experiences to share with faculty, including their perceptions of the world and those teaching situations and approaches, which are most conducive to their matriculation. Closer association could reduce stereotypes and reveal students who are intelligent, resourceful, resilient, and most often willing to engage in compensatory educational activities. (p. 193)

The present investigation addresses whether closer association between White mentors and minority protégés in a organizational context could (1) reduce stereotypes, (2) reduce negative attributes, (3) promote career and psychosocial mentoring functions, and (4) permit more access. One underlying concern of the study is whether certain relationships with White mentors provide access to the full range of mentoring functions and whether they do so successfully.

Effective cross-cultural mentoring will intentionally address the many challenges to the authority of the marginalized group protégé. Challenges include but are not limited to performance pressures, protégé visibility, and work group support. It may be assumed by some, for example, that because an African American man has been admitted to a university, he has overcome the odds against him in a color-biased society and has the

ability to successfully matriculate and graduate, then enter and succeed in the workplace (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998).

Many administrators and counselors at PWIs as well as their corporate counterparts may be unaware that African American males may be internalizing tremendous environmental stress and personal burdens similar to those of the non-college-bound, less advantaged African American male (Bowman, Kite, Branscombe, & Williams, 2000; Johnson-Baily & Cervero, 1998). Establishing trust and negotiation of cultural boundaries is crucial to developing successful cross-cultural relationships, so it follows that successful formal, cross-cultural mentoring programs must intentionally foster trust and assist in crossing cultures with awareness, sensitivity and compassion (Thomas, 2001).

Outcomes Associated with Mentoring Relationships

In earlier studies some researchers assessed whether (and how) culture or gender influenced protégé and mentor outcomes (Noe, 1988; Ragins & Sunstrom, 1989; Thomas & Alderfer, 1989; Thomas, 1990; Caruso, 1992). An abundance of studies have addressed the experiences of African American students enrolled in PWIs (Bowman, Kite, Branscombe, & Williams, 2000; Johnson-Bailey, & Cervero, 1998; Magolis, & Romero, 2001; Murrell, Crosby, & Ely, 2000; Padilla, 1994). However, cross-cultural mentoring of African American males transitioning into professional careers is not well represented in the literature. There is very little empirical research that examines the experiences of this group of men, specifically those attending PWIs (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1998), who are being mentored by a majority culture male.

Cross-cultural mentoring relationships are composed of mentors and protégés who differ in group membership associated with power differences in organizations (e.g., culture, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, sexual orientation) (Ragins, 1995). Given that executive leaders in most companies are White (Morrison & Van Glinow, 1980), minorities are more likely to be in cross-cultural mentoring relationships than White members of the same organizations. This is an obvious advantage for Whites protégés in homogeneous relationships with other majority members (Dreher & Cox, 1986; Murray, 1982; Ragins & Cotton, 1991; Ragins & Sunstrom, 1989; Thomas, 1990).

A central proposition of this investigation is that mentoring relationships involving White mentors and African American male protégés differ from White mentor-White protégé relationships “in the development, processes, and outcomes associated with the relationship” (Ragins, 1995, p. 507). Further, Ragins (1997) contends,

The negative social perceptions associated with African American group membership may affect the behavioral and perceptual processes involved in the development and maintenance of mentoring relationships. (p.502)

Through this study, the author seeks to contribute to the expansion of extant mentoring theory by integrating a communication and diversity perspective. Mentoring theory and subsequent research have been focused nearly exclusively on the mentor’s role in the development of the relationship and the impact of the relationship on the protégé. However, a core assumption of this study is that the cross-cultural mentoring relationship is deliberately reciprocal. Just as leader-member relationships are reciprocal in nature and function, mentoring is a dyadic relationship that is developed by both members and has outcomes for both parties (Mullen, 1994). Our focus is not on the outcomes for the mentor, but rather the protégé’s development.

The point to be made here is that in and of itself, the cross-cultural mentoring relationship is a transition for any protégé based in the dynamics of the mentoring relationship. Consequently, if this developmental transition is to culminate in the successful induction of the protégé into work, the mentoring relationship must address skill building, competence, identity formation confidence, and relationship credibility.

The minority protégé requires not only special support as the younger inexperienced worker, but also access to people and relationships from the organization that can further enhance his career development. All young adults, but particularly young minorities who are launching new careers, for example, are concerned about competence and whether they will succeed in establishing viable and successful careers. Not only do they question their skills and abilities during the initial phase of their career, but similar to all young adults during the initial career they search for occupational identities and a sense of who they can become in a new role and work context. However, as minorities they face workplace relationship issues of difference and similarity.

Most of us prefer to spend time with people who are similar to us rather than different from us. Among people with similar habits and outlooks, we experience interaction predictability. Among people with dissimilar habits and communication rules, we experience interaction unpredictability. In familiar cultural environments, we feel secure and safe. In an unfamiliar cultural environment, we experience emotional vulnerability and threat (Ting-Toomey, 1999, p. 7).

The confluence of behavior, intervention, and social context has many implications. These implications apply to individuals, interpersonal relationships, organizations, and nations. One fundamental premise of this investigation is that the

challenges of African American protégés, their relationship with White mentors, and the concerns of the organizations do not exist in a vacuum, but indeed in the context of a larger society that still is learning to adapt to cultural differences.

Significance of the Study

This study focuses on African American male scholars attending a PWI of higher education and the mentoring relationships that are situated to help them succeed in greater numbers in professional career. The study of cultural diversity is an especially sensitive issue because scholars must not only be aware of how prevailing societal cultural relations influence their approach to the study of cultural diversity, but they must also understand the effects of their own identity and experiences on their work (Alderfer & Smith, 1982). It is critical to note the following:

In America, race is the touchstone of all value, the prism through which all else of significance must be refracted before relationships can be defined or relevance ascertained. There is no order of reality large enough to transcend its pervasiveness, small enough to escape its intrusiveness, or independent enough to avoid its imprimatur (Lincoln, 1996, p. 45).

African American males studying in PWIs must negotiate various cultural boundaries of the academy, peer groups, and professional identities. Without effective developmental relationships, African American male students and early career professionals are at a significant disadvantage in mastering the career function learning that implements the technical knowledge they have spent years mastering. And without cross-cultural skills, young professionals may become isolated from networks of responsibility, power and influence. Their professional credibility and acceptance depends on receiving organizational access and negotiating relationships with professional colleagues.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this investigation is to gain further insight into how culture plays a role in early career cross-cultural mentoring relationships consisting of African American male protégés and the White male mentors functioning in predominately White organizations. The study focuses on two types of behaviors or functions provided by the mentor for the benefit of the protégé: (a) *career development* functions that are aimed at helping the protégé advance in the organization; (b) *psychosocial* functions that provide mutual trust, counseling, acceptance, and personal support to the protégé and are essential to forming collegial relationships.

The junior person/protégé develops conscious and mindful shifting of worldviews, including a clearer sense of who he is and what has been incorporated in the mentor's example as teacher, sponsor, and role model. The objective is to identify the impact of the mentor's behaviors that lead to positive protégé outcomes related to career and professional development. This study includes an overview of relevant literature (Chapter 2) and presents in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a group of cross-culturally mentored protégés and less formal conferences with their White mentor (Chapter 3). The details of the semi-structured interview method used in this study can be found in Chapter 3. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide background on the protégés, data results, discussion, conclusions and implications of the study.

Research Questions

This study is driven by two specific research questions. Research methods were devised to gather, analyze, and describe data regarding:

RQ1: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the career function of their mentoring experiences?

RQ2: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the psychosocial functions of their mentoring experiences?

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Cox and Nkomo (1990) observed the following on the basis of their review of diversity literature: “Hundreds of books and thousands of research articles have appeared in the last two decades on development and leadership. Yet, virtually all of this literature is silent on the issue of [cultural differences]” (p. 422). Although their study emerged over a dozen years ago, the pace of research on cultural diversity and organization is generally slow when compared to other areas of organizational study (Cox, 1993). An aim of this investigation is to explore the mentoring functions (career and psychosocial) necessary for minority career development, mobility, and advancement in PWIs. In this review of the literature, workforce diversity will be examined from a series of perspectives that reflect the many challenges and dimensions of cross-cultural mentoring. Within an organizational behavior perspective, the researcher will attempt to identify workable strategies for accommodating, managing, and understanding cultural differences in the workplace mentoring relationship, and illustrate to the reader the continuing impact of diversity on organizational mentoring relationships that are embedded in the culture and climate of White corporations.

The literature review of this chapter will explore mentoring constructs and functions, followed by cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Part one will include a brief discussion about how various mentoring constructs are consolidated and learned. This section will focus on mentoring as a career intervention tool and how it is logically linked to diversity and organizational performance. Mentoring functions, or those

essential characteristics that differentiate developmental relationships from other work relationships, will be explored, followed by a historical overview of mentoring.

Specifically and with few exceptions, this section will focus on White populations where cultural minorities were included in a study population, but little attention was given to the influence of their cultural diversity on the dynamics of mentoring relationships.

Part two of this chapter will center on cultural diversity, which is logically linked to cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Literature selections will include issues of individual and organizational identity. In addition, a discussion of the literature related to various definitions of diversity will be combined to explain diversity and a changing society and workforce. Further, we will consider how cultural diversity in organizations impacts the early-entry socialization and/or acculturation process of a minority individual, which will clarify certain effects and implications of cross-cultural developmental mentoring relationships. Finally, we will consider how dimensions of culture interact with minority members' social network development and access to mentors as well as other organizational members to determine a minority protégé's behavior and possible career mentoring function outcomes.

Defining Mentor and Protégé

Considering the growing acceptance and acknowledgment of mentoring's importance, one might expect that consensual agreement on the defined role of the mentor would have been achieved. However, such is not the case. The word *mentor* derives from Greek mythology (Kram, 1988). Odysseus entrusted his home and son Telemachus to an old man called "Mentor" when he set off on a 10-year journey. On one occasion, Mentor's advice saved Telemachus from death. The father-like relationship

between young Telemachus and the wise, loving Mentor set the standard for characterizing future mentoring relationships. History is saturated with examples of such relationships: Langston Hughes as mentored by Mary McLeod Bethune; Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as mentored by Dr. Benjamin Elijah Mays; Dr. Howard Thurman as mentored by Dr. Rufus Jones; Alex Haley as mentored by Dr. C. Eric Lincoln; Colin Powell as mentored by Casper Wienburger.

From the legacy of famous mentor-protégé relationships comes the sense of mentorship as a powerful emotional interaction between an older person and a younger person, a relationship in which the senior is trusted, loving, and experienced in the guidance of the junior. The mentor helps shape the growth and development of the protégé (Merriam, 1983). According to Kram's (1985) definition,

...mentoring is the prototype of a relationship that enhances career development. The name implies a relationship between a young adult and an older, more experienced adult that helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world and the world of work. A mentor supports, guides, and counsels the young adult as he or she accomplishes this important task. (p. 2)

Traditionally, mentors are defined as individuals with highly developed experience, information, and knowledge who are devoted to providing upward career mobility and sustained support to their protégés' organizational careers (Davis & Garrison, 1979; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Thomas, 1986, 1990). Moreover, the contemporary literature and descriptive references characterize a mentor in terms of attributes (e.g., wisdom, knowledge, experience, power, ability), roles (e.g., patron, coach, counselor, teacher, guide, sponsor), and functions (e.g., teaching, assisting with career decisions, counseling) (Caruso, 1992).

Levinson et al. (1978) insinuate a problem with defining *mentoring*. They state, "No word currently in use is adequate to convey the nature of the relationship we have in

mind here” and “mentoring is defined not in terms of formal roles, but in terms of the character of the relationship and the functions it serves” (p. 97-98). According to Ragins (1997), mentors may provide some or all of these roles, and the provision of these roles may not only vary from relationship to relationship, but may also vary over time in a given relationship (p. 484).

In contrast to the descriptive references that characterize the mentor, protégés are described typically as individuals under the age of 35 and early in their careers, whereas mentors are typically seniors, ideally half a generation older than the protégé and in mid or late career (Levinson, et al., 1978; Thomas, 1993). The main focus of this study, is on the years from the late teens to the mid-twenties or the Early Adult Transition period of the life cycle (Levinson, et al. 1978). According to Levinson and colleagues

...the Pre-adulthood era includes childhood, adolescence and the Early Adult Transition. However, the Early Adult Transition extends from roughly age 17 to 22. It provides the bridge from adolescence to early adulthood, and is part of both...During this period the growing male is a boy-man; he is terminating his pre-adult self and his place in the pre-adult world, and at the same time starting to form his first adult self and to make the choices through which he establishes his initial membership in the adult world. (p. 21)

In the various definitions of a protégé, there are also some descriptive references and common themes that characterize this individual: a protégé is a person who is the recipient of a senior person’s mentoring that enhances his or her organizational career, facilitates personal growth, and actively encourages professional development; demonstrates a willingness to assume responsibility for his or her own personal growth and professional development; and is receptive to feedback (Caruso, 1992; Thomas, 1990). Mentors and their protégés may experience a significant level of intimacy and emotional attachment in these relationships, which often exhibit dynamics similar to those in parent-sibling relationships (Levinson, et al., 1978; Thomas, 1993).

Concept of Mentoring and its Functions

According to Kram (1988) mentoring functions are those aspects of a developmental relationship that enhance both individuals' growth and advancement. This author also states that these functions are the essential characteristics that differentiate developmental relationships from other work relationships (p. 22). A number of research studies on relationships between junior and senior managers have identified a range of mentoring functions or mentoring roles (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee; 1978; Schein, 1978; Davis & Garrison, 1979; Phillips, 1982; Misirian, 1982; Clawson, 1979; Kram, 1980, 1988).

Among the studies completed, a set of functions converged. These functions can be summarized in two broad categories. Career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance learning the organization and preparing for advancement in an organization. Psychosocial functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role.

Several researchers from the disciplines of organizational development and adult education have sought to describe the complexities of the mentor relationship and delineate how it functions in the development of individual adults. Building on the previous half century of developmental psychology, Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee (1978) found that the presence of a developmental relationship was essential in the smooth transition from late adolescence to early adulthood. Based on interviews with 40 young men, Levinson's concept of mentor included being a teacher, sponsor, counselor, developer of skills and intellect, host, guide, and exemplar.

In addition, “the mentor has another function,” Levinson wrote, “and this is developmentally the most crucial one: to support and facilitate the realization of the Dream” (p. 98); that is, the vision each individual has about the kind of life he wants as an adult. Levinson further defined mentoring as being characterized by the parent-child relationship and peer support alliance without being either. He concludes that what defines the parameters of mentoring is its specific set of functions carried out within a relational context.

The importance of Levinson’s work on mentoring and adult development was supported by a longitudinal study of 95 Harvard graduates (Vaillant, 1977). Of interest to the researchers was how some of the nation’s outstanding young men adapted to and coped with the major events and stresses of life. Vaillant found that the men judged to be the “best outcomes” had been capable of “sustained relationships with loving people” in both career and personal life (p. 337). These mentors adopted in young adulthood ceased to be important for these men by the age of 40. After 40, the successful became mentors themselves. Those men judged to be the “worst outcomes” had not been mentors.

They were least clearly willing to assume responsibility for other adults.... They were able to give less to their children.... Finally, to the extent it can be measured in dollars and cents, they gave of themselves back to the world.
(p. 350)

This ability to provide to the next age group or generation is reminiscent of Erikson’s (1950) middle-age period of adult development in which the psychosocial task for mid-life is to resolve the issue of generativity versus stagnation. Generativity is a concern for and an interest in guiding the next generation. It includes “everything that is generated from generation to generation: children, products, ideas, and works of art”

(Evans, 1967, p. 51). Clearly then, mentoring is one manifestation of mid-life psychosocial tasks.

Although the work of Levinson (1978) is generally seen as groundbreaking, in other ways his study seems focused on a specific historical and cultural context (Crosby, 2001). For example, the men in Levinson's study grew to maturity during an era when America was rigidly segregated (i.e., neighborhoods, armed forces, trade unions, colleges and universities) and the professions and corporate America senior management were virtually all White, able-bodied male. The respondents in Levinson's study were of the same gender and cultural background (Crosby, 2001).

The literature on cross-cultural mentoring is much more limited than that of gender. Yet, some of what has been said about cross-gender mentoring may also be said for cross-cultural mentoring. For example, stereotypes of non-Whites as with women as less capable may make mentors less prone to select them as protégés, and the problems of low representation at higher organization levels and lower access to informal networks in predominately White male organizations may affect non-White and White women similarly (Ibarra, 1993).

Conceptual work by Thomas (1989) offers additional ideas on how cultural identity may influence mentoring in organizations. For example, he argues that deeply ingrained cultural taboos and greater uncertainty about outcomes that are experienced in cross-cultural mentoring combine to make cross-cultural relationships less complete and more instrumental (limited to career functions) than same-culture dyads. In addition, he suggests that the success of cross-cultural mentoring relationships is partly determined by whether the mentor and the protégé are at complementary stages of cultural identity

development (Thomas, 1989). This notion of mentor and protégé at complementary stages led Thomas to build a model of racial dynamics in developmental relationships.

A Model of Cultural Dynamics in Cross-Cultural Developmental Relationships

In 1993, Thomas developed a model that focuses on the link between strategies for managing racial difference and the types of relationships that take form and develop. Thomas' model presupposes that people come to cross-cultural developmental relationships with conventional perspectives about cross-cultural relations that include attitudes toward other cultural groups, a point of reference or orientation toward one's own cultural group and cultural identity, and a perception about proper and preferred ways to address cross-culture-related matters in the workplace. Assuming people are open to forming cross-cultural developmental relationships, Thomas contends their racial perspectives predispose them to prefer either the direct-engagement or denial and suppression strategy for handling cross-cultural differences.

Thomas (1993) explains that when two people join in a cross-cultural developmental relationship, their perspectives may or may not be complementary. He maintains that African Americans and Whites arrive at their perspectives out of very different racial experiences, and therefore, they may agree on behavioral approaches to cross-cultural encounters while having very different reasons for their choices. On the one hand, in complementary relationships the parties' cultural perspectives are mutually supportive, and they prefer the same strategy for managing their cultural difference. However, in noncomplementary relationships the parties' cultural perspectives exhibit different strategy preferences.

In accordance with Thomas (1993), over time a recurrent pattern or strategy of responding to culture-related attributes of the parties' individual cultural experiences and broader culture-related dynamics develop. The patterns that emerge constitute a response of either open engagement or a reticence and inhibition that leads to denial and suppression of culture-related data in the relationship. The model presents four possible variations of cultural dynamics: (1) complementary cultural perspectives and use of the denial and suppression strategy, (2) complementary cultural perspectives and use of the direct-engagement strategy, (3) noncomplementary cultural perspectives and use of the denial and suppression strategy, and (4) noncomplementary cultural perspectives and use of the direct-engagement strategy (p. 177).

As Thomas (1993) describes the variations of interpersonal racial dynamics in a relationship, he contends cross-cultural relationships are most likely to become mentor-protégé relationships when the parties have complementary cultural perspectives and, therefore, similar strategy preferences in view of the belief that each party is engaged in a relationship that attends to cultural diversity in a manner consistent with his or her preference. Thomas contends that the possible resulting consequence is that neither party experiences cultural identity as a factor that inhibits the development of the relationship and its ability to provide psychosocial support. Noncomplementary relationships can become only sponsor-protégé relationships, Thomas argues, in part because the party for whom the enacted strategy is not preferred will consider cultural identity to be an obstacle to developing a close personal bond. Thomas's study is perhaps the most sophisticated treatment of mentoring relationships as they relate to cultural consciousness and career outcomes of mentors and protégés.

African American Perspectives on Cultural Identity and Strategy

Thomas (1993) pointed out that the distinction in cultural perspectives between African Americans who preferred denial and suppression and those who preferred direct engagement were evident along three dimensions: (1) their views and rationale regarding how culture influences the relationship, (2) the degree of cultural awareness expressed, and (3) the extent to which they explicitly attempted to integrate their cultural differences and professional identities (p. 178) (see also Appendix A).

Denial and Suppression Preference. Thomas' analysis of African American racial perspectives revealed several commonalities among six of the protégés in denial and suppression mentor-protégé relationships and two of the protégés in denial and suppression sponsor-protégé relationships. These eight protégés described cultural diversity as having little impact on their cross-cultural relationship. Their reasoning, according to Thomas, often turned on the fact that they noticed no negative effect of culture discrimination and believed their mentors or sponsors were not prejudiced. These protégés also maintained that while in the relationship they did not find the absence of open discussion about cultural diversity to be a deficit.

Also, Thomas found that these protégés frequently described the mentor relationship as occurring at a time when they felt uncomfortable about their Blackness and naïve about cultural relations and politics in organizations. As one protégé told the researcher during an interview, "I also tended to deny the importance of [cultural heritage] back then" (p. 179). Thomas inferred the protégé's response to mean that by suppressing his own comfort and feelings the protégé would make Whites feel comfortable.

Throughout Thomas's (1993) discussion, none of the protégés had strong African American networks for professional support during the time of the mentor relationship and none made extra effort to develop support networks. This finding suggests little proactive effort to integrate cultural and professional identity and to identify African American role models and support networks (Dickens & Dickens, 1991). These African American protégés had a tendency to assimilate and "reject or repress the norms, values, and practices of the socioculture from which they have come" (Cox, 1993, p. 166). Also, the ability to leave cultural identity out of a cross-cultural relationship could have been experienced as validating the culture-neutral stance that some minority protégés took (Thomas, 1993). The preferred strategy of assimilation at the individual level (conscious or unconscious) was to refute one's own sociocultural norms, values, and practices.

Direct Engagement Preference. Thomas's (1993) analysis of the eight African American protégés involved in direct-engagement relationships and six engaged in denial and suppression sponsor-protégé relationships reveals an image of responses that suggest direct engagement was their preferred way of attending to culture-related aspects of their relationships. The direct engagement strategies among these protégés were also consistent with their general impression in which they thought about the relationship between their own professional and cultural identities. When the direct-engagement African American protégés were paired in denial and suppression relationships, the respondents reported that they felt an inability to engage in discussion of cultural diversity openly, and that such discussions acted as a hindrance to the mentor relationship. The following quotation is from an interview Thomas had with a direct-

engagement African American protégé paired with a denial-and-suppression mentor. The protégé describes the limitations of not openly discussing cultural identity:

The fact that we never really talked about [cultural differences] meant we could only get so close. It's not about racism or prejudice. It's about really knowing each other. (p. 180)

In contrast to the naiveté and culture-neutral perspectives of denial-and-suppression, direct-engagement African American protégés in direct-engagement relationships both acknowledged their cultural-identity consciousness and experienced cultural diversity as a positive aspect of their mentor relationships. Thomas states,

Direct-engagement African Americans viewed their [cultural] identity as an important aspect of who they are as people and as professionals. They described how they took account of [culture] in various kinds of work-related decisions and the relationships and alliances they formed. (p. 181)

From an interview, Thomas offers a revealing comment from an African American protégé that illustrates his point:

What changed is that I learned to position myself and think in terms of alliances. I used to be much more of a loner and I didn't want to be a team player. I think we—Black males—have a hard time learning the corporate game. Sometimes you have to be in alliances with people who you'll never be close to or open with. (p. 181)

According to Thomas (1993), the cultural perspective of this group of African Americans is congruent with the pluralist paradigm of cross-cultural relations. Rather than either neutralizing or suppressing their cultural identity, direct-engagement African American protégés acknowledge it, embrace it, and openly engage cultural identity as a potentially positive aspect of cross-cultural relationships.

Direct-engagement African Americans' attitudes and behaviors are also consistent with Dickens & Dickens' (1991) planned growth/internalization stage of African American career development. In this phase, people give attention to constructive integration of their cultural and professional identities and endeavor to reduce bicultural

tension by building multicultural support networks and alliances. They work to enhance cultural relations in their organizational settings (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999), focusing on developing managerial confidence, technical competence, and a particular robust foundation for organizational credibility.

White Cultural Perspectives and Strategy Preferences

Denial and Suppression Preference. According to Thomas (1993), the distinction in cultural perspectives between Whites who preferred denial and suppression and those who preferred direct engagement was evident along three dimensions: (1) their views and rationale regarding how cultural differences influenced the relationship, (2) the degree of cultural awareness expressed, and (3) the extent to which they explicitly attempted to integrate their cultural and professional identities (p. 178).

Thomas (1993) maintains that Whites engaged in denial-and-suppression relationships were inclined to view cultural diversity as unimportant to the functioning of the relationship. They often alleged not to see cultural differences. The following quotation illustrates the extent to which one White sponsor devalued the salience of cultural difference. When asked if he thought cultural differences had influenced the relationship, according to Thomas (1993) the sponsor responded:

I have thought about it in terms of the fact that he is West Indian, that he has more of an English presentation than say someone for the South, with the speech that is typical [of Blacks]. I wonder if this is a counter-bias [bias in the protégés favor].... I never really thought of Michael as anything other than a man doing a job. (p. 181)

Thomas states, “the informant’s words suggest that he has taken the protégé’s ‘English’ accent as a positive attribute that separates him from more ‘typical’ African Americans who speak with Southern (American) accents. That this White informant

entertains his assessment as a positive bias suggests a valuation of Michael's Eurocentric quality that elevates him. The informant's final statement is also significant; for instance the informant suggests he never saw his protégé as 'anything other than a man'" (p. 181). Given the question asked by the researcher, Thomas contends, it seems the informant is implying that to view the protégé as an African American man would somehow "diminish his stature as a man" (p. 181).

Direct-engagement preference. Whites who preferred direct-engagement and were involved in direct-engagement relationships exhibited awareness about both their own cultural identity and cultural diversity as a dynamic in the organization. They tended to view cultural difference as enhancing the relationship and, when asked about the influence of cultural difference, recalled complications and benefits created by the cross-cultural characteristics of the relationship. When acting as mentors, they thought it important to take the initiative in raising cultural differences as a topic of discussion. The direct-engagement preference perspective for Whites is congruent with the pluralist paradigm of cultural relations.

Thomas's (1990) empirical research offers some support for the position that mentoring is affected by cultural identities. In his study of developmental relationships among two hundred Black and White managers, he hypothesized that cultural identity affects mentoring relationships in several ways: (1) Blacks have more developmental relationships outside of the organization. (2) Blacks have more relationships with persons other than immediate supervisors. (3) Blacks utilize mentoring relationships at later career stages. (4) Psychosocial support is higher in same-culture dyads than in mixed-culture dyads. His hypotheses were based on factors such as lower participation of Blacks

in informal networks, an absence of Blacks at higher levels, and greater closeness and intensity of relationships when both parties shared the same cultural identity group.

In a related study, Nkomo and Cox (1991) studied levels of mentoring assistance reported by 729 Black and White MBAs, including more than 100 from each of four-culture/gender groups in their sample. These researchers found that Blacks reported significantly less mentoring assistance than Whites. There were no significant gender differences.

This finding takes on particular importance when one considers the role of culture in supervisor-employee dyads. Murray's (1982) research on African American managers revealed that Black managers who had White mentors early in their careers were more dissatisfied with their career advancement than were those with African American mentors. Likewise in studying developmental relationships, Thomas (1990) found that same-culture relationships led to significantly higher perceptions of psychological support than did cross-culture relationships. Looking at workplaces broadly (i.e., not in terms of dyads), Tsui and her colleagues (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992) determined that Whites who were members of culturally heterogeneous work groups reported less satisfaction and organizational commitment than did their counterparts in culturally homogenous units. With regard to same-culture vs. cross-culture superior-subordinate dyads, Tsui and O'Reilly (1989) established that White subordinates with African American supervisors experienced more role conflict and ambiguity (both negative correlates of job satisfaction) than did White employees in same-culture dyads. These early job satisfaction studies are indicative of the complexities of cross-cultural mentoring relationships.

Historical Overview of Mentoring

The following historical overview of mentoring emphasizes the prevalence of mentoring within the U.S. workplace. “Given that scholarship reflects as well as shapes our times, ... the 1970s was a decade when studies of healthy adult development gained special prominence” (Crosby, 2001, p. 5). Over the next several years there appeared a number of articles enthusiastically endorsing the concept of mentoring, and offering advice for program implementation (Cook, 1977; Kanter, 1977; Davis & Garrison, 1979; Roche, 1979; Shapiro, Haseltine, & Rowe, 1978). Theoretical segments ranged from casual pieces informing readers of the advantages of having a mentor or being a mentor (Bensahel, 1977; Collins & Scott, 1978; Edson, 1980; George, 1981; Halatin, 1981; Johnson, 1980) to exhaustive analyses of mentoring and its relationship to career development. The research literature produced during the latter part of the 1970s and the early 1980s was biased in favor of the phenomenon of mentoring (Merriam, 1983).

Empirical studies of mentoring during the 1970s, extending to the latter part of the 1980s in business, sought to determine the extent of the phenomenon, the importance of it in terms of career development, and whether the phenomenon was related to the sex of the employee. In this view, the manner in which mentoring was defined became the determining factor for the extent of mentoring found.

Much of the enthusiasm about mentoring was traced to a study reported in a 1979 issue of *Harvard Business Review* (Roche, 1979). In this survey research study, nearly 4,000 executives listed in the “Who’s News” column of the *Wall Street Journal* were surveyed about their mentoring relationships. “Mentor” was defined by the question “At any stage of your career, have you had a relationship with a person who took a personal

interest in your career and who guided or sponsored you?” Of the 1,250 executives (less than 1% women) who responded to the survey, two-thirds reported having had such a relationship and one-third had two or more. What caused most of the excitement were Roche’s additional findings that those who had mentors (1) earned more money at an earlier age, (2) were better educated, (3) were more likely to follow a “career plan,” (4) sponsored more protégés, and (5) reported being happier with their careers and derived greater pleasure from their work. Roche found that long-term friendships had developed between mentor and protégé, and that four out of 10 friendships had lasted 10 years or more.

Prior to Kram’s (1988) seminal book *Mentoring at Work*, the author discovered a number of research studies on relationships between junior and senior managers that identified a range of mentoring functions or mentoring roles (Levinson et al., 1978; Schein, 1978; Davis & Garrison, 1979; Phillips, 1982; Missirian, 1982; Clawson, 1979; Kram, 1980) that enhanced development in unique ways. Findings suggested that “some functions in these studies were observed more frequently than others, and a given developmental relationship may provide few or many of the possible mentoring functions” (p. 22). Prior to Kram (1985), the uncritical support of mentoring failed to address the glaring absence of theory building; even definitions of “mentoring” were not consistent from author to author. Empirical research was infrequent and often simplistic in research design and statistical analysis (Merriam, 1983).

With the publication of Kram’s work about mentoring phases and their functions in workplace developmental relationships (Clawson & Kram, 1984; Kram, 1983; Kram & Isbella, 1985), mentoring research gained greater coherence. Briefly, these phases were

derived from Kram's interviews with 18 pairs of managers who were involved in hierarchical developmental relationships that provided a range of mentoring functions. Accordingly, Kram explains, these phases include *initiation* when the relationship is started, *cultivation* when the range of functions provided expands to a maximum, a *separation* when the nature of the relationship is altered by structural changes in the organizational context and/or by psychological changes within one or both individuals, and *redefinition* when the relationship either evolves into a completely new form or ends entirely (p. 48). *Mentoring at Work* (Kram, 1985) further enhanced the consistency of definitions, adding theoretical rigor and scientific sophistication to the field, for which some scholars in education, business, sociology, and developmental psychology had called (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Merriam, 1983).

Kram researched 18 pairs of junior protégés and senior mentors (all managers in a mid-size utility company). In addition, she conducted a qualitative inquiry of peer co-workers. She began to legitimate the entire field of mentoring research. *Mentoring at Work* (Kram, 1985) became and remains a classic publication in the area of career mentoring developmental relationships (Crosby, 2001).

Kram's work made a contribution to the literature by consolidating various propositions, theories and empirical research, and especially by systematizing concepts. Defining a developmental relationship as one that "contributes to individual growth and career advancement" (Kram, 1985, p. 4), Kram initially distinguishes between the classic mentor relationship and "other less involving, exclusive, and intricate forms like the sponsor relationship" and peer support relationships (Kram, 1985, p. 4). Kram then draws on the work of Phillips-Jones (1982) and presents two basic types of mentoring functions.

The first type, career functions, involves sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments. In contrast to career functions, the second type of function called a psychosocial function includes, according to Kram, role-modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship. Whereas “career functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance advancement in an organization,” according to Kram (1985, p. 24), “psychosocial functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance an individual’s sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role” (p. 32).

With the publication of *Mentoring at Work*, contemporary scholarship on developmental relations began. A decade or so following the publication of *Mentoring at Work*, there was an increase in the number of junior women seeking career advancement and entering cross-gender developmental relationships. The 1990’s research on mentoring focused on gender as a relevant variable in career relationships. Of those cross-gender studies, Ragins’ (1989, 1995, 1997) research merits especially close reading for her innovative conceptualization and scholarly methodological thoroughness applied to gender issues. Ragins framed gender issues within a context of power and diversity, implying that ethnic, racial, and cultural differences may operate in mentoring with power differences similar to gender. The assumption that all mentoring relationships could be adequately explained by research with White middle class male subjects was no longer tenable. Organizational diversity research was initiated by the next wave of studies in work behaviour.

Diversity Defined

There are numerous ways in which diversity has been defined. Narrow definitions tend to reflect Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) law, and define diversity in terms of cultural heritage, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, religion, and disability (Wheeler, 1994). Broad definitions may include sexual orientation, values, personality characteristics, education, language, physical appearance, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs, and background characteristics such as geographic location, tenure with the organization, and economic status (Carr, 1993; Caudron, 1992; Thomas, 1992; Triandis, 1994). Hayes (1996), for instance, defines diversity as “All the ways in which we differ” (p. 105). He adds that the diversity concept is not limited to what people traditionally think of it as: cultural heritage, gender, and disabilities (American Society for Training and Development, 1996).

Morrison (1992) categorized diversity in terms of levels: (1) diversity as racial/ethnic/sexual balance, (2) diversity as understanding other cultures, (3) diversity as culturally divergent values, and (4) diversity as broadly inclusive (cultural, subcultural, and individual). Griggs (1995) classified diversity into primary and secondary dimensions. Primary dimensions of diversity are those human differences that are inborn and/or that exert an important impact on our early socialization and have an ongoing impact on our lives. The six primary dimensions include (1) age, (2) ethnicity, (3) gender, (4) physical abilities/qualities, (5) cultural heritage, and (6) sexual orientation. Griggs also concluded that human beings could not change these primary dimensions. They shape our basic self-image and have great influence on how we view the world. The secondary dimensions of diversity are those that can be changed and include, but are not

limited to, educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experience.

Tomervik (1995), based on her review of the diversity literature, identified the following four basic themes related to the definition of diversity: (1) the diversity concept includes a broad range of differences in the workforce, including age, disability, education levels, ethnicity, family structure, function, geographic location, race/culture, religion, sexual orientation, style, and values; definitions are extremely broad and all-inclusive; (2) the meaningful aspects of diversity are how it affects the individual and the organization; (3) the broadened definition requires a culture change within organizations such as in management styles, human resource systems, philosophies, and approaches; and (4) there is an emphasis on communicating a concept of diversity as more than race/culture, gender, affirmative action, and EEO (p. 11-13). There is no definitive definition that fully describes the broad range of differences diversity includes, the evolutionary nature of the process it represents, and the far-reaching impact that it has on individuals and corporations (Tomervik, 1995).

Herr and Cramer (1996) suggest that current career theories have only addressed work behavior of limited segments of the workforce, primarily those who enjoy the privilege of anticipating and planning for promotion and advancement, whose job can be part of a career. The essential point is for many persons who have a job but, because of limited opportunity, structural oppression, and other forms of discrimination, not a sense of career, career theories tend to be largely silent or possibly irrelevant.

Thus, in Herr and Cramer's (1996) view, "current career theories tend to focus on attitudes, skills, and characteristics that are defined and favored by the middle class (e.g.,

interdependence, decisiveness, future planning) but that ignore the work experiences of persons in the lower socioeconomic strata or persons whose cultures reinforce different types of indicators of career maturity” (p. 702).

According to Thomas and Gabarro (1999), by the late 1970s corporations and PWIs “began to move beyond the simple focus on numbers to develop more distinct approaches to advancing diversity. Promoters of these efforts began to find ways to implement their vision of equal opportunity and racial diversity, all within their organization’s essential operating principles and values” (p. 154).

The Changing Society and the Workforce

Most U.S. companies and institutions were originally patterned by the values and experiences of Western European White men. These individuals were the ones who established American organizational cultures (Cox, 1993). Thus, White males built cultures that mirrored their values and experiences and that supported their goals and priorities. During this early era, most women did not work outside of the home and minority roles were very limited in the workplace. Although diversity did exist, individuals who were different were expected to assimilate into the existing White male culture (Dickens & Dickson, 1992; Jamieson & O’Mara, 1991; Loden & Rosener, 1991; Thomas, 1990). Those individuals who were different from White males now constitute the great majority of society (African Americans, women, persons with disabilities, and ethnic groups) and the American workforce; yet, they continue to represent the margins rather than the cultural norm in many organizations. This has resulted in limited career opportunities and low expectations for most diverse populations (Dunnette & Motowidlo, 1982; Loden & Rosener, 1991).

In the near future, the labor market will become more and more a seller's market. The shrinking of the workplace and the shortage of appropriate skilled labor will force employers to compete to attract, retain, and effectively manage all available employees (Johnson-Bailey, & Cervero, 2004; Thomas, 2001; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). Many organizations are changing their cultures and beginning to apply more emphasis to valuing and managing diversity mainly because they have greater understanding of the significant role that diversity will play in their future competitive and organizational success (Johnson-Bailey, & Cervero, 2002).

Others also agree that modern society is undergoing a historic transition from a predominately White society rooted in Western culture to a global society composed of diverse cultural and ethnic minorities (Thomas, 2001). As the U.S. economic conditions improve, the demands for workers increase and employers must turn increasingly to young people or suffer from serious labor shortages.

Racial and linguistic biases continue to stifle employment opportunities for young minority youth. Schools have not fully developed, nor have workplaces fully utilized the talents of minority youth (Crutcher, 2006). Minority youth have a greater probability of being poor, living in poverty, or otherwise being disadvantaged. An increasing number of young people are diverging from the White middle-class pattern. Educational institutions and workplaces must adapt to changes in the youth population. Educational and workplace training that are typically effective with advantaged youth will not necessarily enable disadvantaged youth to reach their full potential (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004). As a result, the organizational culture will have to shift to embrace these differences if minority employees are to be most successful.

Organizational Culture

In this section we will consider how the culture of organizations and the processes of member socialization and acculturation combine to explain certain effects and implications of cultural diversity in cross-cultural developmental relationships and work groups. First, organizational culture will be explained. Next, we will consider how these three factors interact with organizational culture to severely impact a minority protégé's behavior and, possibly even, career mentoring function outcomes.

According to Thomas (1999), an organization's culture plays a major role in creating conditions and opportunities for protégés engaged in cross-cultural relationships to develop, become mobile, and advance their careers in the organization (p. 151). The concept of *culture* is defined, according to Cox (1993), as "the system of values, beliefs, shared meanings, norms, and traditions that distinguish one group of people from another. A group's culture is manifested in what members of that group think, believe, understand, and do" (p. 161). In line with this definition, the term *organizational culture* is defined as the "underlying values, beliefs and principles that serve as the foundation for the organization's management system, as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those principles" (Denison, 1990, p. 2).

Organizational culture refers to a pattern of shared basic assumptions about the environment, human nature, social relationships, and reality that employees have learned as they addressed and resolved problems of external adaptation and internal integration (Schein, 1984). Assumptions are abstract and hard for organizational members to identify since they are taken for granted and out of consciousness. Nevertheless, these assumptions are passed on to new employees as the correct method of dealing with

problems and ensuring success. Shared and enduring assumptions reduce ambiguity, encourage desired behavior, and promote a common understanding and response to environmental challenges and opportunities (Schein, 1996). Further, organizational culture helps explain why organizations differ and how organizations and their employees interact.

According to Cox (1993), organizational cultures are part of a network of embedded cultures that include macroculture and microcultures in terms of majority and minority groups. Cox further explains, “On one level of analysis, we can think of organizational culture as a macroculture within which identity group culture exist. On another level, we can think of organizational culture as a microculture within a larger societal culture” (p. 162). For example, the Harley Davidson Motorcycle Company represents a culture that is also notably American, whereas the organizational cultures as Isuzu and Mitsubishi are heavily influenced by Japanese culture. The point to be made is that “organizational cultures are embedded in larger national cultures and are also influenced by the regional, social class, race, and gender cultures of their members” (p. 162). Just as societal socialization is important for human social development, successful organizational socialization begins taking shape long before minority group members enter a corporation or PWI. Equally important is the nature of the organizational socialization process and the minority member’s early professional career experiences that is the foundation on which one’s career is built.

Organizational Socialization

Perhaps the most efficient method for an individual to successfully navigate and effectively learn his or her professional role, enhance his or her socializing skills, and

learn the organizational terrain, identify with company goals, and gain access to social networks in a corporation is through the help of a mentor. Cox (1993) views the organizational socialization process as a means of conveying the organization's goals, norms, and preferred ways of doing things to members. In this view, however, through the socialization process, members come to understand the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and the social knowledge essential for assuming a specific organizational role and for participating as an accepted member (Louis, 1980; Van Mannen & Schein, 1979; Thomas, 2001).

Gaining and integrating knowledge relating to the dynamics of the organization's roles and educational credentials empowers the newcomer entrants. By facilitating their development as functioning, integrated group members, the newcomer enhances the knowledge and skills required by their new work environment. The process of integrating educational credentials and career preparation with organizational dynamics is known as organizational socialization (Feldman, 1981).

Feldman's framework suggests there are three relatively distinct aspects of organizational socialization: (1) anticipatory socialization, which relates to learning and experiences that occur before entry to the job; (2) accommodation, which is the process of getting to know the organization and becoming a participating member in it; and (3) role management, which is the mediation of conflict between the demands of the work group, the larger organization, and factors outside the organization such as community, family, and friends.

Cox (1993) contends that in discussions of diversity, the often-overlooked third stage is particularly critical. In this view, Jablin (1987) argues that it is during the third

stage when the newcomer “acquires organizationally appropriate attitudes and behaviors, resolves intra- and inter-organizational conflicts and begins efforts to individualize his or her organizational role” (p. 694). Cox extends this conception and contends, “It is in this third stage of ongoing small-scale socialization that the intimate knowledge—the unspoken, unwritten, and sometimes most critical information—about getting along in an organization is transmitted. These unspoken rules and norms may be more difficult for culturally different members to learn, especially when these members are not part of the informal social networks of their organization” (p. 165).

Two main viewpoints have been offered to explain the difficulties Blacks apparently encounter in socializing and integrating into corporate cultures. One of these views pertains to the stereotypical beliefs that many Blacks claim Whites have about them. Fernandez (1987) contends that many Blacks feel that some Whites perceive Blacks as poor performers, unqualified, lazy, and disloyal. According to Fernandez (1987), this perception leads Blacks to experience difficulties in being accepted by White employees as part of the team and thus part of the corporate culture.

The second viewpoint pertaining to the inability of Blacks to “fit in” corporate culture has more to do with lifestyles and cultural differences (DiTomaso et al., 1988). After studying the upward mobility of minority managers, Ford (1988) suggests that Blacks experience difficulty in “fitting” into a corporate setting because they lack an understanding of corporate culture, politics, and social surroundings. He argues that Blacks lack this cultural instinct and understanding because they come from different social backgrounds, and they lack the information about corporate culture and politics

that their White peers may have received from family and friends (Ford, 1988; DiTomaso et al., 1988).

As a result of being unable to effectively socialize in predominately White corporations, Pierre (1998) contends many Blacks argue that they find themselves outside of the main functions of corporations or as members of social margins existing on the periphery. In their 1983 study, Buono and Kamm described social margins as areas in which individuals experience uncertainty and are refused full participation in the dominant group's culture or institution.

According to Pierre (1998), because some Blacks feel isolated and unable to effectively integrate into or socialize within their company's corporate culture, and because of the importance placed on the corporate socialization process and access to social networks, it is necessary to consider this process as a factor that can influence the upward mobility of pre-entry-level Blacks in the corporate arena.

Diversity and Access to Social Networks

Some researchers argue that it is generally accepted within organizational settings that networks are critical to the career advancement of employees (DiTomaso, Thompson, & Blake 1988). Other researchers are discovering that Blacks find themselves excluded from these networks (Fernandez & Barr, 1993; Baker, 1995; Barkey, 1996). The development of effective social networks for Blacks in the workplace is conceived, in part, as an important element of the socialization process and career advancement, not just as an isolated event. As such, it is seen as a stream of assignments, career development and guidance learning that are acquired concurrently with occupation-specific tasks and learning throughout the employee's work experience, not just when the

new employee is about to enter the organization or recently promoted to a new position.

The importance of this issue argues for an examination of the role of networks in the organizational arena. Work (1984) states:

Membership in networks determines the distribution of quality assignments, the organizational perception of employees, and, ultimately, career advancement and upward mobility. Moreover, networks translate corporate needs into information and career actions for their members and, further, communicate employee performance appraisals in ways that determine membership. (p. 96)

In his 1982 book *Megatrends*, Naisbitt explains that society has evolved into an “information society,” and he argues that networks exist to “foster self-help, to exchange information, to change society, to improve productivity and work life, and to share resources” (p. 193). The research of Work (1984) also indicates that networks operating within most corporations are both formal and informal in nature. The formal networks are developed and governed by corporate regulations. These networks communicate pertinent corporate information such as:

...organization’s broad plans and objectives, its policies and practices, specific kinds of workforce data, personnel vacancies, financial results, the competitive picture, relevant notices and directives, and planned training sessions. (Work, 1984, p. 85)

In contrast to accessing and maintaining formal networks, which are important for moving up the corporate ladder, informal networks appear to play an even more critical role in one’s success in the organizational terrain (Lee, 1980; U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Informal networks allow individuals to go outside of defined formal relationships or skip tiers of the corporate hierarchy in order to participate in the communication of pertinent information (Irons & Moore, 1985). Further, for example, if an employee is asked to produce a requisition inventory report and resolves that critical information is needed to accomplish this assignment, the employee can utilize the formal

networks and formal communication process of the corporate chain of command system to obtain the information he or she needs. However, the employee can accelerate the investigation for information and thus the advancement of the report by his or her right of entry to informal relationships, thereby avoiding the often lengthy and tedious formal communication processes.

One of the ways of facilitating the career advancement among employees is to systematically involve the use of social networks. Networking systems allow individuals to interact one-on-one in peer relationships, thereby improving the efficiency of transmitting or receiving information. According to Pierre (1998), information provided by these networks may be more difficult and time consuming to obtain outside of the network system; therefore, they are a vital component of an organizational culture (p. 47). Thus, when individual employees are excluded from these systems their upward mobility is inhibited and causes invisible barriers for qualified, interested employees (Wernick, 1994).

Many minority workers argue that one of the major reasons for their lack of upward mobility is their exclusion from the social and political networks within organizations that can provide them with resources and information vital to accomplishing their jobs (DiTomaso et al., 1988). For example, in a 1988 study, Davis indicated that of the 108 Black MBAs surveyed, 102 indicated or alluded to exclusion from a company's informal networking structure as the greatest problem faced by Black managers. Jeffries and Schaffer (1996) contend:

...a legacy of systematic exclusion, discrimination, and residential isolation has severely limited Black Americans' access to the information networks—the social capital—that are so crucial to labor market success. (p. 65)

This lack of access to a company's internal networking system deprives many qualified Blacks of valuable information that can lead to an increase in their performance, productivity, and ultimately their upward mobility. In any organizational setting, the barriers to an individual's involvement in networks occur, in part, because networks are based upon communication between people. Cox (1993) explains that the concept of "cultural fit" or the degree of alignment between two or more cultural configurations is applicable to cross-cultural mentoring organizations. However, Pierre (1998) has summarized studies suggesting within the minority population, "the inability of many Blacks to penetrate and successfully access White [mentors] is considered a factor with the potential to influence the mobility of Blacks in the corporate arena" (p. 48).

Diversity and Access to Mentors

As indicated earlier in this study, one of the powerful ways for an individual to successfully navigate and effectively learn his or her professional role, enhance his or her socializing skills, learn the organizational terrain, identify with company goals, and gain access to social networks in a corporation is through the help of a mentor. Thomas and Gabarro (1999) contend that having a mentor or sponsor relationship with a broader range of people, especially in the early career, is key to protégés' career advancement.

Mentors are a vital resource within the structure of corporate culture (Pierre, 1998). A strong mentoring relationship can provide personalized instruction for the protégé, as he or she learns the demands of the job and how to function within the organization's culture (Kram, 1985; Bell, 1996; Thomas, 1990; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). Thus, mentoring, whether it is formal or informal, is a powerful intervention socialization technique that helps develop under-used talent, and increase productivity of

employees (Chao, 1988; Shea, 1994; Chao et al. 1994; Butler, 1995). Any individual, regardless of culture or position within the organizational hierarchy, benefits from the tutelage and guidance of a mentor who is experienced and has a high level of concern for the protégé's personal development and professional career growth (Pierre, 1998).

A study by Thomas (2001) shows that the overwhelming majority of corporate executives believed that mentoring helped to advance their careers. Shea (1994) and Bell (1996) reinforce these findings and contend that employees reap benefits from being mentored. Benefits included improved personal productivity, better decision-making and problem solving skills, and enhanced job performance.

Crutcher (2006) found that programs early in one's career that identify qualified individuals and include them in developmental mentoring relationships serve as a means to provide experiences that enhance the credentials and promotability of the participants.

This study cites two cases where mentoring programs were in effect:

One company encouraged individual managers to prepare, guide, and groom their successor. Such a process requirement allowed for the manager to provide developmental opportunities to the individual recipient. In another company, mentoring took place in the form of upper level managers choosing individuals from a list of those identified as fast track, high potential workers to "sponsor." When an inquiry was made into what sponsoring denoted, the response was to "make it happen" for the high potential employee. (p. 21-22)

These approaches are some of the means by which corporations identify qualified, early-career high-potential employee protégés and groom them for leadership positions (U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Thomas & Gabarro (1999) reveal that early relationships provide the job assistance needed to perform effectively in the short term, along with support to move up the career ladder. In addition, these relationships provide minority protégés with enduring feedback about personal and social choices and very important potential career decisions.

Further, in a six-year longitudinal study conducted by Thomas and Gabarro (1999), the researchers found that White mentors of minority protégés contribute four critical kinds of support during the early years. First, these mentors opened the door to challenging assignments and expanded responsibilities that allowed these protégés to grow professionally. Second, placing their protégés in high-trust positions, these mentors sent a message to the rest of the organization that they were considered high performers and important to the success of the operation, thereby helping develop or reinforce these protégés' self-confidence and credibility with others in the organization.

For example, one protégé, in particular, was greatly aided by his mentor. This particular African American protégé had been working in a territory that encompassed only the African American and Latino parts of New York City, which was not considered a prime business account territory, until the White mentor gave the protégé the chance to sell in the central business district. In the study, the mentor pointed out that his minority protégé's stellar performance in that high-visibility territory started his "rise to stardom."

On the other hand, any apparent failure on the part of the minority protégé may have damaged his career prospects and reflected poorly on his White mentor. During the final interview phase of the study the researchers explained that the White mentor felt comfortable giving his minority protégé the assignment not only because he saw that his protégé has the skills of a great sales representative but also because he and his protégé could talk with each other openly and honestly. The mentor noted later during the latter part of the interview session that other White mentors might not have felt so comfortable:

Mentor: "I could talk to him in a way that others would not have done, even about race. They (other White mentors) were worried about being perceived as racist. Some probably still called him a Negro." (p. 111)

Third, these mentors provided career advice and counsel that, in many cases, proved critical in keeping the individual on a track that might eventually lead to a more responsible position or to the next level of positional advancement. For example, the White mentor counseled his minority protégé to pass up several jobs that were offered to him after he completed his MBA, believing them to be dead-end situations that would take his protégé out of the real action. According to Thomas and Gabarro (1999), such insights are critical for these novice managers, many of whom were initially naïve about factors that would tend to produce opportunities for advancement.

Finally, this study found that these early-career mentors often became powerful sponsors later in the minority protégé's careers, recruiting them again and again to new positions. In their first three years at the firm, each protégé developed a mentor with whom they worked later, either directly or indirectly, on at least three different occasions before reaching the executive training program level.

Thus, to be an effective mentor one has to be knowledgeable of corporate dynamics, must have power within the corporation, and should be acutely aware of what is needed to achieve higher-level positions within the corporation (Bell, 1996). In grooming leadership, those at the top of the pyramid look for replacements they can trust, who know the business, have contributed to bottom line profits, are visible and credible, are accessible to upper management and executives, demonstrate organizational savvy, and have varied experiences in the core areas of the business (Wernick, 1994).

The mentor's experience and understanding of the corporate structure and functioning assist the protégé in understanding the informal political processes of the corporation and many of its subjective standards (Nixon, 1983; Kram, 1985; Carnevale

& Stone, 1994; South, 1994, Baker, 1995; U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; U.S. Department of Labor, 1997; Ragins, 1997; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, Thomas, 2001). Researchers contend that when influential members of an organization seek employees to sponsor, mentor, or promote, they are more inclined to select employees who are:

...like themselves in general appearance (e.g., dress, manner, speech) and who, in addition, have demonstrated specific ability to conform to hierarchic expectations... and to maintain the interest of the group. (Caplow, 1954, p. 72)

Research has revealed that attaining a mentor within the corporate structure is essentially very important, but particularly complicated for Blacks and other minorities (Campbell, 1982; Davis & Watson, 1982; Dickens & Dickens, 1991; Graves, 1982; Ford, 1988; Fernandez, 1993; Shea, 1994; Baker, 1995; Butler, 1995; Ragins, 1997; Thomas, 1989,1990; Thomas & Gabarro, 1999). A 1988 survey of minority workers pointed out that a large percentage of respondents indicated that it was much harder for minorities to find mentors than it was for Whites (Fernandez, 1988). In this same study the researcher surveyed more than 200 of America's elite corporations and found that the majority of the corporate respondents assumed that one of the main inhibitors to the success of minorities is their formal or informal access to mentors.

Of course, mentoring is not necessary for all individuals, however, according to Herr and Cramer (1996), it is certainly a help "whether mentoring is formal, organizational-sponsored, an organization-encouraged activity or the more prevalent informal activity, having a powerful mentor greatly facilitates upward mobility" (p. 509). Chao, Walz, and Gardner (1992) examined the effects of both formal and informal types of mentoring, and composed of no mentoring in terms of organizational socialization, job satisfaction, and salary. Informally mentored workers were found to be slightly more

advantaged in terms of these outcome variables, and both formal and informal mentoring relationships were significantly higher in outcomes than non-mentored individuals.

In another earlier study Reich (1985) determined that mentors were perceived as most valuable for offering concrete help: early career transfer to more challenging jobs, opening up new positions, assignment to special projects, and providing autonomy in difficult projects. Less valuable was the function of offering political assistance (for example, pressure applied to key people to obtain promotions, advisement on good positions and company politics). Seventy-two percent of Reich's respondents indicated that mentors contributed substantially to their career development.

In a different study of the perceptions of White corporate captain of industry DiTomaso et al. (1988) found that a great many Black managers felt their mobility was restrained because of their lack of access to mentors. In this survey of White corporate leaders; perceptions of the difficulty Blacks experience in the corporate setting, he found that the difficulty of Blacks in obtaining mentors high on the lists of inhibiting mobility. In an earlier study by Thomas (1986) in cases where Blacks had mentorship relationships, Black protégés were often unable to benefit from the relationship with White male mentors serving in this role. This study, followed by a 1990 study by Thomas suggest, while White mentors were able to help their Black protégés in instrumentally or with the technical aspects of the job, their psychosocial contributions to the relationship lacked understanding and trust between the mentor and the protégé. This prevented White mentors from fully aiding the Black protégés in the socialization process (Thomas, 1986; 1990).

Summary

A review of extant literature on cross-cultural mentoring reveals that scant attention has been paid to cross-cultural mentoring, but that some of what has been said about cross-gender mentoring may also be said for cross-culture. In this chapter several factors have been identified as influencing mobility and career advancement for persons of color. The literature indicates that factors such as stereotyping, coupled with the dimensions of culture, impact the early-entry socialization process of the individual. In addition, such factors as the organizational culture, the lack of access to social networks, and the lack of access to mentors can prevent qualified Blacks, and other minorities from achieving levels of career advancement comparable to those of their White counterparts.

Chapter Three will outline the specific methods, tools and strategies employed for data collection for the present research study. Some of the literature reviewed in Chapters One and Two indicated that early-entry career Blacks experience less-valuable mentoring relationships with their mentors than their White peers. Thomas & Gabarro (1999) contend that having a mentor, or sponsor relationships with a broader range of people, especially in the early career is key to protégés' career advancement. Thus far, it has been established that since cross-cultural mentoring is a likely reality, it is important to understand more about how to achieve success in this relationship.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Purpose

Although the overall aim of this study is to investigate career and psychosocial mentoring functions within formal matched cross-cultural mentoring relationships, the primary purpose of this investigation evolved into an exploration of the mentoring experiences of African American male protégés in a predominately White organization. Although interviews were conducted with mentors as well as protégés, only the protégé interviews are considered in this document because of legal constraints on the mentors concerning questions of the cultural differences between mentor and protégé.

The two types of behaviors or functions provided by the mentor for the benefit of the protégé include: (a) *career development functions* that provide sponsorships, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments that are aimed at helping the protégé advance in the organization, and (b) *psychosocial functions* that provide mutual trust, counseling, acceptance, and personal support to the protégé to enhance his effectiveness, sense of clarity of identity, and credibility in a professional role within and beyond the organization.

Research Questions

This investigation explores the following research questions:

RQ1: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the career function of their mentoring experiences?

RQ2: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the psychosocial functions of their mentoring experiences?

Research Method

Since the primary research purpose of this study is to identify and explore mentoring behaviors that lead to positive protégé career and professional development outcomes, the investigator conducted two (2) in-depth semi-structured interviews with each of five African American male protégés for a total of ten protégé interviews.

In-depth interviewing was a strategic qualitative approach to collecting data from participants concerning their life experiences. The methodology was selected because it is one of the few modes of data collection that best complements the objectives of this study. Essentially, protégés were asked to reflect on the nature, function quality, and outcomes of their relationship with their mentor; therefore, this self-reporting approach was highly suitable. Naturally, it was also useful because of its ability to yield thick descriptive data. As mentioned, it is this investigator's intent to explore, not to predict or ascertain, the causal aspects of the relationship. Therefore, rather than seeking to extrapolate the findings to a larger population as is the case with scope generalizations, the heuristic value of this investigation is to offer a conceptual generalization via in-depth insights regarding the career, psychosocial, and role modeling functions of mentoring relationships.

Critical Dimensions of the Study

Two primary forms of data were collected from protégés for this investigation. The participants' background information is presented in Chapter Four, and cross-cultural mentoring relationship experiences are presented in Chapter Five. At the conclusion of the interview sessions with protégés, the researcher met with the protégés to conduct member checking. Member checking consists of the researcher restating, summarizing, or paraphrasing information received from protégé respondents to ensure that what was heard, audio-recorded, or written down was in fact correct. In addition, member checking was conducted with the protégé's White male mentors to incorporate their feedback. Both forms of member checking added accuracy and richness to this study.

These critical dimensions will facilitate discussions of the functions of the cross-cultural mentoring relationship. Although Black male protégés and White male mentors may not be able to articulate the subconscious dimensions of their relationship, they are likely to recall in relational detail various outcomes of feelings and perceptions of their mentoring relationship. As a result data from this study have yielded results that will contribute to extant research literature. As a result this form of data will yield significant results that will contribute to extant research.

Units of Analysis

In this study the developmental relationships occurring within formal mentoring dyads comprised of White male mentors and Black male protégés were examined. Specifically, the function of these dyads was explored and represents the principle unit of analysis. The researcher uncovered and compared the relational and professional dynamics of formal, matched cross-cultural pairs.

Data Sources or Units of Observation

The semi-structured in-depth interview (Appendix C) was the sole technique utilized to collect data from each respondent in this study. As an exploratory study, the researcher had four basic aims: (1) to collect information needed to build detailed personal histories and background biographies; (2) to explore specific issues that were salient to protégés experiences of their careers (e.g., race, secondary school attendance, exposure to other cultures, and critical cultural incidents); (3) to gain an understanding of the effects of workplace context on protégés careers and development; and (4) to enable the respondents to describe their relationships with their majority culture mentor (career and psychosocial functions in the form of tasks and assignments) from their own personal perspective, and to allow them to “tell their own story” in their own words and in their own way.

The researcher-imposed categories and emergent themes (Table 5.1 and Appendix G) that surfaced from the interviews represent the two research questions. The research questions were designed to elicit information about the participants’ views of their personal background, career and psychosocial functions, and their experiences while involved in this study. The six major themes and (the issues that formed the focus of each theme) identified from the data (Table 5.1 and Appendix G).

Site and Sample Selection

The sample for this study was selected from a pool of 48 African American male students of junior and senior status provided by a Dean in the college of communications of a large northeastern university. Five names were selected utilizing the systematic random-start technique and every seventh name that appeared on the nonalpha listing of

possible participants was chosen to participate in the study. After five individuals were successfully randomly identified, the researcher interviewed them via telephone to discern whether they met six pre-established criteria required for the study. These criteria were: (1) must self-identify as an African American male, (2) must be interested in preparing for a professional career, (3) must be participating in or have recently (within the past 2 years) participated in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship with a White male mentor, (4) must be willing to voluntarily participate in this study, (5) must be willing to participate in two semi-structured interviews, (6) must be willing to be tape recorded during the duration of the interviews, and (7) must be currently enrolled as an upper-level student of the university.

Modes of Data Collection

Consistent with the qualitative research paradigm, this study utilized a semi-structured in-depth interviewing approach. Patton (1990) illustrates three types of in-depth interviews that are distinguished by the extent to which inquiries are resolved preceding the interview. These include the informal conversational interview, the general interview guide format, and the standardized open-ended interview. In this research study, the general interview guide format was used because of concerns to be explored with each participant; however, flexibility was preserved and maintained in the wording and composition of questions to accommodate participant and interview individuality (Patton, 1990).

A semi-structured Protégé and Mentor interview outline guide was used with each participant. The interview guide was used flexibly so that issues and questions could be consistently presented and probed within the context of a logical and comfortable

dialogue. The interview format was “guided” in the sense that some forms of interview questions were prepared beforehand and provided a framework for the interview.

Participants were interviewed twice. Interview sessions lasted approximately 90 minutes to two hours. The first interview included discussion of background and mentor experiences (average of 90 minutes). The second interview included member checking, and typically was of shorter duration (average of 45 minutes). All interviews were conducted at a setting selected and approved by the university hosting the program.

Interviews were audio taped and transcribed verbatim, yielding 225 pages of transcripts. The researcher listened to audiotapes prior to and immediately following each transcription in an effort to assure accuracy. Field notes were written during and immediately following interviews to capture participants’ nonaudible observations as well as the researcher’s impressions and responses to the interview (Patton, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

A copy of the transcript from each interview was mailed to every participant prior to the second interview. Participants were asked to review the transcript in order to ensure accurate representation of the dialogue between the interviewer and participant. All clarifications or changes were noted. Also, participants were asked to provide any additional information that would be helpful to subsequent readers of their respective mentoring stories.

Data Analysis Technique

Following interview transcription, analysis of the interviews and their thematic coding was conducted via the constant comparison technique. This is a robust technique for categorizing units of information. Unitizing involves assigning value to specific

stand-alone ideas. Each idea, or unit, is electronically excised and labeled, a process akin manually cutting out a paragraph and placing it on a note card. Each unit is given a code (i.e., J-adap-01), which using the example would stand for Jessie's first comment about adaptation. Categorizing occurs after all units are assigned. The researcher randomly reads one unit after another and places the independent ideas into collective groups. When the groups are established, a provisional rule can be developed to capture the gist of the collective. From these newly formed groups or categories come themes. Themes are only derived after all of the provisional rules and categories have been clearly defined and distinguished from other rules and categories. For the present study, the units naturally formed around the research questions and the experiences of entering an organization, adjusting to it and establishing relationships. From the 225 transcribed pages, more than 100 units were identified and reduced to two categories with three dominant themes. The six recurring themes (and the issues that formed the focus of each theme) identified from the data are shown in Appendix G, Table 5.1.

To analyze the data, this researcher relied on Lincoln and Guba's (1985) inductive method of qualitative data analysis. They stated, "Inductive analysis . . . begins not with theories or hypotheses but with the data themselves, from which theoretical categories and relational propositions may be arrived at by inductive reasoning processes" (p. 333). Inductive analysis of a data set has two main components: unitizing and categorizing. A researcher unitizes the data by searching for an element (phrase, sentence, paragraph) that is "heuristic" or "aimed at some understanding or some action that the inquirer needs to have or to take" (p. 345). Once data have been unitized, units that relate to the same content are grouped together in "provisional categories" (p. 347). Categorizing is

achieved through the use of the constant comparative method. In other words, units are compared to each other to establish whether they are similar and should be put in the same category, or different and should be put into different categories. When categories contain several units, the researcher attempts to “put into a propositional statement the properties that seem to characterize” (p. 348) the category. Through this process, researchers can establish rules for further inclusion of units into the category. Finally, each category is reviewed for consistency, and categories are compared to make sure each is unique. The goal is to have categories that are “internally as homogeneous as possible and externally as heterogeneous as possible” (p. 349).

After the categories were developed for this research study, they were shared with the research participants for member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The following section presents the categories.

Research Quality

In this qualitative research study, three research quality criteria are considered: credibility, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). As with any research investigation, the quality of research is essential. Qualitative research requires an understanding of meaningful concrete relations implicit in the experience (Moustakas, 1992). Harrison, MacGibbon and Morton (2001) suggest the trustworthiness of research practices is inherent in the politics of what we do at any and every stage of the research process (p. 324), in that the researcher and the researched rely on negotiating complex social situations. Conversely, one of the principal criticisms of qualitative research concerns the extent to which researcher subjectivity and the close involvement of the

researcher with the researched influence the findings of the study (Ambert, Adler, & Detzner, 1995; Maxwell, 1992).

Credibility, the measure or degree of truth-value, is subject-oriented and represents the accuracy of findings (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990). The fundamental issue in establishing credibility is in ensuring that the research adequately represents the multiple realities of the participants and acknowledges the complexity of their lives. In this study, the primary data collection method was in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Two approaches were used to ensure credible data collection and analysis: member checks and investigator triangulation (Patton, 1990; DePoy & Gitlin, 1998).

Member checks are a form of analytic triangulation and are a method whereby the research interviewer checks out information and assumptions with research participants. Member checks occurred twice in this research study. The researcher asked participants to examine field notes and interview transcripts. As Harrison et al. (2001) suggests, “in this way the researcher can give back something to the participants and engage in member checks as a means of ensuring trustworthiness (p. 323). Subsequently, during the second interview the researcher shared his initial impressions of findings, as the process of data analysis developed and got underway.

Investigator triangulation refers to the use of more than one investigator to diminish the chances of probable bias and increase reliability (Patton, 1990). Specifically, an audit trail was utilized in this research study (Krefting, 1991). Auditing in qualitative research is analogous to a fiscal audit. Schwandt (1997, p. 6) states that auditing is “a procedure whereby a third-party examiner systematically reviews the audit trail

maintained by the inquirer.” In the case of qualitative interview research in this study, the audit trail includes recorded materials such as cassette tapes, interview transcripts, interview guides, lists of interviewees, lists of categories and hypotheses the researcher used while analyzing the data, notes about research procedures, notations of specific dates, and so on.

The researcher’s dissertation committee co-chairperson/advisor reviewed interview transcripts intermittently during the data collection and analysis process. Intermittent peer consultations were performed by the co-chairperson/advisor, and were especially crucial during the initial round of in-depth, semi-structured interviews when the interview guide questions were being refined, as well as during verification that the emergent data categories corresponded with research interpretations. This facilitated an audit of the researcher’s interpretations

The intense exploration of subjective and objective knowledge in the context of the interview makes the researcher the instrument through which data are gathered, managed, and interpreted (Patton, 1990), hence “the challenge facing the human science researcher is to describe things in themselves, to permit what is before one to enter consciousness and be understood in its meaning and essences in the light of intuition and self-reflection” (Moustakas, 1992, p. 27). The notion of intuition is particularly critical to this research study, given the importance of conveying and interpreting the meanings of cross-cultural mentoring from the research participants’ perspective.

Dependability in qualitative research is akin to reliability in quantitative research. It refers to the consistency of findings (Guba, 1981). The capability of tracking the thinking of another research study demands a thorough and careful account of the

methods and processes of data gathering, management, analysis and interpretation. While there will likely never be an exact duplication of this study since conditions would be different, with a different sample there should be enough consistency when the same procedures and protocol are employed, using a similar sample, but different research questions.

Confirmability in qualitative research (objectivity) is placed and stands on the interpretation of neutrality. Guba (1981) asserts that neutrality is not as researcher objectivity but as data and interpretation confirmability. This research study employed two strategies to ensure confirmability. First, a reflexive journal account was kept throughout the data collection phase of the research. Second, peer reviews and member checks were conducted as previously described (Krefting, 1991).

In summary, this research study is a qualitative interview study comprised of two semi-structured interviews with each of five participant mentored protégés. The method employed was considered the most efficient way to explore the rich depth of mentor–protégé experiences. The methodology facilitated a comprehensive understanding of protégés' narrative and of mentoring intricacies.

CHAPTER FOUR: BACKGROUND FACTORS OF PROTÉGÉS

In this study, five African American male, undergraduate protégé-participants and four majority culture male supervisor-mentor participants were identified and selected. Three of the protégés had separate mentors and two of them shared a mentor. All five African American males in this study were selected from one predominately White, major research-intensive university located in the northeast region of the United States. Correspondingly, the mentors in this study were all employed members of separate business organizations. Their respective titles and organizations included the following: one mentor was employed as a Senior Facility Manager with an international package-mailing service organization; one mentor was employed as a Company Editor with a student-operated university newspaper organization (mentor of two protégés), one mentor was employed as a Television Producer with a Washington, D.C., television news organization, and one mentor was employed as a certified financial analyst and Team Leader of a large international investment securities firm on Wall Street.

Depending on how the issue is framed, there were many ways by which to interpret the dynamics between protégés. In this study, field notes provided a written account of the things the researcher heard, observed, and experienced in the process of collecting or reflecting on the data. Field notes helped the researcher juxtapose the unspoken context of the interviews to the recorded transcripts, which gives an added dimension to understanding how the protégés experienced their cross-cultural mentoring relationships.

According to Leedy (1997), field notes are the deliberate, controlled efforts of the researcher to extract meaning from observation (p. 103). Field notes include reflections of the researcher's feelings and experiences during interviews (Creswell, 1994, p. 152). This researcher's field notes helped to identify the influence of his biases in the interview process. The next section discusses how self-reflective field notes to provide real, rich, and deep data.

Self-Reflective Notes Change Interpretation

The researcher's initial reflections on the protégés' experiences during the interview process conveyed the prospect of simple, straightforward interpretation. But interpreting another's descriptive lived experiences involves more than words on a transcript. What the study participants' shared verbally about their cross-cultural mentoring experiences and what the researcher interpreted from their behaviors conveyed complex, perplexing problems for data interpretation. The researcher's field notes, including hunches, nonverbal communication, change or emphasis in participant's tone of voice, were essential to the process of data interpretation.

Interpretations, according to Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995), "are grounded in the [interview] setting, but no two persons participate in and experience a setting in exactly the same way" (p. 63). Moreover, during interviews there is always more going on than can be detected in simple dialogue; hence, it was impossible to audio-record nonverbal data (body language, eye movements, sweating palms, etc.). In this study, a complete picture was sought through observation in addition to interviews to obtain descriptions as rich as possible of the protégés' experiences with their mentors.

Protégé Academic Demographics

With respect to the academic profiles of African American male protégés at the time of their interviews, one participant was 22 years of age with the class standing of a senior and majoring in finance with a 3.6 overall cumulative grade point average. Two other participants at the time of the interviews were ages 21 and 22, respectively, both holding the class standing of juniors, and both majoring in business, with overall cumulative grade point averages of 3.1 and 2.97, respectively. A fourth protégé at the time of his interview was 21 years of age with the class standing of a junior, majoring in broadcast journalism with a 3.2 overall cumulative grade point average. The fifth protégé was 22 years old and a junior majoring in journalism with an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.1.

In summary, the participant sample for this research study were five undergraduate African American male protégés ranging in age from 21 to 22 years old. Three students were juniors and two were seniors at a comprehensive northeastern research university. Their major fields of study were finance, broadcast journalism, business, business marketing, and journalism, and their range of overall cumulative grade point average was 2.97 to 3.6.

Background Factors

Our experiences with family, neighborhood, school, and sundry relationships serve as filters through which we interpret our world (Lincoln, 2000). The concerns, behaviors, knowledge, and development of the protégé as well as the mentoring relationship occur within a social context. Growth does not occur in isolation from the social background in which learning is embedded. Within the context of childhood the

character formation of the young adult is established. The new professional needs both an appropriate personal character and the structure of opportunity for skill development in the workplace. The essence of such a view is found in perspectives such as that of Rosen (1996) who observed:

We are born into stories; the stories of our parents, our families, and our culture. These made meanings, which predate us and develop us upon our arrival into the world, can be constraining, even imprisoning, or they can be freeing and liberating. The personal narrative prototype that we develop over time is not constructed in a vacuum but instead incorporates much that is derived from stories and myths we are born into. (p. 23)

In some circumstances, as the narratives of our protégés unfold, it appears that these individuals are living within their parents' stories and simultaneously denying their own story, sense of agency, or volition. However, this is not true. Rather, the perspective of the protégé is sometimes that he is adding his own frame of reference to understanding how his parents construe reality, and how those construct-filters make meaning in his interactions with the world.

Thomas & Gabarro (1999) maintain that clinical and social psychological studies of leadership and managerial development confirm the importance of family history, social background, and education in the lives of executives, although they do not relate their findings to cultural diversity or ethnicity. Parental values and family narratives are the inevitable backdrops for work behavior and organizational socialization.

Parental Values: Family Narrative and Work Ethic

As the reader will see, all five of the protégés in this study had developed an extremely strong work ethic. Each was saturated in the experiences of his parents who worked in oppressive conditions that required persistence and a central commitment that demanded them to work against the odds. The concept of a work ethic is a major force in

American society, and has played a pivotal role in U.S. history, affecting cultural, social, and economic institutions. However, more than any other cultural or ethnic group, African Americans face negative employer perceptions about their qualifications and their work ethic (Thomas, 2001). Wilson's (1996) review of the relatively scant research on culture and poverty challenges in the world of the new urban poor reveals that

the complex interaction between social constraints and cultural attitudes and behavior over time has not only weakened the inner-city Black family structure, it has also reduced the family's effectiveness in socializing children and preparing youngsters for the labor market. (p. 106)

This statement seems sensible; however, it would seem equally sensible that youngsters who grow up in a family with a steady breadwinner and neighborhood in which most of the adults are employed will tend to develop disciplined habits associated with stable or steady employment. Notions of parental influence and cultural environment are certainly important toward that youngster's development of a good work ethic. Moreover, it may be equally true that when that young person enters the labor market, he or she will have a distinct advantage over those youngsters who grow up in households without a steady breadwinner in neighborhoods that are not organized around work.

Concomitant with the sharp rise of solo-parent families, Black children who live in inner-city households are less likely to be socialized in neighborhood environments conducive to accessible employment opportunities and by adults with labor-force attachment that would strengthen a work ethic (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004). This socioeconomic disadvantage impinges on work behavior and adjustment to the culture of workplace organizations.

In an effort to more comprehensively understand our protégés' development and their drive to work hard, the protégés' backgrounds will be explored: their parents, peers,

and school, neighborhood, and other life challenges. As the reader shall see, most of the protégés' parents resided in inner-city neighborhoods and faced with social constraints that severely affected the daily choices they could make. Those parents who managed to remain gainfully employed were mostly in low-wage jobs—and were, in effect, working against all odds. They somehow managed “to work steadily despite the lack of work-support networks (car pools, informal job information networks), and systems (child care and transportation) that most of the employed population in this country rely on” (Wilson, 1996, p. 53).

Accordingly, the interview data reveals that extreme effort and resiliency on the part of the parent(s) to maintain a connection with the formal labor market and to often maintain two and sometimes three jobs, in spite of the odds, defined their work ethic.

Bernie's experience, for example, exemplifies adverse family conditions and work ethic. He is an African American male who grew up in a small town adjacent to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. His mother raised him and for the most part his father was absent. Bernie's recollection of his mother was that she was a wage worker, holding two and sometimes three jobs. His father was a civil engineer, and for the most part, even though he did not live with Bernie's mother, he had a good relationship with Bernie.

Bernie lived in a diverse neighborhood and the high school he attended was a predominately White Catholic school. In addition to the inspiration and drive instilled by his parents, Bernie envisioned them as his role models who taught him lessons about the adult world of work.

A common theme among the overwhelming majority of our African American male protégés in this study, regardless of social background and family circumstances,

was the emphasis their parents placed on their children's' education, achievement, and the importance of hard work. Bernie is a graduating senior in a predominately White, research-one university, majoring in finance and business administration.

Bernie recounts what his parents' sacrifice meant to him:

... for me, my entire motivation was and is this: I've seen my family struggle financially, and my friends' families struggle financially. This is my motivation to study finance as a college major, so that I can help fix that problem. My parents have always encouraged me to be the best in whatever it is that I choose to do. So, I will make certain that this will not happen to me and [that is] the legacy that I am going to build.

The work ethic of Bernie's mother was unrelenting, and, in addition, she served as a strong role model within which he saw parts of his current and idealized self. Combined with words of encouragement for future high achievement, she served as an object of admiration, emulation, and respect. It should also be noted, Bernie had acquired an equally strong emotional attachment to a set of symbolic role models during his early years. For the most part, these symbolic role models were purely romanticized internal figures with which he unconsciously emulated. His relationship with these personalities [a movie actor, a character in a book, the neighbor next door] was very limited, and in scores of occurrences, neither he nor they had ever met.

The identification and transference that underlie role modeling behavior for inner-city minorities are more complex than those found in the wider societal context. Together with the above relationships, Bernie's exposure to the reality of poverty was both influential and developmental; it fueled his career ambition and set his personal goals of professional excellence. This transformation of Bernie's childhood experiences would set into motion the empowering vision of a realistic and obtainable future. Novelist, playwright, and poet James Baldwin once made a statement that is most fitting; he said,

"Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them."

Every one pays lip service to the idea that optimism in an atmosphere of poverty requires mental strength and character. In its execution it is absolutely critical. Without what we call emotional fortitude, Bernie could not be honest with himself, deal honestly with others and the brutal realities of impoverishment that surrounded him, or make available for himself an on-going forthright assessment. If young inner-city youth cannot do these things, they cannot execute their dreams of career ambition or set into motion personal goals of professional excellence.

It took emotional fortitude for Bernie to be open to whatever information he needed, whether it was what he liked to hear or not. Emotional fortitude gave him the courage to discuss and debate the viewpoints of his role models, viewpoints often foreign and unfamiliar to his own. It took emotional fortitude to deal with conflict when it surfaced. Emotional fortitude enabled Bernie to accept and deal with his own weaknesses, to be firm with others whose behaviors were not in his best interest, and to handle the ambiguity inherent in a fast-moving, individualistic, competition-oriented American culture.

Like Bernie, Jessie also grew up in a socioeconomically disadvantaged neighborhood. During a follow-up conversation after our semi-structured interview, Jessie reflected on his parent's work ethic. During his early years, Jessie lived with his mother in one of Philadelphia's inner-city row-house neighborhoods. His mother held two and sometimes three jobs in harsh, often dehumanizing low-wage work settings. Jessie developed resilience from the challenges of the working poor. Jessie accepted the

employment condition of his mother just as he accepted all else that appeared to be imposed upon them by the mysterious structural realities that controlled their lives and the circumstances of their existence.

Jessie is now one of four managing editors of one of the nation's top-ten student-operated, nonprofit, university newspaper corporations. He sits four doors away from the general manager. The brutal realities of Jessie's background and his mother's struggles to maintain her family tell a story of a childhood of tears, trials, and triumphs. Jessie's grounded optimism allowed him as a protégé to transcend the barriers and social constraints of the work environment.

Parental influence and the neighborhood environment in which our protégés reside reflect the lessons of resiliency in their lives, and are critically important toward the personal development of a strong work ethic and an enterprising identity. The lessons they learned, by the example of strong and resilient parents, became the exacting ingredient to help them to adapt, adjust, and overcome obstacles of social constraints and race-based attributions in society and organizational life. A few points highlighted by Jessie pertaining to his mother and father's labor-force activity encounters, provide him with the insight, along with the extra courage and confidence he will need to perform at the apex of his ability in his future organizational life. Jessie's childhood character formation becomes his career drive when honed into a mentoring relationship. He discusses what drives his work ethic:

My father was a certified accountant in the real estate industry. I guess the best way to describe him is that he had a very strong work ethic. He had it right up to the moment he fell sick with the debilitating condition of multiple sclerosis—a disease that robbed him of his career. Work was a big part of his life. That very strong work ethic of my mother and father is clearly something that influenced me early on. It was more by example than anything explicit. My mother's dogged determination, coupled by my father's unwillingness to stop working, even while

physically disabled, strongly persuaded me at a very young age to be the best. And, even though they were separated, I see them as more than my parents; they were in a very strong sense my true role models. I always think about it.

To a great extent, Jessie's mother and father, as do many African Americans in inner cities, share an unshakable belief in the American Christian work ethic. His protestant mother and catholic father each see work as a spiritual as well as pragmatic guide. The protestant work ethic, or sometimes called the puritan work ethic, is a personal value-transcending emphasis on the necessity of hard labor in a person's calling as a sign of personal salvation. Protestants conceptualize work as a duty in the world for the benefit of the individual and society as a whole. The Catholic idea of good works suggests an obligation to work diligently as a sign of God's grace. Jessie's parents firmly believe that job success is based solely on personal competence, individual effort, hard work, perseverance, and attention to detail. They share the belief that if one does not make it, failure is attributed to having not worked hard enough.

Jessie's childhood character formation based on a strong parental work ethic translates (as the reader will see later) into an intense career dedication. Another example of the powerful influence of parental work values comes from protégé Ollie.

Ollie's parents are Black immigrants from the Caribbean Islands. Ollie is a junior attending a large predominately White, comprehensive research university. He is a business major. After attending a smaller institution for two years and earning an associate's degree, Ollie decided to continue his education and subsequently transferred to a four-year university. In addition to classes and school assignments, he works a part-time job three nights a week for a large package delivery service company. His job helps his parents defray costs for his college education. Ollie's parents emigrated from

Barbados and are characterized by Ollie as self-reliant, independent, hard working and having a strong protestant work ethic.

Ollie's mother is a paraprofessional employed in of the hospital district of Boston, a large consortium of medical institutions clustered within a one-mile radius within the city. She earned a secretarial sciences degree from a university in Barbados; however, her credentials are not officially certified in the United States. Ollie's father is a skilled journeyman craftsman and was credentialed in Barbados in the trades of heating, plumbing, tiles, electricity, and carpentry. Similar to Ollie's mother, the father's professional training is not officially recognized in United States, denying him trade union credentials. As a result, he works numerous low-skill/low-wage jobs, as well as independent projects for cash to help supplement family income. Despite their underemployment and the lack of need or creative use of their Barbados skills and training, Ollie's parents still believe in, and attach a strong value in the education of their children.

During an interview with Ollie, he reflects on the harsh work experiences of his parents and their entrusted view of work:

My mother, similar to my father, attended school for the secretarial sciences in Barbados. And, for as long as I've known, she has always worked in the Boston hospital district—a receptionist, staff assistant, or an office manager. She's never really had an issue with finding work. She's worked and has earned a strong reputation with the Boston Hospital District. Anyway, I guess most White folk would classify me and my family as the working poor. But, I can honestly say, I've never been given the impression from either of my parents that we were a symbol of the working poor. (p. 3–5)

When considering the work ethic of the many who are trapped in poor inner-city areas of our nation, Fernandez and Harris (1991) contend that our society often misplaced much of the blame by focusing on “mainly the shortcomings of individuals and families

and not on the structural underpinnings and social changes in the society at large that have made life so miserable for many inner-city ghetto residents” (p. 18). Many inner city inhabitants like Ollie’s parents were not lacking individual work skills, motivation, or effort. In the extreme environment in which they are forced to live, professional relationships, work-related information, informal social networks and the additional day-to-day pressures to survive individually and collectively are oppressive.

There are many individuals in poor inner-city neighborhoods like Ollie’s parents, people who struggle against the odds at great individual sacrifice to live up to mainstream norms and ideas of acceptability. And they are functioning while being denied the opportunity to utilize their professional training or craftsmen skills, such as Ollie’s parents who are working hard under difficult circumstances to make a go of it.

They are sometimes compelled to act in creative, nontraditional, or under-the-table ways. For example, existing for a period of time without a formal or steady job, or else pursuing illegitimate means of an income, Ollie’s father, who more than likely agrees with mainstream judgments of unacceptable behavior, yet felt utterly constrained by his circumstances, forced sometimes to act in ways that violate mainstream norms. He may not have had the option to take steps to get further training or education, mainly because his work schedules and lack of resources make such planning quasi-impossible.

Thus, in many cases, deviant behavior may not reflect internalized values at all. Ollie’s father was simply adapting to difficult circumstances. Outsiders may observe men such as Ollie’s father and erroneously assume that such men regard their illegitimate income [underground handyman on a cash basis] as rightful. Yet, this is often not the case.

Similar to Ollie's parental lessons and experiences at an early age are the stories of another protégé, Mark. Mark is a junior attending a large predominately White university with a major concentration in broadcast journalism. Mark grew up in the poor inner-city neighborhood projects of Washington, D.C. He lived in an extended family that consisted of a grandmother, his parents, three brothers and sisters, two aunts, an uncle and a host of cousins. Mark made no account of his father and this researcher never directly addressed the subject, although Mark did suggest in the interview that his father was employed and was not a recipient of any welfare assistance.

There seems to be two distinctly individual types of ghetto-dwelling families: the passive and the aggressive. In a few words, passive resident parents may have semiskilled jobs and could, conceivably, move upward in the class structure, too, but one or both do not work together as partners and one or both may lack ambition. They are not competitive nor partner goal setters, and they appear to be content with the status quo. Individually or together, neither partner seeks nor expects promotions on his or her job, although one or both may hope for it. Perhaps, living in the "projects" for one or both partners is an end in itself.

In contrast, the aggressive resident family uses the projects as a stepping-stone to better things for themselves and their family. They remain a project family only for the period of time that it takes to secure better housing for the family. In other words, the aggressive project family lives in the projects but is not of it.

The aggressive project family envision themselves as a typical middle-class home though located in the project. Mark's parents have the morals and mores of the middle-class rather than the lower and working class. Their children may play with neighboring

children, but they do not use the vulgar language or indulge in much of the violent play that is common in the projects. The required behaviors taught to the children by Mark's parents are reinforced and extended beyond the front- and rear-door boundaries of their project living space, so as the family leaves no mark on the project, so to the projects appear to leave no mark upon the family. Mark's aggressive project parents play the role as strongly as the parents in any other section of inner-city urban life. Theirs is the motivating force and drive for Mark. They set goals and the mother and father work together to attain those goals for the family. Perhaps, because of this strength, Mark and his brothers and sisters never fall heir to the awful legacy of passive project dwellers.

Another protégé, Randy, has a story that is a bit different from Mark's. As one probes Randy's background and upbringing it should be of no surprise to discover the making of a strong parental influence, which found its foundation in the life and legacy of the American civil rights movement and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Randy's parental lessons both instructed and captured the essence of how one man led so powerfully, yet peacefully, during times of social upheaval. Within their stories there may be an element of tragic drama, and sometimes even humor, in the retelling of the cultural wounds that have been transcended and the hurts that have been overcome, for twice-told tales that end in "success" have a way of trivializing the horror that made them worth telling.

During an interview session, Randy mentioned his parents' involvement in civil rights when the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) allied with the Chicago Freedom Movement in 1966. Randy's parents were there. His parents participated in Dr. King's magnificent ground crew that helped illustrate to the nation the

impossible contradictions of the human condition of Black Chicago. During that time the movement's problem was Mayor Richard Daley, a shrewd and calculating politician, who had adeptly started out by embracing Dr. King's role in Chicago and then subtly worked behind the scenes to discredit him. Randy's parent witnessed the mayor's betrayals.

Daley attended a meeting with Dr. King and 45 other ministers and supporters in hopes of swaying their opinions. Again, Randy's parents were there. At that gathering, the mayor was bold enough to suggest that Dr. King return to Georgia. Randy's parent were among King's supporters as he refused to waver in his persistence and determination. And, as the movement in Chicago progressed, political pressure mounted on Mayor Daley to negotiate. Violence in the city—some of the worst in the nation's history—drew increased media attention. And the boycotts and protests hurt the economy, tourism, and the image of Chicago.

Randy's parents are disciples of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Randy's upbringing was influenced by an ideology that informed him to take as much time to speak with a street sweeper as you would a corporate executive. Their lessons to Randy were comprised of that very same King doctrine that enlightened a President, Lyndon B. Johnson, who committed himself and his office to the rescue of those who live on the outskirts of hope—some because of their poverty, and some because of their color, and all too many because of both.

Randy's sociocultural development integrated such lessons of enlightenment to the swift relief of that other nation within a nation—the poor whose distress was not captured in the conscience of Americans. Even the Johnson Administration's unconditional war on poverty in America finds its origins in King's dogma where King

sets the record straight, rather than leave to chance some grand ideal of an idealistic President. Randy recalled:

My parents had strong, southern, Black middle-class values and expectations. They believe that we should be able to live where their money could afford them to live. They were the disciples and followers of Martin Luther King, Jr., and they believed, breathed, and lived out King's principles with steadfast convictions that insistently integrated the conceptions of personal responsibility and racial equality. They believed that "there are no social islands; there is only the common man, and that we are each a part of what happens to the rest." They believe in a multiracial society, no group can make it alone, and that we must involve everyone through alliances, teamwork, and diversity.

Behind Randy's narrative are recollections and steadfast convictions of his parents' shared lives and experiences. Along the way, Randy internalized these lessons of his parents' experiences of systematic prejudice, institutionalized discrimination, and daily social constraints that persons of color were forced to endure. Randy tells of his background:

I wasn't born at the time, but my parents were the first Blacks to move in the neighborhood I now live. My parents... fought nine long years with the federal government and local real estate agencies red lining customary tactics. Mr. Carraway, can you imagine that; nine years! And, like the true Kingian disciples, they stressed the value of a solid education, and personal achievement and responsibility. They fought for their right to live where they chose. Even more important, though, sometimes I believe that the way that I've been taught to think as a result of my parents, may have had a direct oppositional effect on the way that I am received by White people in the news station... I really do Mr. Carraway.

Randy's reflections reveal three critical background ingredients: (1) residing in a predominately White neighborhood, coupled with (2) the emphasis parents placed on education, achievement, and the importance of hard work, lending to (3) a heightened sense of self-identity and personal worth, all of which are essential to career mobility. Randy's having been raised and exposed to Whites in a predominately White neighborhood, combined with having attended predominately White schools similar to those of the majority culture in the organization, in a positive sense prepared him for the

organizational majority culture. He had grown up with Whites and attended better-quality White schools, a socialization experience not too distant from the prevailing organizational socialization process through which he is presently experiencing. The background characteristics, as well as exposure and ability to successfully adapt to the norms, standards, and organization's socialization process are directly associated with career mobility (Baker, 1995; Loden, 1991). Pierre (1998) contends that Blacks who grew up in areas similar to those of the majority culture were more familiar with the majority culture and tended to experience less difficulty with a White corporation's socialization process (p. 140). In addition to the inspiration and drive instilled by Randy's parents, they were role models who taught the necessity of "knowing thyself" and who taught him about the world of work. Randy was very aware of his enduring legacy.

As noted, "parental education, family circumstances, and social class are all correlated with achievement in U.S. society (Blau & Duncan, 1967, p. 405). However, parental high expectations are not the exclusive province of the well educated or upwardly mobile. Indeed, a common theme among the protégés, regardless of social background, was the emphasis their parents placed on self-identity and the notion of their personal worth in a society that viewed and often stereotyped them as lazy, unintelligent, and inferior.

As observed, Randy possessed the academic qualifications and excellent career growth experiences with his high school and hometown newspaper as well. On average, Randy invested numerous hours in training, and put forth large amounts of hard work and perseverance. Conversely, his preparation and hard work helped him to overcome some aspects of the factors that negatively influenced his mobility (e.g., stereotypes and

different socioeconomic and cultural background), which in turn aided him in achieving certain levels of advancement. However, despite his efforts to meet the newspaper organization's requisite skills and qualifications and gain the working knowledge and skill of the White-dominated corporate culture, he had neither reached nor would reach the higher-level assignments. Nor would he be provided the patterned developmental experiences in the organization that his White counterparts could attain, with the hopes for further advancement. In other words, Randy believed he would never advance because of his cultural heritage. This was a psychosocial aspect of his worldview he would need to contend with throughout his organizational socialization.

In summary, all five of the protégés have developed a commitment to hard work. This learned work ethic, as shown through the above narrative account, sets the tone for responding to social influences and acquiring other occupational attributes necessary to becoming successful in the workplace. Beyond work ethic, the characteristics of adaptability, educational preparation, and neighborhood environment profoundly influenced these protégés.

Adaptability and Responsibility across Cultures

All five of the protégés and their families had to adapt to the harsh realities of poverty and cultural discrimination, but at the same time they took personal responsibility and worked to transcend those social barriers. Parents and protégés had ambitions for a successful future. Living in two cultures at once the parents and protégés had ambitions for successful, professional futures, and they went to extraordinary lengths to invest in the American dream. Jessie laments:

That money she managed to earn as a wage-hour worker meant survival. And that meant, if she'd decided to attend a school function, a school office visit, a school play, or attend one of my football games, also meant having to forfeit a days pay; money we needed to survive day to day.

What is immediately striking about this narrative is the adaptation of and responses to the broader realities within the structures of opportunities and constraints a single-parent, wage-hour worker must make every day. They face difficult choices. With barely enough money to cover the bills and the rent on the home she shares with Jessie, his mother often times must make the harsh decision between the need for food and the need for electricity. The inner-city inhabitant is locked into a system designed to be impervious to hope.

Mark, having grown-up in a large public housing project of Washington, D.C., tells a cogent story about his parents' successful adaptation to overcome the "contexts of constraint and opportunities" (Wilson, 1996, p. 55) that affect the social action of adults and children trapped in such neighborhoods.

Between my mother's friends, and my aunts and uncles, I had some strong professional contacts, Black and White... I could always go to them for personal direction or educational advice. My parents' friends were made up of teachers, administrators, lawyers, doctors, and business people. I'd go to any one of them for just about anything...I've always had that degree of social privilege... and I received the best quality education. Anyway, that's where I spent the majority of my time, but during school hours, I was in an extremely professional, academically rigorous, and culturally diverse atmosphere.

Mark's narratives are engaging and instructive. His mother's expectations and influence were joined by a strong social network of connections that included acquaintances, friends, and kin. Mark was endowed the opportunity to adapt, thereby overcoming a variety of difficult structural constraints and circumstances that poor inner-city neighborhood youth, as a rule, encounter. This social flexibility combined with a constellation of role models during adolescence will serve Mark well in the workplace.

His childhood character formation has prepared him for a diverse workplace, for his childhood experiences and social contacts translate into the ability function, adapt to and thrive in the workplace.

Randy grew up in a more affluent up-scale neighborhood dissimilar to the narrow structure of opportunities and constraints that Mark experienced. Randy had the following reflections:

I think one of the things I had as an advantage was growing up in a secure family background; because there was no doubt in my mind that Black people could accomplish anything. Mr. Carraway, like, you know, my parents exposed me to all kinds of people. There were persons my parent associated with that were poor and rich, solvent and homeless. Some of these folk were family members. Mr. Carraway, our trash man was Black, our family physician was Black, some of my uncles were homeless; the family dentist was Black, some of my dad's high school classmates were professional athletes, my high school principal and some her professional staff were Black. Most of them lived in our neighborhood or close to where I lived. Mr. Carraway, we had the spectrum of everyday people, as well as Black professionals all around us.

More specifically, Randy's childhood experience with a broad spectrum and diverse range of Black role models prepared him for a career identity that was both realistic and promising. This parental direct-action approach has many virtues. One of them is the parent's systematic integration of learning and observation. Another is his parents' direct and purposeful use of a host of strong social network connections, which included their personal acquaintances, friends, and kin and were converted into a learning laboratory. Third, such a direct-action approach brings adults into contact with the concerns and interests of young persons and provides a natural adaptation technique for the two groups to interact. Fourth, perhaps less directly, this direct-action approach helps the child develop urgency for a sense of pride and accomplishment in their schoolwork, beyond that of mere academic achievement.

Mark and Randy's reflections echo similar expressions of parental expectations of yet another protégé in this study. Ollie, during our interview, shared how his mother chose to adapt, adjust, and overcome the persistent dynamic interplay between her parental expectations and the structure of opportunity of Boston's inner-city neighborhoods. He explains:

She'd [his mother] told both me and my sister, I want my children to attend those schools outside of this hell-hole [Boston inner-city schools]. The two of ya'll are going to catch that bus that goes out to the suburbs of Wellesley, Newton, or Dunedin, with those well-off White folks. She'd explain to us, "better schooling and preparation for ya'll will be served there—so you can improve your social lot in life (p. 4–5).

Again, Ollie's mother shared similar views; her expectations required her children to expand their network of relationships and social networks that crossed the boundaries of their immediate neighborhood. She understood that in order for her children to develop, mature, or accomplish something worthwhile for themselves or to live a better life than her, they must attend the school systems and frequent the surrounding suburbs of Boston. Our minority protégés experienced more than their share of disappointments, especially during the initial phase of adjustment to attending a new school environment, but they viewed their performance in personal development rather than external challenges to overcome. Their commitment to attend better schools located in the suburbs led them to learn new skills.

Bernie shared this point in his interview:

My mother earned but a high school diploma and worked two, and if need be three jobs to keep us housed, fed, and clothing on our backs. She grew up very, very, very poor. I've heard stories, you know, plenty of stories, or more than I cared to know about. This probably explains to a great degree why my mother works the way she did as a young person and continues to do so. I mean the way my mother worked the entire time that I lived under her care, I could never tell that we were poor as a family unit (Bernie, p. 1).

Skills, habits, and parental expectations of most families confined to and residing in poor inner-city neighborhoods are often shaped by the frequency at which they are found in their own community. Oftentimes, poor inner-city neighborhood parents' promote the values of the traditional middle-class family joined by a forceful tension between parental expectations and the structural opportunity. Moreover, while emphasized by Wilson (1996), the reader must bear in mind that "in poor neighborhoods, decisions and actions occur within a context of constraints and the structure of opportunity that are drastically different from those present in middle-class society" (p. 55).

The actions of our research respondents in reaction to parental expectations attest to the strength of their commitments to diversity as well as to the fact that racial minorities in these predominately White settings and later schools, including the participants of this study, were in positions to add value to their schools' efforts at a critical time in their lives.

In summary, parental work values and responsible adaptation to extreme environments have contributed to the protégé's character and career focus. This section has provided both direct and indirectly a conceptual logic of our respondents' parental expectations and their adaptation to the context of social constraints and structural opportunities. Our respondents' commitment to overcome imposed structural realities in their lives was also discussed. In the next section the protégé's educational experiences are reviewed. I will follow the pattern of presenting the protégé and their narrative follow by the researcher's interpretation follow by supporting research.

Educational Experiences

Preparation for the workplace finds its origins in the child's school environment. The American school system is an institution driven by the values of the majority culture. Therefore, for many minorities, entrance into school is a cross-cultural event. A parent's active engagement is critical. Active parental participation in a child's school career requires not only that parents hold high aspirations, but that they actively transmit their aspirations to their children, as one must sacrifice their total selves to an educational investment. Face-to-face meetings with the teacher and the school staff, as well as maximum involvement in the child's school experience, are the sum total of educational investment. During our interview, Jessie describes some of his mother's powerful messages:

I did not go to my neighborhood high school... I went to Central High School that by public transportation was about an hour-and-a-half from where I lived... [My mother] constantly reminded me, whenever I had to leave the house for any length of time, to stay clear of the thugs and their hang outs on the streets... and up by the school playground. They're nothing but "injury or death waiting to happen. They are the very reason that I sent you on to Central High," she'd say... "and don't think that I believe they aren't there at Central—because I know they are there too—but your attending Central is a far brighter sight, better than you going to Overbrook High—and like I'd said, they ain't nothing but injury or death just waiting to happen."

His mother's words appear to be the voice of prophecy. In addition to the welcomed changes that Jessie embraced within the walls of the school environment, it is equally true that outside the boundaries of the school there exists an extreme environment of additional stress. He had to recognize and pay his due respect to the alternative social dynamics of the dominant peer groups in his neighborhood.

Within the scope of this study is a direct challenge facing the African American male protégés. They are faced with a dilemma. As Black high-achievers they must seek

to define and navigate their dual relationships to the indigenous Black American cultural system and the individualistic impersonal cultural system that the school system represents. Because the individualistic ethos predominates in the school context, Black high-achievers often make choices that either put social distance between them and their peers or undermine peer group solidarity.

Researchers have advocated that almost everyone residing in poor inner-city neighborhoods is struggling financially and therefore feels a certain distance from the rest of America, but there are degrees of alienation, captured by the terms *decent* and *street* or *ghetto*, suggesting social index types. The decent family and the street family in a real sense represent two poles of value orientation, two contrasting conceptual categories (Anderson, 1999; Jankowski, 1991; Whyte, 1943).

When considering the neighborhoods in which they live, dominate groups, by definition, set the parameters within which the subordinates operate. In many poor, inner-city neighborhoods, dominate youth groups hold the power and authority of the streets relative to outsider subordinate status, such as Jessie's. Whether it is reflected in determining who gets rights of passage through their turf or neighborhood streets, or whose outsider status is validated by an in-group member as acceptable, is often one in which the targeted outsider individual is labeled as nonthreatening, defective or substandard. The brand names of "decent" and "street," which the resident youth group members themselves use, amount to evaluative judgments that confer an oppositional culture on neighborhood youth dwellers.

Based on their fieldwork in U.S. high schools, Fordham and Ogbu (1986) identified a common psychological pattern found among African American high school

students. They observed anger and resentment among adolescents in response to their growing awareness of systemic exclusion of Black people from full participation in U.S. society, leading to their development of an oppositional culture. These oppositional stances serve both to protect minority students' identity from psychological assault of cultural discrimination and to keep Whites at a distance. Fordham and Ogbu write:

Subordinate minorities regard certain forms of behavior and certain activities or events, symbols, and meanings as not appropriate for them because those behaviors, events, symbols, and meanings are characteristic of White Americans. At the same time they emphasize other forms of behavior as more appropriate for them because these are not a part of White Americans' way of life. To behave in a manner defined as falling within a White cultural frame of reference is to "act White" and is negatively sanctioned. (p. 186)

Jessie is an example of this phenomenon. Jessie's choice to attend a better school across town involved travel by public transportation, five days a week. Inevitably, his decision came with a price for both him and his mother. The price tag of an 11- to 14-hour day carried with it an additional tax burden of a negative social perception for Jessie, the accusation among neighborhood youth of "acting White."

The succession of events to follow Jessie's newly found affirmation to attend a better school is nothing new. Jessie's claim to go to Central High school attended to his dreams and vision. It was an awareness of his potential that created excitement and vitality. Central High carried the standing reputation that no distinction between different classes of individuals would be tolerated except what rose out of merit and conduct. Central High offered an integrated academic and social environment, an honors program, and advanced placement courses. Jessie made it his life's mission to compete successfully with the privileged, advantaged students in advance placement courses.

Mark's story is similarly one of individual initiative in the face of adversity. In recounting his story, he is relaxed, even amused during the interview. Mark grew up in a

predominately Black neighborhood and spoke of his challenging experiences in attending a highly ranked high school. He speaks to this point in his interview:

Banneker's in Northwest, Washington, D.C., and my home is in Southeast Washington, D.C. Banneker's close to Howard University, clearly half the distance around the Washington, D.C. Beltway. I traveled there by public transportation, and my travel time daily would on the average take me an hour and thirty minutes or more to get to school on time ... I virtually had to leave my home before 5:09 a.m., every morning to make the 5:27 bus...I'd put in a fifteen hour day, every day. Benjamin E. Banneker Academic International Baccalaureate World High School was an academically rigorous... challenging... rewarding experience for me. I can say that attending Banneker... prepared me for college, no nonsense about it.

The crucial difference between Mark and his neighborhood peers is that Mark possessed an aliveness and purpose that helped him to overcome the many psychological challenges and the social costs of poverty and prejudice. Mark had a passionate commitment to excellence and an inherent, unshakable love for the challenging journey required to succeed. This added value of his childhood character formation in cross-cultural challenging environments has prepared him well for entering the challenging American corporate culture. Mark also proved to be resourceful in utilizing a network of friends, associates, and affiliations associated with his mother and other persons in his extended family. Mark explains:

After school, I'd mostly visit my parents' friend's children who also attended Banneker. Mostly, they lived in pretty diverse, upscale communities, you know, the upper-middle professional class Black folk. Between my mother's friends, and my aunts and uncles, I had some strong professional contacts, Black and White. I always felt that I could always go to them for personal direction or educational advice. My parents' friends were made up of teachers, administrators, lawyers, doctors, and business people. I'd go to any one of them for just about everything... that's how I ended up attending Banneker. Um, I've never attended a school that was in my neighborhood... So, to a great degree, I've always had that degree of social privilege...I could receive the best quality education.

The positive intentional intercultural support of Black professionals helps balance the inevitable accidental influences of deprivation, vice, and violence associated with

living in an extreme environment. By contrast, within the context of Mark's personal associations and professional affiliation with parental friends and other positive acquaintances, there unfolded various informal and emergent networks among various professionals. The context of those relationships may have been work-related, social, or a combination of both. By extension, Mark developed relationships through the children of these professionals and over time he began to gain needed advice and counsel to better define his own career aspirations. Their passing on useful knowledge to Mark further validated him, and just as important, confirmed the value of support of a purposeful, on-going and cohesive relationship.

Ollie's family also treasures the value of a wide-ranging, comprehensive education and shares a similar social dynamic:

Education was the family prize, the shining jewel if you will, and my mother more than anyone else stressed the value of a solid education. An education was always something personal, sacred, empowering to her: "God knows, I'm going to see to it that you two come out in life better than me or your father." She'd always wanted an education for herself, but her family was poor and she had to work, so she pushed us. She was very vocal with regards to her children bettering themselves or to a least living a better life than she or my father. My father was an extremely hard working man, at times working two and sometimes three jobs to keep food on the table, clothing on our backs and a roof over our heads. He never talked much, but he, too, encouraged both my sister and me to always improve ourselves.

Likewise, Bernie and his mother sought out the best educational opportunities they could access, regardless of social price:

My parents have always encouraged me to be the best in what ever it was that I choose to do. I placed myself in a whole new environment with this Catholic school. It provided me more superior teaching and a set of superior students. The school, because it was Catholic, had a strong twist of religion—I wasn't Catholic—but I knew that it would be different. And, I also knew it would be better for me and more academically competitive at the same time.

All five of these exceptional protégés and their parents sacrificed and overcame extraordinary obstacles to secure the best possible education. It should be clear to the

reader by now that parental educational investment refers to active parental involvement in or increased attachment to the child's formal and informal school activity. For the child to be formally and informally outside of the school boundaries does not mean that the parents are totally removed from all forms of school activity. Many parents who have a formal disconnect from in-school activities nonetheless can be involved in informal kinds of school work activities. These may range from a prearranged schedule of homework to curfew hours established for the child during the school week. Informal conversations with the child and his relationship with community friends' and their usage of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs may also be extended to forms of school work activities.

The problems associated with the absence of a parent's involvement or educational investment in the child's education pursuits and the development of his career formulation are severe for families in a low-employment neighborhood. It should also be noted that it is severe for families in middle and upper-level employment neighborhood as well. All five protégé families placed a high value on education. This value incurred a high price, including long commutes to the best schools, parental costs of time and lost earnings, and the toll of re-entry among neighborhood peers.

Neighborhood Environment

The five protégé's in this study hail from a variety of neighborhoods, including small town, upper-middle class suburban, and inner-city low-employment. Regardless of neighborhood or family socioeconomic status or class, "the type of outcomes people expect depends largely on their judgments of how they will be able to perform in given situations" (Wilson, 1996, p. 75).

In social cognitive theory, perceived self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's ability to take the steps necessary to achieve the goals required in a given situation. Such beliefs affect the level of challenge that an individual feels he or she is able to tackle, the amount of effort expended in a given venture, and the degree of perseverance when encountering difficulties. The social environments the childhood neighborhood also contributes to the protégés beliefs about self and others, in addition to parental values and educational experiences (Rollins & Valdez, 2006).

Bernie has a high level of self-efficacy that is an essential enabling factor, which contributes to his lofty career ambitions. This sense of self-worth, tempered with adult supervision and counsel, set into motion his personal drive to strive for high but realistic and obtainable goals of achieving professional excellence.

When one learns to know one's self, one can master one's self. When one learns to keep his ego in check, take responsibility for his behavior, adapt to change, embrace new challenges and ideas, and adhere to standards of integrity and honesty under all conditions—authenticity of the self will be achieved. Bernie has set high aspirations and realistic goals for himself, and is dedicated and determined to doing and performing all that is necessary toward achieving them. Bernie explains:

The neighborhood is not too far from my high school at all. Locally, or where I lived, well Yeydon use to be traditionally an all White town. But, now a lot of minorities are starting to move into it. And now, I would say quote unquote, little gangs are starting to develop. People are starting the enterprise of selling drugs here and there. But, I always kept my friends very close to me. Most of the friends that I grew up with did take that route and began selling drugs and you know, you had your neighborhood rats that you grew up with. So, a lot of them died, but one remained very close and we kept each other out of trouble so locally, it was just me and him... [A]t home I kept my friends even closer. Because, I've seen what happened to my friends in the past. So, we always hold each other down, you know, we always kept each other out of trouble. He's like my other half of me.

Even in Yeyton, a traditionally all-White small town, Bernie is exposed to the realities of drugs, gangs, and violence, an extreme environment usually associated with inner-city neighborhoods. Yet, Bernie was coached to be discriminating in all relationships, even those that appeared to be normal or nonthreatening in his home neighborhood. Negative influences are present in all environments, and Bernie's lesson in his home neighborhood was to become highly skilled in evaluating others. It is a skill he will continue to use to succeed, for the business world highly values this decision-making skill about people and finds it essential in a disciplined corporate culture of execution and succession management.

Another valuable social skill is learning to cooperate as a team member working toward a shared goal. Mark observed three generations of his extended family cooperating to move out of public housing, a feat that required the team effort of the entire family.

I grew up in an extended family, a very large extended family... we lived in public housing ... the projects. We could afford to eventually buy a house [all working age adults contributed to the extended family household] and that's how we ... got in [our own house].... that's how we could afford to pay the bills, [my grandmother's] children were helping her pay the mortgage... we all lived there and we all grew up there... until we all had gotten older and began moving out... [W]hen we moved to Southeast Washington, D.C., our grandmother moved with us. So, it was then, my mother, grandmother, brothers and sisters, two uncles, and two aunts, and a host of cousins.

Mark, as a mentored protégé at a television news station, needed to cooperate and collaborate with many other professionals to complete a news broadcast. It might be tempting to think that Mark's success relates to the economic success of his combined family's efforts. The researcher suggests that much stronger forces were at work than mere economics. Collaboration that was modeled in his family prepared Mark for the complex social demands of the newsroom and the web of corporate interdependence.

Who we are transcends limits of social position, race, and gender. Again, as observed with other protégés, the foundation of his childhood prepared Mark for his career in news broadcasting.

In contrast to Mark's large extended family, Randy experienced social isolation in his predominantly White upper-middle-class suburban neighborhood. Randy learned at an early age that public politeness does not necessarily translate into acceptance and recognition. His formative lessons of neighborhood Whites were replicated and repeated in the mentoring situation and in the formal and informal social networks of the workplace as well. Time and again, Randy has encountered an extremely peculiar racial phenomenon, experienced by one social group (Whites) when it conceives a different group (Blacks) as being a source of threat or intimidation. This same phenomenon is precisely what happens in informal social networks of an organization where a change in the structure of opportunity within the organization is either imminent or underway.

Randy recalls:

My neighborhood was transformed from predominately White, and seemingly overnight it became really racially diverse. When it was all White, it was like, everybody was "publicly friendly" but privately, it's like, "neighbor doesn't speak to neighbor." No one sat on the front porch, children never played on the sidewalks, and neighbor rarely, if ever, connected with neighbor. I remember on weekends, my Mom and Dad would take me to the home of my cousins', I guess they'd do this in the hope that I'd have someone to make friends, talk and relate to.

In summary, the neighborhoods in which these protégés lived are, in themselves, contributing factors that may enhance or inhibit career formation. Our five protégés grew up in a variety of neighborhood environments, attended the best of schools possible, had parents with strong work ethics and educational values, and experienced cross-cultural environments that challenged them to adapt and perform responsibly. These childhood

experiences forged a depth of character not usually seen in young adults in American culture. The protégés in this study are not only bright, motivated, focused, and hard-working; but also experienced at crossing the boundaries of culture.

CHAPTER FIVE: VOICES OF THE PROTÉGÉS

Description of the protégé's' backgrounds, social influences, work ethic, education, adaptability and responsibility, and neighborhood have laid the foundation for this next chapter: the protégé–mentor stories. This chapter presents those stories in the voices of the five protégés: Bernie, Mark, Jessie, Randy, and Ollie.

The chapter is intentionally titled “Voices of the Protégés” because the goal and purpose of qualitative research is to honor the experiences and realities of the participants with their own words. This thick descriptive approach presumes that the “voices” matter, so before chapter six (data analysis) is presented, it is imperative to offer space for the exploration of the participants' stories as they told them. To do so systematically, however, this presentation is arranged according to three emergent themes: “Entry Shock Phase,” “Growth Process and Learning from Experience,” and “Organizational Relationships and Connections.” These themes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six to explore how they relate to the two research questions about career and psychosocial functions of mentoring. This chapter does not include the protégé background dynamics identified in Table 5, since these were expanded upon in Chapter Four. Again, the research questions that guided the exploration of the voices of the five protégés are as follow:

RQ1: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the career function of their mentoring experiences?

RQ2: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the psychosocial functions of their mentoring experiences?

Table 5.1. Categories and Themes of Cross-Cultural Career Mentoring

Categories	Themes
Protégé Background	Parental Work Ethic Adaptability & Responsibility across Cultures Educational Experiences Neighborhood Environment
Career Function	Entry Shock Phase Growth Process & Learning from Experience
Psychosocial Function	Organizational Relationships & Connections

Career Function, Theme #1: Entry Shock Phase

For the individual in the first stage of both career and adulthood, “the entry shock phase” occurs during his or her initial period of employment in an organization. It is an interlude of new beginnings, marked by a relatively short period of time between two longer periods (adolescence and early adulthood) during which something happens that is different from what has happened before and what follows. During this phase of an organizational career the young adult is faced with concerns about competence and the ability to function effectively in the adult world of work. For example, the first assignment a mentor provides to a protégé in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship is an official task carrying with it essential requirements that cause a creative tension, or what this research study will label for an organizational context, the *entry shock phase*.

Bernie explains some of his early concerns as he encounters various episodes of the entry shock phase during an initial assignment.

BERNIE:

You know, when I first started the job, and initially when I was given my first assignment, I was really concerned about my making a contribution to the company. Man, some of the company’s working formulas were so hard, you know, you get out in the real world and you are holstered with these experts—and they knew their formulas like the flip of a coin. I’d have to think through these formulas almost all of the time. They’d explain them to me and a lot of times I couldn’t understand them. On many occasions, I’d find myself taking these formulas back to my desk, and I’d beat it into my head until I got it. And, if I couldn’t get it, I’d get up from my desk area, walk back to their areas of operation, and ask them to explain it to me again, and again.

But, you know Mr. Carraway, it’s funny, I was a self-proclaimed expert in Microsoft Excel, and as a result of that MG was always assigning me to everything and everybody, both in and beyond the borders of our finance group. And, you know, I didn’t really begin to put things together until I found myself

having to get information or having to build a relationship with others to learn the job or to get some aspects of my project done. He'd taught me early on that while my technical skills were essential, I needed added exposure to others in the unit group, but more frightening to me at the time was that he believed in placing me into already established teams with others that needed my level of technical expertise. MG was an exceptional White boy. No, I really mean this, he understood the kinds of issues I'd encounter in these groups and did something to right these wrongs—as soon as he decided that I was for real, and committed to learning every aspect of finance. I understand now. MG involved people other than himself to invest in my professional growth. He'd use these organizational relationships as sources of reliable input; you know, like, checks and balances to assess my performance from multiple perspectives. In a real sense, MG taught me how to survive the UBS corporate jungle.

While Bernie's survival was interpreted by him as entwined in relationships coupled with his technical skill, Mark began with a bit more introspective interpretation. Mark is a senior at the university and completing an undergraduate degree in broadcast journalism. His "entry phase encounter" turns out to be a real issue of concern as it pertained to his self-confidence and professional competence to perform on the job.

MARK:

There were a lot of us that showed up the first day, and felt that we knew what was going to happen to our numbers in only a few days. He knew from day one that the majority of us would not be there in a week. He also knew that if we chose to grab a tape and work with it and we liked it, fine. But, if we didn't, that to him was fine to, and he'd simply say good-bye! The second meeting that we met with JD[mentor], was more in-depth to involve what we'd do at the station, to include our responsibilities, how he was going to conduct his evaluations of our individual internships, and our role in contributing to our learning at D.C. Channel 28. So, everybody basically started out doing the same thing.

I remember JD saying, "I don't like tardy people, if you're going to be tardy then you need to call, and if you're going to be an hour late then don't come ... I don't have time for it, I'm tired of this _____. People say they want to do this or to do that, and simply don't show up." (Laughing) "So, if you don't want to do it, leave. If I place you on an assignment, I want it submitted on or before that due date. I don't take excuses." So, that was basically the bottom line. So, we were like, okay. Because of JD's influence as a supervisor/mentor, or however you may want to put it, is why I know what I am doing today. For example, I know

precisely why I came to Penn State to major in Broadcast Journalism. Because, I really didn't know what I wanted to do in TV broadcasting, and I felt that it wasn't like JD was in any way interested in me. But, I was wrong, because he did.

Fortunately, through hard work and perseverance, Mark became an effective and valued protégé despite his initial shock regarding the leadership style of his mentor JD.

Randy, another protégé in the study, in contrast to Bernie and Mark, provided a different perspective of his encounter with entry shock.

RANDY:

I didn't pretend to act as if I'd known anything about student government or undergraduate student admissions, but they or Harvey would automatically throw me into these assignments, as if to say, you know ... "you do it." So, I didn't know too much about these assignments at the time so, you know, it was my responsibility to come up with the story without guidance as to which direction I was to go in with the story. Now, some areas I felt more comfortable covering than others. But, I'd rather, or preferred the option of having Harvey, to first provide me some guidance and advice prior to story coverage.

Sometimes I'd go to him and say, "Hey look, I'm stuck ... I don't know how to handle this story or I don't know what questions to ask or I don't know where to take this idea that I have to develop some source and to take this idea to print?" And, he'd always give a few words to help me but, he'd never give me an actual blueprint on how I should pursue the story. He'd give me insights and he'd probe me for what I thought I should do, but he'd never give me the answer. In a metaphor, he'd give me the key to the door ... and all I'd have to do is to find the right door that matched the key and walk-in. And, that's the way that I chose to look at both Harvey as well as my coverage to a story. He'd make multiple suggestions to ... do this or to do that ... or did you think about this avenue as an approach ... or he'd ask if I'd completely evaluated my lead-in story idea? He'd always ask me questions to raise my thoughts, so he'd never put anything on a silver plate and mention here you go ... now here's the formula and then I could go out and cover the story.

There was never any patting on the back, and if he'd call me into his office it was pretty much to tell you that there were areas in which he'd felt that I could improve. But, when he did pat me on the back it was still the comment, 'good job but...'. It was never a comment that even suggested that I'd come a long way or that I was on my way toward becoming a good reporter. But, now as I reflect back, Mr. Harvey was exactly what I needed to prepare myself to enter the field of communication, because these acquired skill sets were critical for such a

competitive industry. Mr. Harvey was a taskmaster, because he kept me thinking along those lines. He taught me to think critically, objectively and skeptically as a writer. He really knew how to make me focus on the hard news assignment at hand, because that was where my professional focus lies.

Each of these three, Bernie, Mark, and Randy, had different entry phase experiences and, as might be predicted, each reacted distinctively. The point is that during the entry phase in one's career, personal and professional adjustment is a process required before any growth from learning may occur. An individual's apprehensions about self in an initial work role within the context of an organization are linked to concerns about ability, capability, and skill development while developing within the cast of characters in the organization. The growth process and learning from experience is our next topic of discussion in this chapter.

Career Function, Theme #2: Growth Process and Learning from Experience

In contrast to the entry phase in one's personal and professional career adjustment in the organization, this second phase is purely an initial step in the growth process and learning from experiences as one navigates the terrain in the organization. As a news reporter, Mark learned from a constellation of relationships within the organization that expanded rapidly and in a variety of experiences that extended far beyond his initial mentor to include peers, role-set coworkers, and persons above and below him in the organizational hierarchy.

During the interview, Mark shared the following reflections of his early news reporter experiences.

MARK:

He simply approached me one day and asked me to strongly consider becoming his news anchor; primarily because Nicole was leaving and JD felt that I had all the makings as well as the lion's share of intact experiences. JD told me, "Mark, you need to do this; I see it in you." Actually, I was virtually scared out of my mind. After a few days, he more or less took me through each and every aspect of the duties and responsibilities of a news anchor for our television broadcasting station: on-location news-reporting assignments, the duties and responsibilities of the technical crew, materials and equipment, production layouts, reel tapes analysis, story development broadcast production, timing and press releases and on and on. He introduced me to other area departments and professionals I'd be working with that makes for a broadcast news report: production managers, field reporters, team managers, choreographers, camera operators, film loaders, script supervisors, and make-up artists, to name a few.

So, I did that for maybe a month or two, then he moved me on to camera and teleprompter, and then he actually moved me on to assistant producer, even though there were a lot of assistant producers behind the set; but I was one of the assistant producers for a program entitled *60 Minutes with the Superintendent*, which was one of our premier news program shows that modeled the actual [CBS] *60 Minutes* news program. So, I was actually there for three years, and [worked as assistant producer] after the first year and a half; but Nicole, I've forgotten her last name, but she went on to Boston University, to major in Journalism. And, she was the host of a show in Washington, D.C., called *Street Rap*, which is a student run talk show with students in the city.

Mark's story illustrates a patterned relationship of progression as a beginning news anchor for a television broadcasting station. The organizational context played a major role in creating the conditions and opportunities for Mark to acquire the skills and experiences needed to become a more seasoned professional. Mark's developmental experiences, initially helped along by his mentor, combined with interpersonal skill mastery and a strong degree of technical proficiency to help him broaden and deepen his association with other decision-makers in the organization, thereby affording him organizational clout.

Working with JD was a stroke of good fortune for Mark. A blossoming news anchor for a television broadcasting station with responsibility for a technical group,

Mark was looking to expand his own horizons. His mentor gave Mark both resources and responsibility, in the form of stretch assignments, subordinates, and room to expand. JD also provided advice and counsel on how Mark should negotiate the organization. This brief description of Mark's early career illustrates a number of early-career characteristics of and unique to African American males in the workplace.

Let's turn now to the story of Ollie, a newly minted, African American male assistant manager whose early career had a brush with stalling. Ollie described the situation as follows.

OLLIE:

Some of the employees were reporting for the start of the shift and he (my mentor) had been nervously excited to complete the day-shift roster. As senior facility shift managers, SZ listens to the likes of George, Sy, Earl, and Martin too much. They've been here as long as some of the building and equipment. In a sense, I don't really know, but they were never too happy about my getting this position over some of their friends, and I don't know, maybe even some of their relatives. These are some pretty head strong mothers, and you know, for the most part they are accustomed to getting their way. So, with their expectations placed on SZ, he transmits their frustrations, in turn, on to me. Mr. Carraway, I know the real deal. Believe me; I know what's going on. These cats want my head on a stick. They believe, somehow in their own twisted way of thinking that I don't have what it takes to be one of them, or hope that I've no intentions anyway. Sh__t. I come from a long line of strong, self-confident Barbados ancestry. Sh__t, I know what I'm capable of being and becoming. But, getting back to SZ, on that particular day he was full to the brim with pressure, and that frustration that he allowed them to put on him, his motivation was to take it out on me. You know, the old saying, "I'm going to put this boy in his place," kind of thing. Well, when I recognized that this was the kind of thing that was happening, my thinking was, I'm not having it. So, I had to let him know, in a professional manner, I said, "please, don't speak to me in that tone of voice, tied by this master/slave mentality you're presently exhibiting." Actually, I was being given vibes the week before this confrontation took place. So, I was preparing myself all along to handle this situation in a manner that was more becoming of a person representing the company. I was not going to raise my voice, and rant and rave. Anyway, the time came where this confrontation did occur. It was a situation that involved a few hourly employees and their handling of packages that needed to go on the

trucks in preparation for the next shift. He had some heated words for me, as a result of my not disciplining “on the spot” this particular individual in the presence of other co-workers. I’d informed SZ that I had approached this individual and that I mentioned to him that we needed to meet at the conclusion of the shift in my office. But, SZ felt that was inappropriate and that I should correct the situation right here—right now. So, as I began to explain to him my approach on the matter he almost immediately, he closed the distance gap between us, pointed his finger in my face, and said, in no uncertain terms; “No, you shut up and listen to what I’m saying.” I responded, “Hey, Hey. Wait, let me tell you something right now, I have but one father, and he’s in Boston, Massachusetts. If you think you’re going to speak to me any way you feel, you’re sadly mistaken. We’re both men here, and the two of us want to get the job done in the most efficient and effective manner as possible. We need to work together, so I’m letting you know that speaking to me like this, in that tone of voice, before my shift of employees, is unacceptable. So, he replied, “Oh, oh, I’m sorry, I understand, I understand—let me start over.” From then on, I knew when he’s on edge and I’ve tried not to push his buttons. We’ve had confrontations since then and he’d mention, “I’m not yelling at you, I’m not yelling at you. This is the situation, and this is what’s going on. So, can you do what you can as soon as possible, you know?” And, he does that now, where he’s in a situation where he feels some sort of pressure coming on—he’s learned to handle me more effectively. But, it’s a good relationship. Because, he trusts that now, if he has to give me advice or counseling on a situation, I will listen to him or at least be guided by company policy and regulations. He’s given me more and more responsibilities that indicate to me that he believes in my capabilities as a responsible and capable assistant shift manager. Whenever I come in now, he’s very likely to call me into his office and suggest, “Ollie, I need to go over some things with you before the shift begins, is this ok?” Other supervisors, as a result of SZ’s and my relationship appear to be very positive—also have come to respect me more as a competent and credible assistant shift manager. Primarily, their respect for me originated from my strong relationship with SZ. I’ve learned a lot from SZ, and he’s taught me the State College and Lewistown operation so well that should there be a manager that is in need any of the two facilities during any particular shift operation all UPS managers for these locations know that I can perform well in all locations. I have their respect and their’s mine. On many an occasion, SZ and other managers have approached me to ask, “Ollie, here’s what’s going on and we need this done, can you help me out?” My response is always in the affirmative and I’d mention to them sure, “I’ll act on it right away.”

With the reputation as a technically competent and credible performer who could deliver, Ollie gained the cooperation, respect, and sometimes the friendship of Whites who were initially either resistant or hesitant to work with him.

For the African American male protégés in this study, intense career grounding was acquired in the functional areas in which they performed in their assignments and was demonstrated through consistent, excellent performance over time. However, intensive grounding in career development is gained cumulatively, and is applied in diverse work-related relationship contexts. These psychosocial functions are developed through the continuous execution of building organizational relationships and connections that represent various degrees of familiarity, complexity, and a character of something that has many aspects or parts arranged together in a peculiar way.

**Psychosocial Function, Theme #1:
Organizational Relationships and Connections**

The psychosocial relationships discussed below allow for African American male protégés to develop an intuitive sense of the contrasting elements of their organization's business operations and allowing them to learn how they are interconnected. Building and sustaining these work relationships with others enabled them to bridge the knowledge gap when later in their internship work experience they would be faced with the more challenging stretch assignments.

With confidence and credibility with his mentor established and progressive relationships with others in the business operations area nearly won, Bernie began to look for assignments that would draw more directly on his business interest and training, he explains as follows.

BERNIE:

It was in this transition period that I felt the influence of somebody that I would really consider a mentor. But all he ever talked about was the job, work, and the next assignment, and the dynamic labor market trends—we never discussed anything else of equal or greater value than the job. At times, this was most frustrating to me. I felt as though he had so much more to offer. But, all he spoke of was the job, next assignment—never his family, his daughter or son, his wife—always the job (p. 26).

When I appeared at PSU, I was simply a Penn State student majoring in finance. I had only a mere working knowledge of the basic concepts of finance. When I left PSU, I felt like a guru in the industry, and I understood finance and its application in my career and how it would apply to my personal life as well. I didn't merely memorize the concepts, as I'd learned to do in academia—you're almost expected to memorize things in the world of professors, books, and exams. But, when I emerged out of my relationship with MZ, and my internship work-related relationships experiences with others at PSU, I believed as though I understood the industry. I felt as though all that I'd needed was the further development of an individual mind-set. Through others, I'd learned the importance of utilizing these financial concepts in a day-to-day operation. When I came back to Penn State I felt a need to challenge a lot of things that were in the books, as a direct result of my internship experiences with my group, other workers, and of course my mentor MZ. I know this because it wasn't long before I found myself thinking through problems and challenges and acting like MZ when I found myself in a problem-solving mode.

I learned that the finance industry is dynamic and constantly changing—the environment is never just right, and that one must discover opportunities and create information through analyses and profit by it. I learned through MZ that real-world application to job experience is the only remedy to gaining confidence and know-how. I also learned the importance of networking, building relationships, and to always position myself with others who are brighter or more talented than I. I've become so well-informed from my relationship with MZ. I will always come out on the positive end of the job because of my mentor MZ. I've come to understand that I must build relationships with others that have a working knowledge-base of the profession that is equal to or greater than my own.

Randy, another African American male protégé in this study, explains some of his learned experiences of working in a newspaper organization, as well as some of his personal encounters and the importance of networking, building relationships.

RANDY:

From that little conversation, I believe that he not only respected me, but more than that I really believed that he respected the commitment I gave to the job, my skills, and what I could bring to newspaper and, in turn, what they could offer me. For awhile I began to perceive Harvey as a kind of expert trainer, a coach, or, I don't know, as some grand teacher of sorts. He appeared to have a patented answer for everything I'd bring to him. I mean, this cat had it going on; he was just impressive in terms of knowing the basics of initiating a new project. He was the kind of professional I'd aspired to emulate, like, this cat was on point. He lived to come to work. Like, it's funny, we never once spoke of anything that he felt wasn't job related. I mean, like, to this very day, I couldn't tell you if the man is married, single, divorced, or a male single parent. All he breathes was the job, getting the job done, and get the hell home, as he always says.

Harvey was forever assigning me to this person or that department head. Each unit of the newspaper included a person assigning me more and more responsibilities. Every newspaper operations manager has his or her own personal opinion or philosophical spin on the XYZ Black Caucus and Republican Party story.

By Harvey having me work with all these persons was like a roller coaster ride. As reporter assigned to the Black Caucus and Republican Party story I had to go out and get the story, then I had write the story and get it in by 5:00 o'clock. Then, by five o'clock the editor had to read the story in its entirety. Because my story isn't read by one person, it may be read by four or five individuals before it is actually sent to print. Then, there is Harvey's role in this project; nothing goes anywhere until Harvey gives it the OK.

So, as I bring the story to the Harvey, and together we review my work, hopefully I don't have to go back and re-write the entire thing again, because that has happened from time to time. But, for the most part, this rarely happened. Harvey was a strategist in every sense of the word. I began to notice this early on, everything he did was with some specific purpose in mind.

He had this motto he'd lived by, and would repeat it, time and time again. He'd say "I don't make it a habit of paying for the same Real Estate twice. I live by doing the job right the first time." You know, it was like he'd operate like a cross-country track coach. I don't know, probably because that's the kind of performance endurance a news reporter needed to stay competitive in the news race. Harvey would say something like "if I called the right plays 'that's my advice,' under the right conditions 'that's who needs what you have to offer,' at the right time 'that's our requirements and deadlines,' with the right players 'those are the people we work with to make things happen,' we 'that's you and I,' and we will score the winning point every time. This time the story related to all the people that I had to work with to get my story in before the deadline—deadlines are important in this business. Almost like clock work, Harvey would walk me through the news reporter script. He'd make a statement that would almost always take the form of a directive or a question; something like "the first responsibility of a news reporter is..." and I'd have to finish the statement with

the correct answer. I'd go on with the response that a news reporter must go out and gather information for any number of persons that represent....

From that point Harvey sends the story to his associate editor, who also reads it and sends it to another editor who, in turn, sends the story to the copy editor to check for grammar; the big picture effect of what is being said in the story. Then, I'm also working with photographers. You work with photographers if the story needs art, because the story may need a picture or a visual to go with the text. And, then you are also working with the page designer, because the page designer has to design the page, so they need to know how long a story is because they don't want to make the page too big or small. So, it's a lot of people who happen to also be decision makers.

Yeah, most definitely, he was always telling me about others in the newsroom, and their individual thoughts of my work performance. If something was done in an outstanding manner or if something was not done in a timely fashion, Harvey would always let me know. He'd instruct me to do this next time or try avoiding this scenario with this person. For instance, he'd tell me about people and their opinions of my work that was shared in departmental committee meetings. Then, he'd give me the low-down of what they really thought of me in comparison to this person or this individual, as it referenced my strengths and their weaknesses and vice versa. He'd also take my side during those meetings. Harvey was a fair man and in the same breath, he was a real taskmaster. What I mean is this... if the head designer needed me to perform at an 87% level of performance to provide me a decent evaluation, Harvey would require my level of performance to remain at a 97% level of performance. Harvey was hardly ever satisfied with my work completely—there was always something else that he'd mentioned that I could have done better. But, in his committee meetings with others he always spoke very strongly of my work.

Jessie and Randy are both working members of the same university newspaper organization. Additionally, they are both field news reporters, sometime sharing identical news stories, and reporting as a pair to their mentor. During an interview, Jessie informs the Interviewer of unique reporting experiences, multiple working relationships, and personal encounters of working as a news reporter in the university newspaper organization.

INTERVIEWER:

... you spoke of editors, copy editors, photographer, and designers, in addition to the professional staff that arrives during the evening hours to make sure the paper goes out—is this, as far as you can tell, a cooperative work environment?

JESSIE:

The work environment is pretty good. It's pretty good. Like last week, we were all returning from vacation, we had to put out a huge magazine about the entire football season. This magazine is a rap up from the beginning of the season, all the way up until the end of the Orange Bowl Game victory in Miami. So, it was intense, because our editors were like, "Hey guy, look we've got to get these stories in so we can do the layout." But, for the most part the workplace environment is cool but, it can get pretty intense.

INTERVIEWER:

When you mention intense, what do you mean?

JESSIE:

Well, it's like; there's lots of tension in the air, but never to the point where it's been disrespectful. And, that's the one thing that I do, because I do treat people with respect. So, if someone comes to me in a tone incongruent with what I feel is respectful, I'll always ask, "Hey, what's going on here; I mean, I can understand there may be a lot of pressure in the office and you may be under the gun as a result of it but, let's act accordingly here." But, for the most part, this is a very cooperative work environment. It has to be cooperative and participatory; we are all interdependent upon each other. Every position within the *Collegian* newspaper arsenal is dependent on the position that works below and above it. From reporter that produces the story, to the editor, copy editor, to photographer and designer to print production—I found the *Collegian* to be more participatory and cooperative than most places that I've worked in my short work career. However, I found people in the newsroom disrespect one another, but it has never happened to me.

INTERVIEWER:

Why is that? You mentioned that they may disrespect each other, but it has never happened to you. Why is that?

JESSIE:

I don't know?

INTERVIEWER:

Might it be with the way you carry yourself?

JESSIE:

Well, deep down inside I believe they [Whites] know I'm an easy-going nice guy, but they also know that if I need to go there, I can go there, too. My mother always taught me to always be respectful. I grew up in the church and my mother is a minister, so she always taught me to be very respectful. But, she also suggested that if somebody rubs you the wrong way ... let them know about it. So, I've always been conscious of my mother's advice and I do my best to treat people as she said.

In summary, the African American male protégés' descriptions of their internship work experiences has provided them with much needed broadening of perspective and experiences of working with other parts of their respective companies. The protégés' work-based internship experiences and their psychosocial relationships with others in their respective organizations, including their mentors, broadened their networks of contacts and reputation beyond the narrow confines of their major fields of study. The early-career African American male protégés in this study have made some of their most difficult school-to-career transitions as protégés in mentor relationships, including entering and becoming acclimated to an organization and job assignments. The preliminary anxieties of this transition period can make it difficult to see clear of the urgent requirements of the demanding tasks and challenging assignment. Help from the mentor as well as others in the organization are paramount, and these relationships are the best immunization from the hazards of early career.

Finally, the assignments provided by their mentors deepened the protégés' individual confidence as likely future workers in their respective career industries, and to be talented and capable enough to make the real-time decisions to succeed in a highly

turbulent and fast moving environment. Thriving in one's career is a result of being able to get the career and psychosocial support that mentors, sponsors, and special peers can provide.

CHAPTER SIX: CROSS-CULTURAL MENTORING THEMES

The overview of the study, the literature review, the methods and methodology, the description of the protégés' backgrounds, as well as the overall report of the participant responses have been presented. This chapter will report the data analysis. As suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), the emergent data are organized into categories and themes that are consistent with the research questions, which are as follows:

RQ1: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the career function of their mentoring experiences?

RQ2: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the psychosocial functions of their mentoring experiences?

As a result, the two categories presented here are both related to career mentoring functions, but one is related to career development functions and the other to psychosocial functions.

When considering how the cross-cultural mentor-protégé relationship is characterized by the protégés, two major themes emerged regarding the degree to which the relationship facilitated development of the protégé's career: "the entry shock phase" and "growth process and learning from experience." A third theme, "organizational relationships and connections," emerged that was indicative of the psychosocial functions of the mentoring experience.

Career Development Functions

“The entry shock phase” is marked by a time when the dreams or fantasies of the protégé are met with the actual reality of career and psychosocial functions, in addition to a multitude of preliminary work events to help the individual grow. As Kram (1988) stated, career functions are those aspects of the relationship that enhance advancement and they are possible because of the senior person’s position, experience, and organizational influence in the organization. The cross-cultural mentoring relationship in an organization is a structural role relationship, and at some point during the initial phase the mentor will provide coaching and challenging work to help the protégé navigate his new organizational world.

The opening assignment is the first official task the mentor provides to the protégé. As time passes a sense of self-assurance develops in the protégé, and both individuals develop positive expectations for the relationship based on the opening assignment early encounters, which suggests that the protégé’s fantasies have begun to be transformed into reality. Kram (1988) suggests these positive expectations encourage both individuals to seek out and to nurture the new relationship (p. 52).

Moreover, within the boundaries of a cross-cultural structural relationship in an organization there are additional challenges. The very nature of its composition calls for added dimensions of visibility and performance pressures; the challenges of perceived competence, and issues of comfort and risk are present (Thomas, 2001; Ibarra, 1993). Ragin (1997) suggests that mentors in more diversified relationships should obtain more knowledge, grasp a deeper level of awareness and understanding, and develop a more heightened sense of interpersonal competencies when relating to or interacting with

individuals from different cultures and power-related groups than mentors in more homogeneous relationships.

Nonetheless, both during and after the opening assignment, the protégé's entry phase becomes an essential aspect of the mentoring relationship. In the school setting, the student is a passive receiver of information. However, in a professional setting the protégé learns rather instantly that he is responsible for identifying several learning goals. In the classroom, evaluation comes in the form expected and standard results every several weeks in the form of periodic grades. However, as a novice professional, the protégé learns that he is being evaluated continually by a supervisor, his peers, and indirectly by others in the organization. How the protégé responds to any form of criticism, constructive or otherwise, may impact his notion of perceived competence in the organization.

Additionally, an individual in the first stage of both his career and adulthood is concerned with the kind of occupation and lifestyle apart from his family of origin (Levinson et al., 1978). During this period, the protégé explores an initial course and makes provisional decisions to shape a life and career that are both confirming and satisfying. The protégé carries some notion of who he wants to become; this notion is an expression of his goals and aspirations related to becoming a professional and a person outside the work context. It is during this period that the beginning of his organizational career stage has been set into motion; the cast of characters are present, the lights have been turned on, and the curtain is being raised. It is a reality shock. The first assignment grows to be the young actor's performing script, combined with an audience in full-house attendance, as he commences on an organizational stage.

Career Function, Theme #1: Entry Shock Phase

In keeping with the performance metaphor, this theme is labeled “the entry shock phase” because the initial experience can spawn performance anxiety and extraordinary pressure to perform. The actual performance will influence future assignments and perceptions, but this is all part of the protégé’s development. Developmental tasks of the entry phase include concerns about self, career, and family that become important during life and career stages (Levinson et al., 1978; Hall, 1976). Previous life experiences, including relationships with parents, other authority figures, siblings, and peers influence how an individual behaves in current relationships (Levinson et al., 1976). Understanding these forces helps explain why certain career and psychosocial functions become important in a mentoring relationship. These functions interposition themselves between the organization’s expectations and the newcomer’s desire to become a competent and accepted member of the organization.

Entry into the organization can be viewed from two perspectives—the individual’s and the organization’s. What makes career a complicated concept is that one can view it from the perspective of the individual developing his own life pattern of work or as an occupation, profession, or organization creating a path for people to follow. The same events will have a different meaning from the point of view of the mentor in the organization that makes things happen (i.e., “putting someone through an initiation, or opening assignment rite”) or teaching the novice what the organization is ultimately about.

Jessie is a protégé learning the initial requirements of becoming a newspaper reporter and being exposed to a high level of required writing skills in his first

assignment. Obviously, Jessie had his own self-imposed degree of expertise concerning his writing ability; however, through his mentor he learned the organization's expectation that he meet this requirement. Jessie explains:

Well, I can recall when I first sat down, or better, I remember the first story that I ever wrote for the [daily newspaper]. He [the mentor] literally tore me apart. He marked up my story so much that for a moment or so, the paper that my story was written on looked similar to the colors of the American flag—red, white, and blue. He literally pulled out the red pen and marked it up from top to bottom. (p. 47).

Each of the protégés experienced with anxiety the difference between the skills they brought into their organizations and the professional level of expectations required by the organization. Jessie's picture of professional writing standards is visualized in "red, white, and blue." Like the shop owner who frames his first dollar, Jessie posts this entry phase in a picture frame on a wall behind his desk where he's currently employed as an associate editor for a major metropolitan newspaper.

While Jessie is learning to internalize excellence as a key ingredient of sustaining performance and drive from his critical early career period, Mark's encounter during his first assignment illustrates a different version. His "entry phase encounter" causes real concern:

J.D. comes blasting out, "My name is J.D. M____, I am the producer of D.C. Channel 99. "You're going to look at tapes and you're going to write a story. There are the tapes on the table, grab 'em, they will show you how to do it, bye!" He turns around, walks back into his office and closes the door, and that was my introduction to J.D. M____. After J.D.'s introduction, within a three-day period, out of 30 students 12 students remained at D.C. Channel 99.

It may have been J.D.'s intention to extract or eliminate individuals who were not serious about learning the broadcast journalism profession. However, his scare tactics may have transmitted the wrong message to those who were serious. Mark and others in his orientation group were newcomers to both the profession and the organization they

were entering. At the outset of an organizational career a young adult has concerns about competence and ability to function effectively in the corporate world (Kram, 1988). For Mark, however, his challenging experience at Banneker High School prepared him somewhat for his mentor's shock-wave introduction. This is evident in Mark's choosing to stay the course while others were frightened off and left.

Clearly, Ollie's transition from the university classroom to the real world of work became convoluted, annoying, and complex. Ollie's transition was also startling. He described an experience of being given the responsibility of supervising a shift he was unfamiliar with. Whatever initial performance pressures that Ollie may have anticipated while muddling his way through his initial opening assignment did not undermine his positive outlook and capability to succeed. Yet, the emotional cost of coping, coupled by a natural need to find comfort and avoid any unnecessary risks, remained vividly imprinted in his memory. The lesson was indelible. Ollie describes his reaction:

This first task virtually frightened me out of my socks. As this D-Day shift approached, I literally didn't sleep for three days. I was completely horrified.

The anxiety that Ollie experienced is typical of many young protégés; however, the magnitude of his fear may be traced to his experience as a young Black man with a skilled father who was structurally denied the status he had earned in Barbados as a skilled craftsman.

For as long as Ollie could recall, his father was locked into the system of the wages of accommodation, forced to work multiple jobs for pennies. In other words, his choice defined his wage, but never defined his worth. Through his father, Ollie acquired the knowledge that one's work defines one's status in American society; and serves many essential functions. It provides economic resources that are a means to an end. It allows

Black men to view themselves as contributors to their wives, children, and families. Work carries with it the identifying mark of self-respecting adulthood. Work offers personal identity, validation to oneself, and a sense of connectedness with others. It provides opportunity for interactions with others, and becomes “a regular and regulating force in [life]” (Wilson, 1996, p. 52).

Though some of Ollie’s emotions and self-expectations may be unconscious in their origins, it is important to recognize that he chose to treat these feelings as facts to be rationally dealt with. Even though African American males do not know the source of their many anxieties in certain work situations, and often are not trusting of Whites, they have the rational choice of circumventing such situations if these situations make them too uncomfortable or they can take the risk. In other words, whatever their personality, whatever their limitations, whatever social constraints operating within the work environment, and however high the stress level, African Americans, in general, have learned to preserve a coping device when encountering a sense of personal threat.

The key to successful constructive coping for African American males in a predominately White organization during the shock of entry is to diagnose the situation and themselves sufficiently to identify their choices, and then to act as rationally as possible. Social emotional intelligence matched with critical thinking will provide a balance between comfort and risk.

As a newcomer, it appears that Ollie could not fully identify his concerns about career competence or his ability to function effectively in the organization’s first test. Closely aligned with competence and professional identity is the concern about how committed to one’s career an individual will become.

These tasks cannot be accomplished without first understanding clearly the impact of what feelings are triggered, and what coping responses are available given the constraints within the organization. It should be noted that concerns about competence are most important for African American males in their entry phase induction and their first challenges. The unfamiliarity of a new setting and new responsibilities associated with having to prove oneself as an “unaware insider” creates anxiety about ability to perform effectively (Louis, 1980).

Kram (1988) contends that concerns about identity in a work-role during the entry phase are linked to concerns about competence. In addition to concerns about confidence and professional identity is the concern about how committed to one’s career an individual will become. Whether to stay, and how much to invest, are larger questions for some than for others. Throughout, Kram argues:

In general... success [early career phase] results in greater confidence about one’s capacity to thrive in the corporate setting. Often, developmental relationships begin when the young adult is faced with a significantly new kind of job... This suggests that a young [person’s] efforts to achieve a sense of competence are the catalyst for a new developmental relationship.” (p. 70)

The entry shock may also consist of a personal discovery that another person in the organization is, or the experience itself may be perceived as being an obstruction, a blockade in the path to what the newcomer may want to get done. In an interview with Randy, this point may be better illustrated:

My first assignment was distressful. But, don’t get me wrong, I felt I was better than capable of doing a good job. I mean, I just didn’t quite know what to expect. I had proven myself prepared to do the job with experiences from professional staff in my hometown newspaper, plus I had three years’ newspaper reporting experience in high school. I wasn’t the best thing since sliced bread, but I could hold my own.

Despite his previous experiences with similar tasks, Randy felt uncertain of the professional expectations in this new setting. The first encounter with an “entry-level

assignment” for any newcomer can be intimidating. The literature is replete with studies that demonstrate that “at the outset of an organizational career a young adult has concerns about competence and the ability to function effectively in the corporate world (Kram, 1988, p. 70). From the above narrative, we might believe that Randy’s early career concerns about self and meeting his immediate challenge of a work assignment is normal for all young adults in an organizational setting; however, that is only partly true.

Randy had few illusions about the newspaper organization or the mentor who worked with him. He knew that much of his success as a reporter was dependent on how he approached his job assignments and the skill with which he interacted with those around him. He was constantly vigilant and had learned many things, such as managing his anger toward Whites. In addition, one of the prevalent and most challenging things Randy learned was to accept the added burden of being a “Black reporter.” This is an extremely complicated task for most Blacks, and is often another point at which Blacks who continue to gain upward mobility are separated from those who will remain in low visibility assignments (Rollins & Valdez, 2006; Thomas, 2001).

Researchers have identified the early career as a critical stage in both the personal and professional development of managers in general. Accordingly, this is when the fit between individual and organization is tested; managers are socialized into company norms, mutual expectations are set, and full admission is granted to those managers who meet them (Dickens & Dickens, 1991).

“Unhappy experiences in this early trying ground—poor work relationships, problematic performance, or dissatisfaction with the work itself—can derail people,

leading potentially valuable contributors to leave the organization or to demotivate those who stay” (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 96).

Another protégé, Bernie, describes his early experiences in the entry career phase:

That was all I was concerned about. I was excited about my job; growing, developing, and taking on more responsibility. Now, don't get the idea that I was received by others [Whites] without resistance, because I got more than my share of opposition from team members and other co-workers alike. Oh yea, I got a whole lot of that.

Bernie, like many minorities, had apprehensions of making it in the White corporate world. However, concerns about self, followed by concerns about competency are real for any new novice entering corporate organizations. Thomas (2001) reveals the essence of this pandemic occurrence in his *Harvard Business Review* article, “The truth about mentoring minorities: Race matters.” Thomas further notes that the pressure is abnormally high for minorities who usually are granted fewer opportunities in the early career due to biases and prejudices. In short, the African American male protégés in this study are affected by additional concerns and other inhibiting factors that do not plague or impact their White counterparts to the same degree (Kanter, 1977). Minorities and women face discriminatory barriers to advancement (Ragins & Sundrom, 1989), exclusion from informal networks and role modeling (Ibarra, 1993), and alienation as minority members in organizations (Kanter, 1977; Thomas, 2001).

Black males in the workplace are affected by these perceptual, behavioral, and psychological processes even if they are not actively aware that these negative processes exist. Although all Blacks may not believe “all” the negative perceptions that society has placed on them concerning their perceived competence, these perceptions may be internalized by many Blacks (Grant-Thompson & Atkinson, 1997; Rollins & Valdez, 2006). An important point to recognize is that the behaviors of Bernie's mentor varied as

a function of the composition of the relationship. The mentor's behavior was influenced by Bernie's needs, his own perceptions of his protégé's needs, and his own ability and motivation to meet the protégé's needs.

Several points should be noted, namely, Bernie's internship placed him in New York's Wall Street finance industry. The finance industry is traditionally a White, able-bodied, male-dominated profession. Bernie interned with the Union Bank of Switzerland, and for the most part its employees possessed self-perceived talents and abilities, motives and needs, as well as attitudes and values based on actual successes in a variety of work settings. In other words, Bernie worked in a high-skill, bottom-line, profit-driven culture. Bernie was placed in an environment with a very low tolerance for human mistakes coupled by a more constricted margin of error. Bernie's mentor both recognized and understood that minorities have different developmental and career needs from their majority counterparts.

The realization of the need for a successful strategy in order to effectively survive in an organization becomes very apparent in many of Bernie's statements regarding his entry shock phase. The execution of a successful personal strategy is of monumental importance for minorities, particularly if a minority is to gain interpersonal trustworthiness and assistance in building a strategy from a majority male mentor.

Bernie arrived in the organization with some specialized knowledge base that stemmed from his school work and/or training obtained as a part of his induction into the UBS organization. However, until he actually appeared on the organizational scene, neither he nor the organization knew whether his abilities would be commensurate with the requirements of this job or his potential careers. Further, Bernie could not know how

he would like the assigned work or how his values would fit those of the organization within which the work would be performed.

Gradually, over a period of weeks, Bernie became more acclimated to the corporate culture of the Fortune 100 financial services company. With a gradual gain in confidence on his early assignments, he began experiencing successes on the job. The more success that Bernie accumulated in the form of job-related competencies, the more confidence he gained. It should also be noted that for Bernie, unlike most of the other protégés in this study, he was assigned an “extraordinary mentor” who was a former athlete and had lived among persons of color and was unafraid that Bernie possessed multiple talents for both his finance group and the corporation. The mentor recognized Bernie’s talent immediately after Bernie began meeting him at work before 4:30 a.m. and leaving well into the late evening hours. Bernie was also taking his work home and returning with excellent results, which he shared with his mentor during their early morning discussions. As a result of this “extraordinary mentor,” Bernie was positioned in the kinds of job-related assignments where he could see early successes and quick results.

The entry shock phase that African American male protégés experience as they first encounter majority male-culture mentors may be problematic due to different perceptions and attributed to the cross-cultural mentoring relationship. This concern is primarily assuaged through growth and learning experiences.

Career Function, Theme #2: Growth Process and Learning from Experience

While we have a sense of how and the extent to which the protégés responded to challenges during the entry phase, that phase was just the initial step in the mentoring relationship and in the organization. In that stage the mentoring was limited or nil. In this

section, the protégés' developmental learning experiences will be explored as they come up against the organization's perceptual, behavioral, and psychological processes unique to the cross-cultural mentoring relationship. Again, the primary focus of this study is the development of the protégé, the mentoring relationship, and to a lesser extent the development of the mentor. As discussed previously, mentors provide two types of behaviors or functions that are inextricably intertwined. These include (1) career development functions that are aimed at helping the protégé advance in the organization; these functions include sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging work assignments; and (2) psychosocial functions that provide counseling, acceptance, and personal support to the protégé (Kram, 1988). However, like a diamond whose flash cannot be attributed to any single facet, the richness of the mentoring relationship depends on the juxtaposition of these multiple mentoring aspects.

A key point of this study, and aptly reported in the prevailing view of Ragins (1997), is that "mentor behaviors vary as a function of the composition of the relationship, and as such, the mentor's behavior is influenced by the protégé's needs, his capabilities, and the mentor's perception, ability, and motivation of the protégé's needs to meet the needs of the protégé" (p. 502). Thus, as partial validation of Ragins' observations, it is important to recognize that racial and ethnic minorities often have diversely dissimilar developmental and career requisite skill needs than their majority counterparts (Kanter, 1977).

During the early career period, Jessie's story illustrates these differences. Jessie has developed a working relationship with his mentor, as well as a distinct pattern of early experiences that have enabled him to acquire and build a strong early career

foundation. His early accomplishments, despite episodes of becoming discouraged relative to his token and solo status in the organization, proved to be significant accomplishments.

During the interview, Jessie reveals a series of events and developmental relationships that formed the foundation for his subsequent success. Jessie reflects on numerous relationships that he encountered during a normal newsroom day in his early career:

Well, it was like a chain reaction. The reporter has to go out and get the story... write the story and get it in by five o'clock that same day. Then, by five o'clock the editor has to read the story... see, the story isn't read by one person, it may be read by four or five individuals before it is actually sent to print. So, the reporter brings the story to the editor... the editor reads it... sends it to another editor, who in turn, sends the story to the copy editor to check the big picture effect of what is being said in the story. Then, you are also working with photographers... if the story needs art, because the story may need a picture or a visual to go with the story. And, then you are also working with the page designer, because the page designer has to design the page, so they need to know how long a story is because they don't want to make the page too big or small. So, it's not just one person involved in a story, it's a lot of people. Then, we have our professional staff that comes in at night... that makes sure that this paper is going to go out. So, the point is, you cannot take deadlines lightly. It's important in this business. My point here is that the reporter wants to get the news but must also utilize deadlines to work with others to get the work done in a timely fashion (p. 30).

As a news reporter, Jessie's constellation of relationships expanded rapidly and in some instances extended beyond the initial mentor to include peers, role-set coworkers, and persons above and below him in the organizational hierarchy. Jessie's informal interaction "networks tended to be full of redundant ties (i.e., of people who knew each other) and often mirrored his initial mentor's own work-related relationships" (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 112). Particularly, in turbulent task environments or under conditions of uncertainty, individuals are more likely to direct their networking strategies to those who have similar personal as well as professional attributes (Galaskiewicz, & Shatin,

1981; Kanter, 1977). When transactions are frequent, the benefits of strong ties, trust, predictability, and voice (as opposed to an exit solution to relationship difficulties) may outweigh those of weaker relationships (Aldrich, 1989).

For example, as a news reporter, Jessie was greatly aided by his mentor, Harvey. With the active support of his mentor, as a news reporter Jessie was met with a constellation of relationships, as well as the expansion of informal interaction networks inflated rapidly. These newly inherited relationships arrived in an assortment of flavors, textures, and varieties (tie strength, range, and network density) and bear dissimilar meanings and connotations while each served as an instrumental resource as well. These relationships were critical for job effectiveness, career advancement, and social political support.

Tie strength is a function of “the amount of time” the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and reciprocal services that typified this kind of relationship characteristic (Kanter, 1989). Jessie’s rise as a news reporter demonstrates a required need to develop a fluid constellation of ties that form hurriedly, dissolve intermittently, and are re-activated over again according to demand. Accordingly, despite their more expressive nature, Ibarra (1993) contends that strong ties between co-members of an organization also serve a range of important instrumental functions. Other organizational studies, usually measuring stronger links, indicate that ties to powerful persons in the organization are critical for centrality to organization-wide networks (Ibarra, 1993; Brass, 1984; Thomas, 2001). Weak ties are the channels through which socially distant ideas, influences, or information reach an individual (Granovetter, 1973). In other words, for minorities employed in predominately White organizations, the people they know the

least [weak ties] are often the people they need the most (Thomas, 2001). Conceivably, weak tie value lies less in the limitation or weakness of the relationship than in the greater likelihood that they constitute a bridge to parts of the social system range that may be otherwise isolated from the flow of information.

Jessie's example of "strength ties" is exemplified in the large amount of time he spends as a reporter with editors, photographers, page designers, and other professional staff. "So, it's not just one person involved in a story, it's a lot of people (Jessie, p. 30). Jessie took extraordinary initiative to connect with these individuals. However, this was missed opportunity for the mentor/sponsorship to have introduced Jessie to this cast of characters. Cross-cultural mentoring training would have addressed these kinds of relational issues of strength ties, range, and network density.

Range is defined as the degree of diversity contained in a personal network (Burt, 1982). "It differs from homophily [characterized by similar levels of racial and/or gender exclusion in the dominate group] in that it refers to differences among contacts within a focal actor's network instead of difference or similarity between focal actors and those to whom they are tied" (Ibarra, 1993, p. 61). However, some researchers contend that having a broad range of network relationships provides greater access to instrumental resources than drawing contacts from a restricted group (Aldrich, 1989; Burt, 1982, 1992).

Empirical reports indicate that a person's contacts that extend beyond their workflow interactions, immediate work groups, or immediate work units tend to be perceived as powerful (Blau & Alba, 1982; Brass, 1984; Rollins & Valdez, 2006). Taking these empirical reports a step further, a network that includes peers, superiors, and

superiors of superiors, subordinates, and subordinates of subordinates provides a range and network density of support for the implementation of a mentor's agenda and career/psychosocial development for his protégé.

Finally, network density refers to the extensiveness of contact among the members of an individual's personal network (Marsden, 1990, p. 451), and focuses attention on how a focal individual is affected by relationships among his contacts. Density is high if a person's network contacts all have close network connections with each other. Density is measured by comparing the total number of ties to the potential number that would occur if everyone in the network were connected to everyone else (Marsden, 1990).

The organization is the context of opportunities, and consequently mentors possess many instrumental network ties with other workers, some of whom they get along with and some to whom they do not ordinarily associate with or care for but the work has to get done. For this reason, personal networks characterized by a commonness of strong ties are often times redundant or inefficient for instrumental purposes. However, Ibarra (1993) contends that certain weak and strong ties within organizations are desirable despite potential redundancies (p. 63).

Jessie's work relationships with the editor, the copy editor, photographers, the page designer, and the professional staff have distinct indescribable implications. Through initial active support, Jessie's mentor encouraged him to maintain these network relationships over the relatively long time spent as a news reporter. The mentor's support served to create a strong social consensus within Jessie's immediate work group, as well as with those to whom he reported within the organization.

Ultimately, it was the course of Jessie's preference to employ and/or make use of a "perception and behavior maintenance strategy" to gain entry into organizational relationships and cluster networks within the dominate group. This strategy helped the organization to learn of Jessie's abilities, his passionate commitment to excellence, and his potential to succeed, thereby lending him credibility toward developing a professional reputation.

Relationships at work are central to accomplishing the work task. Barriers to social access cripple the minority professional. Jessie is aware of the many people involved in getting a story printed. He goes to exceptional lengths above and beyond his mentor's efforts to build sustaining relationships based on mutual respect and performance. He earns his reputation for excellence. Despite the common organizational conditions that include unique social constraints, stereotyping and negative attributions, and ultimately the practice of exclusion, Jessie strives to maintain his work-based relationships and informal interaction networks. By remaining focused on his work function he transcends what may have been inevitable workplace problems.

Jessie's key consideration was not to seek a relationship with one particular individual. Rather, at all times he viewed an individual as a port of entry or access to a more powerful cluster of individuals that would inevitably extend beyond a single interpersonal relationship. Jessie was achieving professional relationship efficiency in return for time and energy invested in maintaining single interpersonal relationships that would grant him access to organizational resources. This is a pragmatic strategy that is rarely employed by many racial minorities but that can be strategically used in an organization-wide system of networks.

First, through the assistance of a mentor, Jessie was recognized by an organization-wide system of relationships and interconnected networks as a high performer, who also happens to be the lone African American male reporter for the university newspaper. Second, he was assigned to every variety of reporting the paper had to offer and he established an impeccable track record of exemplary performance. Third, he was nominated and won several “Top Reporter of the Year Awards” and was offered numerous positions in the industry after graduation. Fourth, he covered every University football game (home and away) for four years. Jessie had the psychological affirmations of loving the work and possessing an interior standard of excellence and an internal compass guiding him toward on-going mastery and unremitting professional development.

The personal alliance that developed between Jessie and his culturally different mid-level mentor in the organization is symbolic of a successful partnership between the two of them, in addition to a larger group of managers and employees who came to share (unknowingly) their commitment to diversity. The result was deep levels of exchange, trust, and problem solving.

Such cross-cultural mentoring partnerships model a type of collaboration seldom observed in predominately White organizations (Grant-Thompson & Atkinson, 1997; Rollins & Valdez, 2006; Thomas, 2001). The presence of an African American male with tie strength partnerships, range, and network density was enriching for many of Jessie’s White colleagues who had never in their occupational experience had a working relationship with a person of color. Jessie recalls, however, that the issue of cultural diversity never came up as a topic of conversation with his mentor:

But, it's funny, because we'd never talked about race, and we never talked about the huge disparity of people of color in the industry, or persons of color that work at the ... newspaper. But, he's been very helpful to me... (p. 25)

The mid-level mentor would have been wise to take advantage of opportunities to discuss with Jessie various issues of cultural diversity that affect mobility for minorities in the workplace. To be more effective and efficient as a mentor involved in an organizational cross-cultural mentoring relationship, a first step may be "the monitoring process to understand the ... organization's opportunity structure" (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 220). Inherently, career and psychosocial functions are embedded in an organization's opportunity structure.

An additional benefit of a thorough and careful understanding of the organization's opportunity structure is that it will almost invariably generate some essential questions that may be asked. Thomas and Gabarro (1999) have extrapolated recommendations from business and industry about how a thorough examination of an organization's opportunity structure can be brought into question to become useful. Selected questions include the following: What is the replica of mobility in our organization? Do different paths and identical destinations for Whites and minorities exist in our organization? If so, what dominant group perceptions, behaviors, and processes govern it? Are there different implied norms or rules governing the distribution of rewards to minorities as compared to Whites? If so, why? In addition to these kinds of queries, mentors can also identify the dominant pathways to the organization's critical jobs and the developmental relationships and informal network experiences that correspond with them (p. 220).

Similar to Jessie's promotion to a high-visibility upper-management position in a university newspaper organization, Mark's story illustrates progression as a news anchor

for a television broadcasting station. Mark's developmental experiences, helped along by his mentor JD, guided him in acquiring a high degree of technical proficiency and interpersonal skill mastery as a news anchor with organizational clout.

The organizational context played a major role in creating the conditions and opportunities for Mark to acquire the skills and experiences needed to become a seasoned broadcast journalist. Just as Mark labored to penetrate the barriers of cultural difference, the TV station was working to diminish those same barriers.

Mark's specific developmental experiences were comprised of assignments that involved his active participation in the production of on-location news reporting, news reporter production layout designs, and volunteering to handle additional responsibilities in the hope of expanding his scope beyond the current job. He did all of these things, and eventually received his mentor's support and endorsement. This was an eye-opening experience for Mark, which required him to stretch his skills beyond those previously demonstrated.

During the interview for this research study, Mark talked about his mentor and experiences in his early career internship as a lesson in his subjective encounters with the TV broadcasting organization:

He [the mentor] simply approached me one day and asked me to strongly consider becoming his news anchor, primarily because Nicole was leaving and ... I had all the makings as well as the lion's share of intact experiences. JD told me, "Mark you need to do this; I see it in you." Actually, I was virtually scared out of my mind. After a few days, he more or less took me through each and every aspect of the duties and responsibilities of a news anchor for our television broadcasting station; on-location news-reporting assignments, the duties and responsibilities of the technical crew, materials and equipment, production layouts, reel tapes analysis, story development broadcast production, timing and press releases and on and on. He introduced me to other area departments and professionals I'd be working with that makes for a broadcast news report: production managers, field reporters, team managers, choreographers, camera operators, film loaders, script supervisors, and make-up artists, to name a few. I worked with what seemed to be some of the most detestable and condescending

White folk in the industry. I never really felt that I could ever be accepted in some of those groups I was assigned to work in; by all rights, I was invisible. But JD stood right there with me all the way, sometimes as if to even force some of these persons to work with me, and to teach me the ropes.

As noted, cultural barriers can limit minority access to the opportunity and development needed to advance at a particular stage of a career. However, a persistent and reoccurring theme emerges throughout every narrative account that has been offered so far—that is, being perceived as having high potential eventually led to the protégés' continuous expansion of developmental relationships. Although the repeated adage is “it’s not what you know, but who you know,” for minorities both “what” and “who” hold a considerable amount of weight. Without extraordinarily high performance, minorities are rarely given the recognition and rewards (Thomas, 2001).

In a longitudinal study of minority executive development, Thomas & Gabarro (1999) emphasized the specific content of developmental experiences for the minority executives they studied: “[D]eep grounding was required in the functional area in which they began their managerial career and was demonstrated through consistent and excellent performance over time” (p. 114). On closer inspection, however, Mark’s mentor JD further helped him along by providing an assortment of assignments requiring the development and focus to hone his skills to a higher degree. These assignments entailed higher-level skills and additional responsibilities beyond those Mark had already demonstrated.

Additionally, JD purposefully placed Mark in specific assignments that would develop his intuitive sense of how different elements of TV station operations were interconnected, thus, enabling Mark to bridge the knowledge gap between his working-familiarity with on-location news-reporting assignments and articulating his needs to a

host of various professional staff members. These continuous experiences furnished Mark with a set of portable and transferable skills for both field and on-location reporting, thereby arming him with a broadened perspective outside of his area of expertise.

JD understood that as a news anchor, Mark possessed strong technical expertise which would serve him well. However, JD also implicitly recognized that Mark required first-line supervisory exposure, which would facilitate acquiring the skill of persuading others in the work unit to whom he had to report. In effect, Mark understood all too well, drawing on the lessons learned from his parents and family friends, that as a minority advances toward higher levels in predominately White organizations, Whites males often display a tendency to react to the cultural minority member's advancement with status anxiety, a term used by scholars of risk perception (Weber & Milliman, 1997). This dynamic, it is hypothesized, reflects risk skepticism that hierarchical and individualistic White males display when activities integral to their status are challenged as harmful or perceived as a threat.

So, consequently, many White males tend to believe that the career advancement of racial minority members toward the strategic apex of an organization represents what Wells and Jennings (1983) argue to be a "scandalous paradox." These authors report, "For Whites, a scandalous paradox occurs when a person possessing neither legal rights nor social status receives preference over someone possessing both. For example, this behavior may be observed when a Black person is given a position, privilege, perk, or other coveted resources that historically and typically have been granted exclusively to Whites" (p. 394).

Historically, White males have perceived prestige, power, and privilege (often indistinguishable, one from the other) as their birthright, their inheritance (Wells & Jennings, 1983, p. 394). Behaviors associated with these perceptions continue to express themselves today among many Americans (Crutcher, 2007; Rollins & Valdez, 2006). Further, these authors argue that there are threshold positions in organizations at which mid-level White male opposition is overtly expressed. Wells (1996) describes this oppositional expression as a “legitivist impulse,” an urge to “put things right” when mid-level White males perceive their assumed entitlements are being taken away and given to undeserving cultural minority group members.

Mark’s narrative mirrors a number of Wells’ findings:

I worked with what seemed to be some of the most detestable and condescending White folk in the industry. I never really felt that I could ever be accepted in some of those groups I was assigned to work in. By all rights, I was invisible. But JD stood right there with me all the way, sometimes as if to even force some of these persons to work with me and to teach me the ropes.

In his account Mark describes a typical predicament for a minority group member who has been identified by the organization as a high-potential candidate. In the applied behavioral science literature, for example, closely aligned to the issue of status threat among Whites, there is a second cousin that answers to a different name “an exception-to-rule” explanation. Wells (1998) reports that when Whites treat Black role occupants as an “exception to the rule,” such a perspective leads to minority-based attributions (to the exclusion of individual-based assessments) and minority-based devaluation. This idealization of the role occupant simultaneously denigrates all Black people including, in due time, the role occupant. For example, one might overhear a conversation about how articulate and well spoken a particular Black employee is. What else could be assumed

about a highly educated person with an advanced degree, employed by a major corporation, occupying a managerial position?

Wells (1998), in fact, goes on to explain in simple terms, when a Black professional speaks well, it is often noticed as if to suggest that such verbal skill violates a covertly held expectation. This exception-to-the-rule explanation allows the White person to exempt the Black role occupant from his or her racial group-based attributions (mostly negative and demeaning). It also enables the White person to maintain stereotypical generalizations and attributions about the cultural minority group as a whole, because this *individual* is identified as unrepresentative (p. 395) of the group he or she should not belong.

When the Black role occupant disappoints, missteps, fails at a task, or makes errors, the exception-to-rule explanation is immediately suspended and the idealized Black professional, once exempt from the minority group-based attribution, becomes one of “them” again. Wells states that a common reaction among Whites is: “I knew it was too good to be true, he or she is just like all the rest. This affirmative action business does not work” (p. 395).

Inevitably, Mark’s early life experiences, combined with a mentor with organizational rank and influence, enabled Mark to navigate his organizational world. It was within this structural role relationship that the mentor could help Mark increase his position of influence through mutual association. The quality of this interpersonal bond provided several career functions. For example, this protection enabled Mark to perform in a set of patterned developmental experiences, with a series of challenging assignments, which showed the way to exposure-and-visibility to upper management.

The career support offered via his mentor-protégé relationship (protection, challenging assignments, exposure-and-visibility) provided mutual trust and established a continuous series of meaningful relationships with others in the organization. These experiences, combined with a host of linked developmental relationships, helped to shape Mark's confidence to navigate the corporate environment. They would later shape individual competence and organizational credibility.

Each formative experience has an effect, direct or indirect, on the development of personal resources (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 117). To begin, family, school, and other early life experiences can establish—or fail to establish—the confidence and drive needed to fully engage in the job, to resist doubt, and to take appropriate risk (Roberts & White, 1998).

As noted, Mark attributed much of his success to availability and access via his developmental relationship to his mentor, JD. And, in concert with JD, secondary relationships developed with additional supervisors and peers. However, the principal distinction was that Mark had a high frequency of experiences that “opened his eyes.” These experiences provided him new insights into career decision-making, the importance of company culture, and his own impact on the lives of others. In turn, others impacted Mark and increased his level of self-confidence.

A sidebar should be noted—both Jessie and Mark are displaying what in football is called “open field running.” Their intern performances have enabled them to break through the dangerous block of cultural ignorance, thereby bridging the knowledge gap of cultural diversity and perceived performance, which over and over again is a source of disruption to personal growth and professional development. Without opportunity and

development prearranged by their mentors to be placed in positions to perform, their careers would likely have been less effective or stalled.

As cultural minorities, the protégés in this study have developed internal compasses that reliably point in the direction of true North. They have internalized the capacity to grow and learn from their internal sources of intrinsic motivation, rather than the external forces, which are inevitably controlled by the organizations in which they must compete. To have risen to such high-visibility decision-making positions within their respective organizations requires an exceedingly high level of competence, confidence, and opportunity.

In contrast to Mark's rapid movement into a high-visibility news anchor for a television broadcasting station, Ollie's story illustrates a slower pattern of progression as a new assistant facility manager of the company's north-central region. Ollie's position is one in which a steady progression of job task assignments provides the cumulative experience and positioning through which one grows into eligibility as a likely candidate for facility operations manager.

Ollie's pattern involves an evolutionary broadening and deepening of managerial skills and exposure as supervisor of temporary personnel and full-time company employees. Characteristically, Ollie has but one important mentor who provides opportunities and developmental experiences. He recalls:

It was a situation that involved a few hourly employees and their handling of packages that needed to go on the trucks in preparation for the next shift. He [SZ, the mentor] had some heated words for me, as a result of my not disciplining "on the spot" this particular individual in the presence of other co-workers. I'd informed SZ that I had approached this individual and that I mentioned to him that we needed to meet at the conclusion of the shift in my office. But, SZ felt that was inappropriate and that I should correct the situation right here—right now. So, I began to explain to him my approach on the matter. But then, he closed the distance gap between us, pointed his finger into my face, and said, in

no uncertain terms, “No, you shut up and listen to what I’m saying.” I responded, “Hey, hey. Wait, let me tell you something right now, I have but one father, and he’s in Boston, Massachusetts. If you think you’re going to speak to me any way you feel, you’re sadly mistaken. We’re both men here, and the two of us want to get the job done in the most efficient and effective manner as possible.

Obviously, Ollie is an “outsider.” However, at the heart of the matter is this:

Ollie’s everyday functioning in the workplace is shaped not only by his own background but also by the organization’s cultural attitudes in combination with the baggage of the individuals who work for the organization. Many of the behaviors our protégés encounter in predominately White corporate settings cannot be declared as new. Although attitudes have changed and many ways of relating to cultural minorities in predominately White corporate settings are no longer in vogue, the spirit that gave those behaviors currency lives on. It continues to express itself in ways that are as destructive of character and community as ever.

The notion of cultural dissimilarity remains deeply rooted in the American psyche and is the inevitable attendant in all personal relations in American life. The narrative subtexts of each African American male protégé in this study begin with a spectrum of cultural experiences that plowed the ground of their personal consciousness and planted the seeds of a conventional interpretation of reality by which they were expected to cope if they wanted to survive.

Ollie, like other cultural minorities, tends to possess a propensity to be sensitive to the moods of White people in various situations; that is, minorities have learned to be conscious of White people’s cultural moods and intentions. When Ollie began to feel intimidation stemming from SZ’s statements (e.g., “No, you shut up and listen to what I’m saying”) Ollie thought to himself for a flash second, “Who does this guy think he is? If I do not address this now, this kind of condescension will continue.” In that same

moment in time, however, Ollie reveals a rather astonishing coping behavior called *interest transference*.

Dickens and Dickens (1991) suggest that “interest transference” is a coping behavior mechanism triggered and used by Blacks to help manage stressful or awkward situations with Whites in the context of an explosive interaction episode. Interest transference entails transferring one’s awareness of discomfort into a negotiation, which bares the intense interest of a positive discussion and interaction with the other. For example, Ollie deemphasized his feelings of stress or awkwardness and transferred those energies into a positive discussion to counter SZ’s competing interests.

Ollie chose not to become bogged down with his supervisor-mentor’s insulting physical posture, offense gestures, and intimidating remarks. For instance, he astutely observed his supervisor-mentor’s physical behavior (e.g., “...he closed the distance gap between us, pointed his finger into my face, and said, in no uncertain terms, “No, you shut up and listen....”), and discerned that SZ’s tone of voice and mannerism implied that he was speaking down to Ollie as if he were a disobedient diminutive pet or small child, exhibiting behaviors of a owner/animal or parent/child affiliation.

Ollie’s response, that he had but one father, placed responsibility for SZ’s attitude, behavior, and emotional outburst back on SZ where the responsibility belonged. This technique, “sudden seizure of stupidity” according to Dickens and Dickens (1991), “frequently calms the person ... and forces that individual to reexamine his or her own emotional data. This technique places the responsibility back on the originator to explain his or her behavior” (p. 81).

In instances where racial and ethnic minorities dwell in predominately White work settings and where racial and ethnic minorities may be provoked to engage in a potentially conflicting situation, the coping mechanisms mentioned above (interest transference and sudden seizure of stupidity), proper timing is equally critical. However, proper timing is a learned behavior and is often the critical ingredient that can ensure success. Finding a person who displays this ability and asking questions, modeling or copying that person's behavior may help (Dickens & Dickens, 1991).

Social psychologists have found that evaluations of performance are highly responsive to status differences in experimental settings (Webster & Foschi, 1988). Research on performance appraisals in organizations has also found evidence of bias, error, and favoritism that is related to status and numerical representation (Chen & DiTomaso, 1996). Thus, cognitive processes may lead to disadvantages in performance evaluations for women and minorities where they are in the minority and have lower status than White men.

Performance feedback and evaluations are inherently linked to mentor career strategies and behaviors, and as such are an acceptable and effective approach for majority members. However, these same mentor career strategies and behaviors are nothing more than a "stratagem" for minority members in organizations, a tactic or maneuver, a conscious or unconscious behavioral scheme designed to deceive the other. Mentors of minority protégés may, therefore, need to meet their special needs and compensate for structural barriers by buffering the protégé from discrimination, tailoring their career paths, extending extra support, building their self-confidence and career

goals, and providing them with insider information usually obtained in the “good ole boys” networks (Ragins, 1989).

In contrast to Jessie and Ollie, Randy’s story illustrates yet another different pattern of progression. Randy is interning as a field reporter for a large university newspaper. Randy’s developmental experiences, helped along by his mentor, guided him to acquire a high degree of field reporter proficiency; however, as a field reporter Randy found himself stalled by a series of competitive bouts with other individuals in roughly identical job families in competition with one another for the same promotion.

Organizational context plays a major role in creating the conditions and opportunities for Randy, who acquired the skills and experiences needed to become a seasoned, “hard news” field reporter. Mastering these skills and experiences were expected to lead to other high-visibility assignments and opportunities, which Randy witnessed happening to his White colleagues. Although he thought he had high potential, Randy labored to penetrate the organization’s opportunity structure. He explains:

“Hard news” involved business meetings, town hall meetings, legislation, government, politics or anything that would basically be boring or somewhat challenging to the average student of my age. And I reported on hard news for almost three consecutive semesters, the duration of the time I worked for the newspaper. I’d witnessed the Whites moving on, experiencing new and more challenging assignments. Some that started with me a year or so ago, I’d have taught, soon became my supervisor. I’d always wanted more exposure to other aspects of the university paper, but I was kept tied down to hard news assignments. I continue to struggle with this issue; it still hurts.

Randy’s important assignments and developmental opportunities were limited to on-location field reporting. Likewise, his specific experiences were limited to “hard news” and business meetings of city council, legislation, government and politics, school board meetings, and town hall meetings.

For two successive years the organization conveyed by official actions and behaviors that Randy was regarded as a substandard staff member. Perhaps, there are justifiable reasons and/or explanations on behalf of the university newspaper professional staff that may explain Randy's career deadlock, but Randy did not understand. Many of today's Black young people have been taught to be more confident than their parents were, although a lack of confidence is still pervasive among adult Black professionals. The lack of self-confidence can be a product of personal background and upbringing, and it can be a product of historical cultural prejudice.

Deeply rooted within Randy's psyche lay not only the tangled skein of the madness that is his heritage, but also the enduring visible symbol of American style corporate apartheid. Corporate apartheid is when polarization occurs between a large Black minority in predominately White American corporations are reserved for positions that are largely race-related. But, above all, and infinitely more fundamental to our corporate well being today and tomorrow, corporate apartheid represents the increasing polarization between a large Black minority and a White majority in this country with unpredictable social and political consequences. Corporate apartheid points to, and is part of, an American problem of the first magnitude in which there is a steady maintenance of wasted Black corporate talent throughout the United States workforce.

Some researchers contend that systematic prejudice and institutionalized discrimination do not take place because of some ill-spirited tenor of diehard bigots, but rather (real or imagined) as "a description of culturally biased assessments and selection criteria" (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 26). Some researchers suggest systematic prejudice and various forms of institutionalized discrimination are manifest in subtle

forms of personal treatment, discrimination that serves as major barriers to many African Americans' full enfranchisement in the workplace (Feagin & Sikes, 1994).

Comparing themselves to Whites with similar skills, experience, and education, many Blacks have concluded that as a whole they should be doing more than they are now. Bill Cosby's rant on network television about Black nihilism in 2005 is indicative of this. Still, whether because of bad luck, bad decisions, race, or a combination of all three, one cannot be sure. But wherever the primary fault, cultural differences have played a role. "For most Blacks in America, regardless of status, political persuasion, or accomplishments, the moment has yet to arrive when [cultural differences] can be treated as total irrelevancy. Too often, [cultural diversity] is the only relevant factor defining our existence" (Cose, 1998, p. 28) in the corporate arena.

Treatment discrimination in an organization by the dominate group to an individual member of a less dominate group is based on group membership. The dominate group's treatment of the less dominate group member becomes a collectively shared assumption that regulates members of the less dominate group to particular position in the organization. Moreover, Blacks employed in a predominately White work setting learn almost instantaneously that a function of treatment discrimination is cultural prejudice and "the tax of prejudice is time" (Thomas & Gabraro, 1999, p. 74).

Randy offered s brief description of his early internship experience, which illustrates how he chose to manage his career with the newspaper organization and overcome barriers with some assistance of a mentor-supervisor:

Harvey [mentor] told me from the breakaway [from the start] that he'd felt that I had a nose for the "hard news." And, in no uncertain terms, that was my first experience of having someone of Harvey's professional rank and organizational clout take an interest, you know, take the time to talk to me, a brother? ...like this cat has been in the media business for over 25 years. For a White cat to ever sit

me down, assess my writings, and inform me that I had a talent, it just doesn't happen? You know, as a young and aspiring reporter, my feelings and observations tell me that there were few, if any, Black folk doing anything of substance at the newspaper? So hey, I figure I've got this cat... that's taking my back and telling me that I've a nose for this kind of reporting so, you know, I'm going to develop my reporting skills.

This discussion of direct verbal support that Randy is receiving through Harvey is the most frequently observed career function in the workplace—sponsorship. In her study of developmental relationships in organizational life, Kram (1988) observes, “A senior individual’s public support of a young individual launching a career is critical for advancement in an organization. Opportunities for advancement through the hierarchy are made possible in one-on-one conversations as well as in formal promotional decision meetings” (p. 24).

However, it is noted at this point that the form of sponsorship Randy received was no more than direct verbal support. Conversations with a potential sponsor that have not taken place at a formal meeting or during formal discussions with peers, supervisors, and subordinates who participate in promotional decisions are of no significant worth to further advancement. Movement in the organization depends on good press to share an individual’s potential offerings to the organization’s daily operations, as well as that which is communicated through others about the individual’s professional competence.

At first glance, it appears that Harvey sincerely sought to help Randy advance his organizational career. Harvey may even have considered helping Randy to build a solid reputation, to become known in the organization, and to provide him with challenging opportunities that would prepare him for higher-level assignments to be hosted by other patterned developmental relationships. However, as time passed this was never to be the

case. For this reason, Harvey lost Randy's trust. Harvey's inability to effectively sponsor Randy as he'd apparently promised reflects poorly on the mentor's credibility.

This is not to say that Randy is altogether faultless. It is not necessarily all Harvey's making. What is clear, however, is that Randy may have had opportunities to perhaps build stepping stones to a better position, but these opportunities were eclipsed by a stunted growth in their relationship. This is not to suggest that Harvey or the newspaper organization was openly hostile to Randy. Naked hatred and open hostility are—one would hope—largely relics of a wretched past. Still, however, many organizations and individuals within them have trouble seeing Blacks in the same light in which they customarily see Whites, thus, favoring the latter candidates (Crutcher, 2007; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2002; 2004; Thomas, 1991).

Bernie's experience is different. Bernie is an African American protégé who earned an internship assignment in the finance district of New York's Wall Street. He arrived at an assignment with several competencies, including a working technical skill in financial software systems, at a critical time. His mentor opted to give him opportunities on some key projects. In situations perceived to have high organizational or business risk, critical assignments are more likely to go to highly credible people who are, in turn, connected to social networks and important job assignments (Kanter, 1977).

In the narrative account below the researcher observed that MG's (mentor) investment in Bernie's professional development, along with other exemplary performers, occurred precisely because MG's view of his protégé's technical ability and interpersonal skills were trustworthy and credible. MG's assessment of Bernie may have

led to similar opportunities that would further develop a repertoire of added skills. Bernie reflects:

I was a self-acclaimed expert in Microsoft Excel, and MG was always assigning me to everything and everybody, both in and beyond the borders of our finance group ... He'd taught me early on that while my technical skills were essential, I needed added exposure, but more importantly he believed in his ability of placing me into already established relationships with others that needed my level of technical expertise. MG was an exceptional individual... he understood the kinds of issues I'd come across and did something to right these wrongs—as soon as he decided that I was for real, and committed to learning every aspect of our finance group. I understand now. MG involved people other than himself to invest in my professional growth. He'd use these organizational relationships as sources of reliable input; you know, like, checks and balances to assess my performance from multiple perspectives. In a real sense, MG taught me how to survive the corporate jungle.

Competence has two components relevant to professional development: deep grounding in one or more areas of expertise and continual mastery of new and broader skills (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 114). Specifically, MG contributed critical brands of support during Bernie's mentorship experience. First, he opened the door to challenging assignments requiring Bernie to take on additional responsibilities. The depth of technical competence required in each assignment increased in degree and difficulty as time passed which allowed Bernie to demonstrate his technical expertise more broadly in the organization. Second, by introducing Bernie to the turbulent task environment of high-performing groups, MG sent a signal to the rest of the organization that his protégé was considered a high performer and important to the operation. These kinds of developmental experiences helped reinforce Bernie's self-confidence and concerns about competency, and they widened his credibility with others in the organization.

In particular, subsequent to Bernie's increased motivation to learn more of the finance business and his growing infatuation with his multiple assignments, he began to

model his mentor's behavior by arriving at the office long before the start of the work day. Bernie explains:

MG wouldn't place me with just one project, so this called for good organizational project-coordination, and more counsel and direction from MG, as well... I'd start the day at 4:30 a.m., but my day oftentimes wouldn't end until after 9:00 or 10:00 at night. I'd take different aspects of projects home and worked on them from there long into the night.

MG modeled good organizational role behavior and excellent mentoring practices. Role modeling is a psychosocial function that will be discussed as it relates to the third theme, but in terms of growth and learning, Bernie's experiences have proved indispensable.

Of the five protégés and their mentoring relationships, that of Bernie and MG is most exemplary of how to effectively and successfully overcome the challenges and multiple tasks of a cross-cultural relationship. As seen, every aspect of mentoring is infused with interpersonal dynamics and connection skills, which are clearly psychosocial dimensions of mentoring.

Psychosocial Function, Theme #1: Organizational Relationships and Connections

In this study, some of the protégés developed extreme competencies, defined here as technical skill mastery tied to expertise in one or two business areas (Thomas, 1990). Without a doubt, "extreme competence can compensate for the absence of social networks and the eternal conscious feeling of alienation, but their experience also suggests that demonstrating competence is scarcely enough for minorities to succeed; they must also earn organizational credibility" (Thomas & Gabarro, 1999, p. 115). As Thomas and Gabarro suggest, credibility depends on an individual's successful performance, strong commitment to excellence, and impact on core business functions.

Early relationships with key managers and role-setting coworkers, when combined with focused and deep expertise, directly influence credibility. The skills, abilities, and knowledge are most effective when combined with relationships. Psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship provide the kind of balance needed to excel in a career where consistent performance is expected and normal.

Kram (1988) indicates that psychosocial functions are those aspects of a relationship that enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness in a professional role (p. 32). Kram also contends that role modeling involves the mentor setting a desirable example, and the junior person identifying with it; it is a conscious and an unconscious process and the mentor may be unaware of the example he is providing for the less experienced colleague. Moreover, the protégé may be unaware of the strength of identification.

In this phase of Bernie's relationship with MG, Bernie emulated certain aspects of the mentor's style and began to initiate more interaction with his mentor around business tasks, and common organizational concerns. Through a continuous flow of dialogue with the mentor Bernie "learned new approaches, attitudes, and values held by his mentor, and the mentor had the opportunity to articulate the central parts of his self-image in the work role" (Kram, 1988, p. 33).

During MG's 4:30 a.m. counseling sessions, quality time was utilized to point out to Bernie that his stellar performance in high-visibility assignments, coupled by his association with other exemplary performers in high-performance groups, would become his ticket to the rise to stardom. In other words, Bernie's future prospect of returning to

UBS hinges on stellar performance in high-visibility group assignments and, perhaps equally important, his performance was a reflection on his mentor.

Third, MG made available extra time and effort MG for Bernie. Moreover, MG reserved blocks of time to manage the impressions of others. MG provided career advice and counsel that proved critical to keeping Bernie informed of his assignment and project progress, through performance assessments offered by other group members.

Finally, MG became a powerful sponsor later in Bernie's career, recruiting him again and again with expanded responsibility, stretch assignments, and long-term developmental leap-of-faith assignments with other group members, all elements of building Bernie's competence, confidence, and credibility. To further illustrate this point, Bernie maintains a close relationship with MG, and is currently employed as a Financial Analyst on Wall Street. Bernie chooses to model his mentor, and to emulate him by preparing for the Certified Financial Analyst Examination, known as the highest earned degree in the finance industry.

MG was unusual; he was perceptive and a true pioneer as well as an extraordinary and courageous supervisor-mentor for Bernie. MG understood the type of diversity strategy needed to enhance his finance organization. Additionally, he also recognized that it was far less important to comply with an enabling organizational context than to ensure opportunities for Bernie's development.

MG recognized that he needed the leadership of the organization as an essential ingredient toward the development of such an alignment. In related research, Thomas and Gabarro (1999) have reported, "the support and commitment of key members of the

corporations' executive leadership are critical" (p. 215) to the success of creating a strategy within and compatible to the organization's diversity efforts.

MG was acquainted with the central role that executive leadership played in legitimating the process by both their official actions and the symbolism of their behavior as well. However, he also recognized that ultimately ownership and the leadership of his strategic initiative must be shared. The probability of leading a successful intervention is enhanced by the existence of a partnership between those who are ultimately responsible for it and those who wish to further add to it.

MG articulated his vision to the organization's executive leadership that the diversity efforts must be connected to individual and organizational performance in his unit of operation. Moreover, MG demonstrated results. For example, he revealed to the organization's leadership that as manager of his operational unit, his weekly practice was to meet with the representative body of diversity self-help groups in his division. In concert, they would actively and collectively identify issues and explore solutions that would ultimately spread to lower-level units. As Thomas and Gabarro (1999) state, "the further down the hierarchy [effective diversity] practices go, the more effective the organization's diversity efforts become as a whole" (p. 217).

Applied behavioral scientists Alderfer (1981, 1992) and Cox (1993, 1997) have written extensively on these organizational inclusion issues. Similarly, research by individuals such as Morrison (1992) identifies the array of practical programs and tactics available to corporations to aid them in creating an enabling environment for persons of color, ensuring opportunities exist, and that development takes place. Bernie experienced a highly positive and serendipitous relationship with his majority White male mentor and

learned to internalize excellence as a key ingredient of sustaining performance and drive. The mentor's support of Bernie sent a clear signal to the rest of the organization, thereby providing him access to other organizational relationships and informal network connections.

African American males need access to the power brokers within the organization (Thomas, 2001). To succeed within an organization one has to have an awareness of what is going on in the organization. Being aware of the informal structures and how they function is important. However, it is very difficult for members of cultural minority groups to become a part of these informal structures. In many ways, having a working understanding of the more informal organizational structures and, in addition, working relationships with those individuals that comprise these structures are imperative to members of cultural minority groups.

The following narrative account from Randy illustrates some of the micro-inequities he experienced at the port of organizational entry. These challenges affected the beginnings of any informal network structure he hoped to attain. Randy explains:

After I began to see these slights happen a few more times I began to get the message, "You are not welcome here."... I was so naïve. Mr. Carraway, before or, I should say, long before we completed the orientation class, long before we'd been issued a role and a newspaper assignment, these White groups had already been cast in stone. As we came to the conclusion of the orientation class and into our assigned roles for the newspaper, important assignments, jobs and vacancies that the newspaper needed to fill had already been set. Maybe, even before that? Many of my White classmates that graced my presence by attending the required orientation class... were recruited by their friends...long before the required orientation class had begun...and I'm so inclined to believe that many of my classmates were being primed and prepared for vacant positions, leading to open slots in the newspaper. (Randy, p. 17)

Randy's narrative assessment is rather unsettling; yet, if we assume this practice of nepotism was fully operating as stated, these organizational patterns run counter to a social system that gives opportunities and advantages to people on the basis of their

ability and accomplishment rather than, for example, personal contacts or political maneuvering.

In attempting to identify specific predictors of organizational movement and employee upward mobility, Rosenbaum (1984) found in a longitudinal study that early job assignments and early promotions had an enduring influence independent of the most salient individual attributes. In other words, he found that those who were designated as fast starters did significantly better throughout their careers than others, irrespective of actual ability and performance. Randy recognizes this and claims:

These folks were miles ahead of me, because of the contacts that they'd established long before I'd even arrived to the orientation class. But, I wasn't to actually realize until later down the road that these relationships would turn into cliques, and those cliques into units, and units to committees. Man, I was pigeonholed before I even got started as a news reporter. It was all about support and the will to survive, Mr. Carraway; I never had a chance. I was never on a level playing ground. Hell, I never even saw it coming. I was invisible. (Randy, p. 18)

Yet again, and for a second time, Randy's narrative assessment becomes all the more unsettling. Beliefs, assumptions, values, attributions and negative stereotypes have been found to influence organizational culture and, in turn, influence the organization's recruitment, training orientation, placement, and performance appraisal processes. Performance evaluations are considered critical to effective management (Fernandez, 1981). Appraisals of an individual's current orientation training play a significant role in an organization's assessment in placement and promote-ability (Greenhouse, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990). Thus, they should be implemented accurately, consistently, and fairly (Somerick, 1993).

The recruitment, training orientation, placement, and performance appraisal processes of this newspaper organization should be objective. Ideally, an organization's

objectivity should come into play to minimize confusion, bias, or discrimination. The organization's recruitment and training orientation programs should be based on objective operational standards set by the organization (Henderson, 1984). These objective standards should serve as reference points for measuring the relative value of an employee or potential employee (Henderson, 1984). In attempting to identify specific predictors the recruitment and training orientation programs of an organization should objectively measure an individual's ability to successfully adapt to an organization's operation. The appraisal process should be performance based and should objectively measure the output and performance of the employee in question (Forbes & Piercy, 1991).

However, more or less any organizational recruitment or performance appraisal program has some degree of partial identification with different levels of perceptions of group membership bias. A similar dynamic comes into play that necessitates the risk that is perceived in supporting a person who is a member of different a cultural group. Many have written about the tension produced when members of different cultural groups must work together. Looking at the role organization-level context and processes play in facilitating minorities earning a high-visibility challenging assignment or position, Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly (1992) determined that Whites who were members of culturally heterogeneous work groups reported less satisfaction and organizational commitment than did their counterparts in culturally homogeneous units.

Minorities working within predominately White corporate structures can experience a host of unconstructive attitudes, negative individual perceptions, and institutional assumptions, joined with an array of practices that have a kind of invisible-

hand effect in systematically advantaging members of more powerful groups over members of less dominate groups (Bell & Nkomo, 1994). A similar dynamic can also occur on the individual level.

Randy was the sole African American in the entire newspaper organization. Over the course of the summer vacation period, when the majority of the newspaper personnel were away on summer break, a culturally insensitive incident occurred. There appeared to be an incident that involved one of the university's Black organizations, which took issue with the manner in which the university's administration handled the situation. This story needed coverage. The university newspaper organization needed someone who was experienced and seasoned to handle this story. Additionally, they perceived the need for someone who could handle this story with sincerity, passion, and balance. As a professional staff they concluded that they needed a person who had strong interpersonal skill and with a strong working understanding of the university's African American culture.

Unanimously, Randy was chosen for the assignment. This assignment, in turn, required that Randy be moved to a different area and assume progressively larger and more important responsibilities. Randy describes the perceptions he and the newspaper organization held:

What happened was, the XYZ Black student organization and the town's Republican Party were polar opposites on some very important diversity issues. Now, mind you, I was not a diversity reporter at that time, my responsibilities included report coverage of the XYZ administration... The newspaper hadn't done a story on the XYZ Black student organization in some time, and they chose me to cover it. Historically, the newspaper had an awful reputation with the XYZ Black student organization over the years. Obviously, a part of the reputation is probably due to the fact that they never recruited or tried to retain Black folk in the organization.

It was in this transition period that Randy felt the influence of somebody that he could truly consider a mentor. Harvey was the professional staff editor for the newspaper organization. Randy did not know Harvey that well. When they first met, it was a brief conversation they shared about the responsibilities of the “hard news” reporter. Although Randy had little contact with him, Harvey did remember him and knew a lot more about him than Randy realized. It was during this conversation that Harvey gave Randy the official offer to come work with him on the XYZ Black student organization story.

Randy transitioned from a pure “hard news” reporter to what was a combination of a special project and leap-of-faith assignment. This was a high-profile assignment, one which challenged the newspaper’s image, and placed Randy in a high-visibility, high-trust situation. This sent a message to the rest of the organization that the newspaper organization considered Randy a high-performer and important to the success of the operation; consequently, this helped Randy to develop or enhance his self-confidence and credibility with others.

Randy had been limited by the organization to “hard news” for some time, which was not considered a primary assignment. However, Harvey pointed out that Randy’s performance with the XYZ Black student organization situation was a high-visibility, high-trust project assignment that could be his start to other critical assignments.

On the other hand, any failure Randy might encounter would damage future assignment prospects, and give Randy a reputation that would reflect poorly on Harvey.

Harvey was comfortable giving Randy the assignment not only because he saw Randy had the requisite skills of a fine reporter, but above all and infinitely more fundamental to the particular assignment—because he was Black. Harvey also noted that

others might not have felt as comfortable working with Randy as he did. He believed that because Randy was a member of the same minority group as the XYZ Black student organization, he would be in a better position to work with XYZ Black student organization and write about its members' complaints. Additionally, Harvey firmly believed that Randy's place in the newspaper organization could be better served in helping close the gap between the newspaper and the XYZ Black student organization. Harvey's choosing Randy for this assignment was admirable; but for all the wrong reasons.

Randy was placed in an assignment with a very low tolerance for mistakes and a more constricted margin of error. Harvey never recognized or understood that minorities have different developmental and career needs from their majority counterparts (Kanter, 1977): they face discriminatory barriers to advancement (Ragins & Sundrom, 1989), exclusion from informal networks and role modeling (Ibarra, 1993), and alienation as minority members in organizations. For the most part, Randy's strategy to take on this high-visibility, high-trust assignment was void of his mentor's advice, counsel, and organizational support.

Randy's need to successfully close the gap between the newspaper organization and the XYZ Black student organization and, in addition, effectively report the story involved all of the essential characteristics of a boss-subordinate relationship. This challenging assignment related to the immediate work of the department, and Randy's relationship with Harvey could be differentiated from other organizational work relationships. Randy often referred to his mentor as a teacher because of his wealth of

technical knowledge and useful feedback during their sessions together. Randy maintains:

For awhile I began to perceive Harvey as a kind of expert trainer, a coach, or, I don't know, as some grand teacher of sorts. He appeared to have a patented answer for everything I'd bring to him. I mean, this cat had it going on. He was just impressive in terms of knowing the basics of initiating a new project. He was the kind of professional I aspired to emulate. This cat was on point.

Through this function Randy was beginning to employ the essential technical and interpersonal skills through his work that encourages protégé-centered learning. Randy's opportunity to demonstrate his competence and performance was created by Harvey's decision to give him additional responsibilities that broadened his contact with other professional staff in the organization. The exposure-and-visibility function was activated when Harvey arranged for Randy to report and to develop relationships with key figures in the organization. Inherently, these individuals would become the persons who would later judge Randy's potential for future assignments and advancement. Randy explains:

I bring the story to Harvey, and together we review my work... From that point, Harvey sends the story to an associate editor, who also reads it and sends it to another editor who, in turn, sends the story to the copy editor to check for grammar; the big picture effect of what is being said in the story. Then, I'm also working with photographers. You work with photographers if the story needs art, because the story may need a picture or a visual to go with the text. And, then you are also working with the page designer, because the page designer has to design the page, so they need to know how long a story is because they don't want to make the page too big or small. So, it's not just one person involved in this special project, it's a lot of people who happen to also be decision makers.

Kram's (1988) findings indicate that exposure-and-visibility is an important factor in an individual's career development, primarily because it "serves as a socializing force; it prepares an individual for positions of greater responsibility and authority, and it introduces him to others so that he becomes a viable candidate" (p. 27). Further, Kram's findings indicate that exposure-and-visibility facilitates a young person's entry into

higher ranks of an organization. At the same time it reflects well on the senior person's choices about who to support when highly visible tasks are effectively completed (p. 28).

In preparation for Randy to become successful in this leap-of-faith assignment he needed organizational support, in the form of resources allocated, including time and cooperation of different newspaper personnel. Equally important, he needed a mixture of career and psychosocial functions to be provided by the mentor by way of protection and coaching, acceptance-and-confirmation, as well as the mentor's professional counsel. Other personnel in the newspaper organization were looking to Randy for leadership in this potentially explosive project, while Randy was placing more and more confidence in his mentor for the sponsorship support that was needed for this special project's successful execution. Sponsorship occurs at formal committee meetings as well as in informal discussions with the mentor's peers, superiors, and subordinates who participate in organizational decisions (Kram, 1988). Kram contends that "it is not only what a sponsor says about an individual, but the knowledge that he or she is a sponsor that empowers the less experienced person and creates opportunities for movement and advancement" (p. 25).

During our interview, Randy describes some impressions that he held about his mentor:

Yeah, most definitely, he was always telling me about others in the newsroom, and their individual thoughts of my work performance. If something was done in an outstanding manner or if something was not done in a timely fashion, Harvey would always let me know. He'd instruct me to do this next time or try avoiding this scenario with this person. For instance, he'd tell me about people and their opinions of my work that were shared during departmental committee meetings. Then, he'd give me the low-down of what they really thought of me in comparison to this person or this individual, as it referenced my strengths and their weaknesses and vice versa. He'd also take my side during those meetings.

Although not confined solely to the sponsorship function, Levinson (1978) contends “serving as a sponsor, the mentor may use his influence to facilitate the young person’s entry and advancement. [The mentor] may be a host and guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources, and cast of characters” (p. 98).

The concerns and needs emphasized by the mentor regarding other persons in the organization and their verbal performance assessment of the protégé appear to be legitimate ones. As a result, the ability of an African American male protégé to demonstrate performance and commitment, competence, and interpersonal skills effectively with majority group members should be considered as one possible source of explanation that a majority White male can effectively and successfully provide. This practice allows the mentor or sponsor to offer both career and psychosocial functions effectively to an African American male in a predominately White organizational setting.

However, to rely on one individual for sponsorship may be a toxic strategy for minorities in most organizational settings. Kram (1988) contends, “If a sponsor leaves the organization or loses credibility with colleagues, an individual’s career may suffer. In addition, since sponsorship depends on interpersonal and political processes, the more who favor a particular individual, the more likely it is that such processes will work in his or her favor” (p. 25-26).

Another career function that needs attention is coaching. Like sponsorship, successful coaching gains respect from one’s peers and superiors. Coaching enhances the less experienced person’s knowledge and understanding of how to navigate effectively in the corporate world. Harvey had an experienced perspective of 25 years that he was

willing to share with Randy who had the status and limited knowledge of a newcomer.

During an interview Randy further illustrates this point:

He had this motto he'd lived by, and would repeat it time and time again. He'd say, "I don't make it a habit of paying for the same Real Estate twice. I live by doing the job right the first time." You know, it was like he'd operate like a cross-country track coach. I don't know, probably because that's the kind of performance endurance a news reporter needed to stay competitive in the news race. Harvey would say something like "if I called the right plays 'that's my advice,' under the right conditions 'that's who needs what you have to offer,' at the right time 'that's our requirements and deadlines,' with the right players 'those are the people we work with to make things happen,' we 'that's you and I,' and we will score the winning point every time."

The individual without an interested coach is at a disadvantage in relating to the organization because of insufficient knowledge of the informal political process (Thomas & Gabrarro, 1999; Thomas, 1990; Kram, 1988; Levinson, 1978). Harvey's passing on of useful knowledge and perspectives to Randy confirmed the value of Randy's experience. This sharing also helps to create the next generation of managers who hold a similar perspective, thus ensuring that one's views are carried on into the future.

Obviously, the very fact that Randy was assigned the XYZ Black student organization assignment meant that in this case cultural diversity had not worked against him. If anything, it had worked to his advantage. Certainly, it was not immaterial. It might be noted, according to Cose (1995), "For most Blacks in America, regardless of status, political persuasion, or accomplishments, the moment never arrives when [cultural diversity] can be treated as a total irrelevancy. Instead, too often it is the only relevant factor defining our existence" (p. 28).

Evidence suggests a link between an organization's structure of opportunity and human capital to shape an individual's abilities to achieve top jobs. Collins (1997) has aptly reported the prevailing view that an organization's "managerial division of labor as

mediating human capital... and these factors interactively influence Blacks' progress in executive arenas" (p. 56). During the 1960s and 1970s, as a reaction to pro-Black governmental policies to mediate Black-related issues, White-owned business companies deployed highly educated Black labor out of mainstream positions and into "racialized" jobs. The impact of filling these jobs by Blacks directly limited their upward mobility. Over time, however, this structure of opportunity underdeveloped the human capital that corporations value. Consequently, these racialized jobs marginalized the job holders' skills and, thus, the job holder (Collins, 1997). In due course, Randy's probability of moving into, competing for, and/or performing in the newspaper organization areas that lead to decision-making jobs and assignments was greatly diminished.

This chapter has presented the results of the study by reporting the responses of the participants followed by analysis of the data collected. Using the constant comparison technique, three themes have emerged. There were two major emergent themes regarding the degree to which the relationship facilitated development of the protégé's career: "the entry shock phase" and "growth process and learning from experience." A third theme, "organizational relationships and connections," to emerge was indicative of the psychosocial functions of the mentoring experience. The first two themes addressed the research question:

RQ1: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the career function of their mentoring experiences?

The other theme, “organizational relationships and connections,” addressed the psychosocial functions of the mentoring relationship, which is related to the second research question:

RQ2: How do White male mentors and African American male protégés within formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships characterize the psychosocial functions of their mentoring experiences?

Chapter 7 draws conclusions about the findings and summarizes the entire study. The most significant and heuristic aspect of this study is what these mentor-protégé experiences tell us about the challenges of cross-cultural mentoring. Even as we are trained to think of work in culturally homogenous ways, once we have established that an employee is a high performer, there are clear influences on work behavior, upward mobility, and overall performance that have much more to do with the quality and extent of mentoring relationship than anything else. Protégés are constantly negotiating organizational boundaries and expectations, and African American or minority protégés have the added responsibility of self-regulating perceptions, anxieties, and challenges when there is no one there to help remove obstructions in the workplace.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

Overview of the Study

For African American males, cross-cultural mentoring relationships are a fact of life in organizations. Hundreds of books and thousands of articles have appeared in the last few decades on professional development and career mentoring. Yet, almost all of this literature has been silent on the issue of cultural diversity, and at a more fundamental level there is very little that can be found about workplace cross-cultural mentoring relationships in organizations and management (Crutcher, 2007; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Thomas, 2001). Perhaps the only exonerating defense for this omission dwells in the very nature, composition, and complexity of the relationship itself.

Americans, Black and White, when asked about the question of cultural distinctiveness transmit a kind of protective hesitancy, which somehow necessitates withdrawal. It is as if a taboo were operating. The word *taboo* is suggestive here. Taboos operate on two levels. They forbid action, but they also forbid reflecting on what is forbidden. Perhaps this is why members of organizations find it difficult to take part in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship, because it links wider cultural processes to organizational reality while operating to suppress this linkage.

As discussed, minority protégés face more barriers to upward mobility and advancement than majority protégé counterparts, and must develop special strategies to overcome organizational and interpersonal barriers toward their progression to advancement. Altogether, this line of thinking suggests that African American male

protégés with a White male mentor are likely to experience a greater sense of resistance and nonfulfillment in their cross-cultural mentoring relationships than other combinations of mentoring relationships.

Review of Study Purpose

The primary purpose of this investigation was to gain further insight into how culture plays a role in early career cross-cultural mentoring relationships consisting of White male mentors and African American male protégés in predominately White U.S. institutions. The study focused on two types of behaviors or functions provided by the mentor for the benefit of the protégé: (a) *career development* functions that are aimed at helping the protégé advance in the organization; (b) *psychosocial functions* that provide mutual trust, counseling, acceptance, and personal support and role modeling for the protégé.

In individual cases five African American male protégés in this study received effective and useful career and psychosocial mentoring from their mentors. However, among the five protégés, only one respondent expressed during the interview session that he began to perceive his mentor as a role model by emulating the majority male mentor's attitudes, values, and behaviors. This is a significant finding. What distinguishes coaching and sponsoring from the kind of mentoring Bernie received from MG is the role modeling MG epitomized. This speaks to the very crux of the problem—the pipeline for minorities in workplace organizations is compromised by those who are either unwilling to be or incapable of being role models.

Frequently, each African American male protégé directly informed or suggested that their White male mentor had given them a necessary opportunity promoting them to

high-visibility assignments joined with a higher level of responsibility. This form of public support of a White mentor's willingness to pursue a cross-cultural mentoring relationship with an African American male may have sent a signal to other White subordinates of the seriousness and personal investment of the leadership in promoting diverse management. Additionally, the witnessing by other persons of color of a successful cross-cultural mentoring and sponsorship, it was found, positively influenced others' perceptions and experiences in the organization. These signals were often effective and/or important; yet, they never rose to the level of mentoring received by Bernie. Nonetheless, they still led to a modicum of success, usually as a result of personal initiative and drive.

Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

As a researcher, especially of a study of this importance, it is critical to clarify how each research question was answered via the interviews and shared experiences. Each research question will be reiterated and examined here. The first research question is as follows:

Do formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships involving White male mentors to African American protégés provide effective career development functions to African American male protégés?

Research Question #1

Early in this investigation, I maintained one unrelenting instinctive thought, "White male mentors situated in a predominately White corporation cannot successfully mentor an African American male protégé!" Finally, as should always be the case, the

interview data dispelled a myth, revealing a finding in direct opposition to my own rigid and preconceived notions. In a nation largely stuck in a state of denial, Americans have a very difficult time being honest (even to ourselves) when it comes to cultural differences. And because determining what our basic attitudes are is so difficult, agreeing on what those attitudes mean may well be impossible.

The findings of this investigation reveal that all five African American male protégés participating in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship with a White male mentor in a predominately White organizational setting were provided the quality of an interpersonal bond that enabled them to have effective career development experiences.

Randy worked with a university newspaper. He was given limited, low-skill assignments to begin with, and this frustrated him. It was only after a fluke occurrence happened on campus that he was placed in a position to seize the moment and prove his worth. Although he was essentially invisible up until that point, when given the opportunity to perform, he rose to the occasion and received increasingly more meaningful assignments thereafter.

Mark had a rude awakening early in his professional interactions with JD, his mentor and the producer at a television news station. JD turned out to be one of his biggest advocates, but only after Mark was able to demonstrate his abilities and character on the proving grounds.

Bernie works in the finance industry where it is very competitive. He worked with an individual who not only demanded excellence from his team, but also exhibited this drive and high performance himself. Bernie had to go the extra mile to demonstrate his competence and did so. His consistency and performance impressed his would-be mentor

to the extent that the mentor opened up more access and opportunities to him that led to 4:30 a.m. exclusive meetings.

Ollie became an assistant facilities manager. He had a conflict with his supervisor early on, which was resolved. Because Ollie was able to quickly employ an interest transference strategy, he diffused a potentially volatile situation and this led to a greater amount of respect from his mentor. Although his was probably the least supportive mentoring relationship, he still benefitted from the intermittent coaching he received from his mentor SZ.

Jessie was provided a set of foundational opportunities that equipped him to move on to become an associate editor at a major metropolitan newspaper. Despite his rough upbringing he overcame obstacles and achieved in a way that he was expected to achieve by his parents. His mentoring relationship began with a tough-as-nails mentor who deconstructed his writing in a way that he had never experienced. This helped him to perfect his craft.

So, to answer the first research question, each of the protégés was provided effective career development functions.

Research Question #2

The second research question queried whether formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships involving White male mentors to African American male protégés provide effective psychosocial functions to the protégés?

The findings of this study reveal that all five African American male protégés participating in cross-cultural mentoring relationships with White male mentors in predominately White organizational settings were provided quality interpersonal bonding

experiences. In contrast to effective career developmental experiences, psychosocial experiences were possible because of the mentor–protégé interpersonal relationship that fostered mutual trust and increasing understanding.

Conversely, while there was little reason for this researcher to expect that this composition of the mentoring relationship should directly influence an African American male protégé’s professional career and job outcomes, there was reason to expect that it would have a direct impact on the protégé’s personal fulfillment. Kram (1988) reports, “Role modeling is the most frequently reported psychosocial function...[when] a senior colleague’s attitudes, values, and behaviors provide a model for the junior colleague to emulate” (p. 33).

However, among the five African American male protégés who participated in this study, only one protégé (Bernie) articulated during the interview session that he began to emulate and internalize the attitudes, values, and behaviors of his majority male mentor.

Discussion of Findings

The central questions in this study explored whether a majority White male mentor tends to provide effective career and psychosocial functions to an African American male protégé in a predominately White organization. According to Kram (1988), mentors provide two primary types of functions or behavioral roles. The mentors in this study made available and effectively provided career developmental behaviors, which involved coaching, sponsorship advancement, providing challenging assignments, protecting protégés from identifiable adverse forces, and fostering positive visibility. In contrast to career functions the mentors in this study also made available and effectively

provided limited psychosocial role behaviors, which included such functions as personal support, friendship, acceptance-and-affirmation, and counseling. The psychosocial behavior of role modeling was not provided equally in this study to all protégé respondents; of the five developmental mentoring relationship experiences investigated, only one exhibited emergence of psychosocial behavior of role modeling.

However, research suggests that mentors may provide some or all of these roles, and the provision of these roles may vary not only from relationship to relationship, but also over time within a given relationship (Scandura, 1992). Nevertheless, this study's results raise the question, Can African American male protégés obtain effective mentoring experiences in the absence of role modeling?

In this study, the absence of role modeling is directly connected to shared identity and interpersonal comfort, factors crucial in the development of power. Existing theory suggests that these important ingredients are directly tied to group membership (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 2004; Thomas, 2001). To a more considerable degree, the essential function of role modeling is as an essential ingredient that frames the fundamental soundness of the mentor's vital role regarding the development of the protégé.

It should be noted, however, for the reason that identification and interpersonal similarities increase the effortlessness of contact in fostering a cultivated relationship, this same dynamic is much less likely to occur for dissimilar members in a cross-cultural relationship (Thomas, 2001). For instance, Thomas (1989) theorized that cultural taboos, particularly those involved with cross-gender and cross-cultural relationships, may result in constrained social interactions in cross-cultural mentoring relationships. Cross-cultural relationships involving a White male mentor providing career and psychosocial functions

to an African American male protégé in a predominately White organization face social constraints and perceptual barriers. These concealed obstacles relate to the risk of the protégé's reputation (and the mentor's as well) that may inhibit upward mobility and advancement.

Whereas, persons in more homogeneous relationships may rely on readily available group membership as a basis for identification and perceived similarity, individuals in this study may have had to search for similarities that go beyond group membership (i.e., playing golf, sports and athletics, hobbies, etc.) in the hope of relating to one another through some commonly shared camaraderie, and in so doing, build the foundation for promoting a more cultivated relationship.

The dimension of psychosocial role modeling in this study appeared in one of five respondents' mentoring relationship experiences. Therefore, this study cannot be generalized, nor does it pretend to be generalizable. It is a study that seeks to explore the rich detail of five specific mentoring experiences. While it does not have scope generalizability, it does have conceptual generalizability. As we consider what is next in mentoring theory, there needs to be more emphasis placed on role modeling and identity negotiation within cross-cultural mentoring relationships. The way in which a male protégé defines himself is in constant dialectical relationship with the way in which a mentor defines him or herself, and this influences the interaction and the quality of the relationship. As observed, when the quality of the mentor-protégé relationship is compromised, so are the protégé's developmental experiences and chances for career advancement.

Further, disparities in the range and choice of career and psychosocial functions moving from the mentor to the protégé during a particular phase of the relationship's development may be due, in part, to differences in individual needs and individual capacities to engage in a trusting relationship. Thus, while we have come a very short distance in understanding mentoring, we have covered even less territory toward understanding the composition of the mentoring relationship. How career and psychosocial functions support individual development in the dimension of an organization's cultural climate, a complete understanding of the brands of mentoring, as well as the numerous episodes of enhancers and inhibitors that emerge in those relationship types are lacking.

Indeed, the cultural climate dimensions of an organization's processes and structural features at work are equally important. Since cultural climate can encourage or interfere with mentoring functions, it may impose imperceptible boundaries on the relationship and, consequently, further inhibit the frequency and quality of interaction.

There is a certain universe of experience in which many African American males participate, depending on their level of cultural development. These protégé behaviors tend to outweigh but cannot entirely prevent a host of counterproductive feelings—resentment, inadequacy, envy, and intimidation, as well as apprehensions of being dishonored, violated, and perceived as belonging to a debased group. There is a resonance between these behaviors. To move beyond these behaviors, the younger protégé admires and wants to emulate organizationally productive behaviors of character, expertise, and understanding that the more experienced mentor exhibits.

Trying to become like a mentor and adopting his behaviors is the essence of a mentoring experience. Dr. C. Eric Lincoln, a longtime Duke University professor who was among the leading scholars of Black religious life, observed that mentoring can be completely symbolic. He said, “Some of the most distinguished and most talented persons I’ve chosen to emulate, I’ve never had the pleasure of meeting, nor have I ever had the enjoyment of their assembly.” This is symbolic mentoring.

Clearly, in this study the element of symbolic mentoring is used by the protégés and is interwoven with a need to scrutinize the senior mentor’s attitudes, values, and behaviors. As the protégé aspires to greater assignments of greater authority and responsibility, he unconsciously envisions himself in his role by identifying symbolically with his mentor. In this study, symbolic mentoring helped protégés more easily acquire firm-specific competencies and performance-related skills. As they advanced into more responsible job assignments, they adapted to the demands of the changing work environment and advanced in their careers.

Finally, African American male protégés paired with White male mentors in a predominately White organization may face two barriers related to networking in the organization. First, the protégé’s performance may be perceived by others in the organization as untrustworthy and less than desirable (visibility and performance pressures, exclusion from informal networks and work-group support, issues of alienation in the organization, etc.). Such perceptions may cast performance threats on the protégé, further inhibiting mobility and advancement in the organization.

Second, power associated with group membership may affect the behavioral, perceptual, and psychological processes unique to cross-cultural mentoring relationships

that are directly linked to professional development and maintenance of the relationship. More specifically, negative attributions and stereotypes, inaccurate perceptions of competence, and negative work group reactions, combined with increased visibility and performance pressures, may restrict African American males' access to informal network relationships and the outcomes associated with cross-cultural relationships. These findings are reported in the work of career theorists and researchers such as Thomas (2001), Crutcher (2007), and Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004).

In summary, one could argue over this researcher's assessment of the serious deficiency in the accessible body of knowledge on cultural diversity and management development. What one cannot refute, however, is the reality of the perceptual chasm separating so many Blacks and Whites in predominately White organizations. The problem is not only that Blacks and Whites are afraid to talk to one another; but also that Blacks and Whites are disinclined to listen. And even when the will to understand is present between them, often the ability gained through analogous experiences is not.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this study can be characterized by its concentration on essential developmental functions, interaction patterns, and the peculiar experiences that reflect the needs and impinge on the capabilities of the African American male protégés, as well as the surrounding contexts of the organization. These are the circumstances in which cross-cultural mentoring relationships are embedded.

An additional strength of this study is that while it may be useful in shedding light on some factors that enhance and/or impede African American males and other minorities advancement in organizations, as a limitation it has not demonstrated how some

experiences and opportunity structures reinforce minority advancement in organizations. With this lens future studies could examine and monitor successful minorities whose success in organizations has provided them opportunity structures that reinforce their advancement. As a body of work, these kinds of studies could yield a sharper and deeper understanding of the psychological and behavioral processes in organizations that lead to advancement.

This study proposed to gain understanding of cross-cultural mentoring relationships by examining the experiences of those in mentoring relationships. To a large extent, the discussion above reflects the empirical reality of the five protégés in the study. One of this report's limitations is a lack of direct input from the White male mentors in this study. Mentor interviews were conducted, but the mentors were constrained by organizational legalities (disclaimer statements) inhibiting them from discussing or providing information (verbal or written) pertaining to company diversity policies and/or matters relevant to the subject of cultural prejudice. In addition, despite this study's focus on cultural diversity, interview conversations about cultural differences made most participating mentors uncomfortable and defensive. Accordingly, the rich dialogue to be gained from the mentors is not included in the current report. A future research study with a different angle may be able to tease out answers from mentors to the questions in this study.

To assess whether one particular mentoring relationship was better or more superior than another would not be a worthwhile for the current study. To assess which career or psychosocial function was most prevalent is relevant. In this study, most of the mentoring relationships provided a range of functions, but only one relationship provided

the full set of career and psychosocial mentoring functions. Thus, two major limitations to this study were sample size and limited time span.

Future Research and Scholarly Implications

Cross-cultural mentoring relationships are composed of mentors and protégés who differ in group membership associated with power differences in organizations. Cross-cultural mentoring relationships are now commonplace for minorities in organizations (Ragins, 1997). However, cross-cultural “developmental” mentoring relationships for minorities in organizations are not. The term *developmental* is suggestive here. By convention, *developmental* implies an ongoing underlying process by which significant behaviors emerge in a relationship, thereby marking progress. A cross-cultural developmental mentoring relationship is one of the most complex as well as important relationships an African American male can have at the outset of his early adult life and organizational career.

The cross-cultural developmental mentoring relationship in organizations in America is a fundamental laboratory for future research. At present, the career and organizational literature observes, as a function of the composition of a cross-cultural mentoring relationship, that the mentor’s behavior is influenced by the protégé’s needs, the mentor’s perception of the protégé’s needs, and the ability and motivation of the mentor to meet those needs.

However, it is equally important to recognize that minorities and African American males in particular, are assigned to a different set of developmental and career needs, separate and unequal to their majority counterparts. Within organizations that have cross-cultural mentoring relationships embedded, there exists multiple informal

interpersonal and network interaction patterns, and a peculiar set of experiences that positively or negatively shape the needs and capabilities of African American male protégés.

Future research and scholarly implications can influence organizations to become more encouraging and supportive of cross-cultural mentoring developmental relationships in two ways: educational intervention and structural intervention. The former will allow for the tool of active research to guide the researcher through an intentional entry into an ongoing relationship for the purpose of initiating or introducing change in learning new concepts, skills, and attitudes that forms a supportive work relationship. The latter will allow the tool of active research to guide the researcher to create interpersonal relationships and network systems and practices that encourage mentoring functions and eliminate those that interfere or inhibit them.

Educational interventions may increase self-awareness, understanding, and provide action steps for mentor and protégé and other organizational members as well. In an educational context, individuals explore their own concerns about self, career, and family, and discover that they are not alone in their experiences of particular dilemmas. Educational interventions will also develop strong, focused attitudes and build skills that help form developmental relationships. While self-awareness is essential to discovering and defining what one needs, skills in listening, managing conflict and impression management mastery, and giving and receiving feedback are essential for building enhancing relationships.

In contrast to educational interventions, organizational researchers should investigate how various organizational structures and perceptual, behavioral, and

psychological processes impact the composition of a cross-cultural developmental mentoring relationship. As this study demonstrates, the outcomes associated with these processes for a cross-cultural developmental mentoring relationship may prove to be detrimental to the protégé, and sometimes the mentor as well. For example, majority mentors with minority protégés may face two barriers. First, as discussed earlier, the protégé's performance may be viewed as less effective, which casts a negative shadow on the mentor's reputation. Second, in spite of organizational diversity efforts, majority mentors have unique barriers involving influence processes within the relationship, most notably the role modeling and identification behaviors.

Mentors in cross-cultural developmental relationships should obtain more knowledge awareness, understanding, and informed action skills relating to diverse individuals than mentors in more homogeneous relationships. Each of the previously mentioned areas needs a careful and comprehensive examination (developmental functions, interaction patterns, the peculiar set of experiences, organizational circumstances) to address the links among culture, professional development, and opportunity in organizations.

Finally, future studies would benefit from larger samples using longitudinal techniques to explore the questions in this study. A larger sample size of mentor-protégé relationships over time may prove to be more beneficial to the interests of workplace organizations investing in cross-cultural mentoring. Future research would also benefit from reviews of public domain information and internal documents related to cultural diversity and management advancement within the firms sponsoring mentor-protégé relationships.

Practical Implications

It is reasonable to assume that because role modeling is a key psychosocial function of any mentoring relationship, restricted social identity has important perceptual and behavioral implications. In particular, there may be more social distance in cross-cultural mentoring relationships and less motivation to enter and remain in these relationships among minorities and women.

Organizations may possibly avoid these perceptual and behavioral challenges by employing informal mentoring programs. These programs can be organized by first identifying pools of potential mentors and protégés followed by training in the development of effective mentoring with a particular emphasis on diversity issues, and then pursued by providing informal opportunities for the development of informal mentoring relationships.

It should also be noted, that due to the very nature and composition of a cross-cultural mentoring relationship, minorities protégés differ in their developmental needs and perceived capabilities from their majority counterparts in the development, processes, and outcomes associated with the relationship. Two practical issues emerge that may be addressed by organizations as independent actions, or as part of the mentor's individual diversity strategy.

First, on the organizational level, the organization's diversity planning committee should create its diversity (or existing) strategy so that is aligned with the overall organizational strategic plan that is directly tied to each organization department that it is linked to the mentor's organizational unit. This strategy will provide the mentor the

support and commitment of key members of the corporations' upper management for the reason that executive leadership is critical to the success of creating a strategy within and compatible to the organization's diversity efforts.

Second, on the interpersonal level, the majority mentor that chooses to participate in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship must understand and accept the fact that these relationships require more time and effort than the traditional homogeneous relationship involving majority mentors joined with majority protégés. The mentor may consider building a stronger understanding of the short and long-term benefit effects for the need of investing more time and effort into the organization's diversity initiatives and the building of other relationship beyond his or her area of expertise; and while involved in a cross-cultural mentoring relationship he will learn the need to reserve blocks of time committed to manage the impressions of others.

The mentor may want to become more involved with his organization's diversity planning committee. Working with the organization's diversity planning committee has two components relevant to a mentor increasing his diversity awareness, understanding, and development: deep grounding that is gained cumulatively, that can be applied to his work contexts; and exposure developed through the recurrent execution of tasks that present various degrees of both familiarity and difficulty.

The mentor may need to more strongly recognize that ultimately ownership and the leadership of his strategy initiative must be shared. The probability of leading a successful intervention is enhanced by the existence of a partnership between those who are ultimately responsible for it and those who wish to further add to it.

Final Remarks

In a country largely stuck in a state of denial about cultural diversity and prejudice, any such individual performance measure of inquiry is fraught with peril. No agreed upon measures of management development exist, particularly when it comes to the issue of cultural difference. Nor are there blueprints with well-defined critical paths that guarantee career movement through an organizational hierarchy, again, particularly when it comes to the issue of cultural difference.

Ultimately, substandard or successful organizational performance is measured via the individual assessed and in the perceptions of those who perform the assessment and issue the report card. However, along the way there are intrinsic indicators and predictors that provide direction and serve as a blueprint to effective and efficient performance. Mentoring is key to organizational success in the new millennium, and effective cross-cultural mentoring is a good strategy toward enhancing total work performance.

The lessons to be learned by any newcomer entering the workplace are a matter of possibility and knowledge converging simultaneously. There exist no steadfast, ironclad guarantees in the adult world of work. Yet, as a result of this study, it is clear that the making of successful minority employees in predominately White organizations may become less random, mysterious, and paradoxical than this researcher had formerly foreseen and/or predicted. The following comments are directed toward protégés.

Message #1: Choose the Organization Wisely

In today's fast-paced labor market, employment in a particular company, even if your job content is intrinsically gratifying and motivating, does not automatically mean that it will be your only place of employment over your lifetime. Selecting an

organization that best fits your personality and passion is key, but what is a good fit today may not be later.

Decide on an occupation and a career in a field that suits your personality and passion. Well-developed self-assessment skills will enable you to choose your career and the right organizational fit. To make a choice that is harmonious with who you are, you need to understand yourself on multiple levels. What is your passion? What motivates you? What are the characteristics of your ideal organization? Many books and courses will help you develop these skills.

Message #2: Build and Maintain Relationships and Social Networks

One of the most salient findings of this study suggests that one expand his or her interpersonal skill so that it is inclusive of all individuals and extends across cultures. This perspective advocates interpersonal skill, technical efficiency, and the necessity of building a network of developmental relationships. Most often, discussions of developmental relationships center on the idea that a one-on-one mentoring relationship is a key to opportunity. Many young people tend to move in a corporation and immediately begin looking for individuals in senior management to mentor them, often failing to notice more likely candidates such as their immediate supervisor, or more experienced professional persons within the network of their work areas. I recommend that in your early career, think about creating the skills that will help you develop relationship opportunities as they appear.

Message #3: Opt for Broad and Deep Experiences over Fast Advancement

A fast and upwardly mobile pace in an organization is important. But particularly in your early career, your velocity of movement should be accompanied by patterned developmental assignments and growth opportunities that will allow you to cultivate developmental relationships with superiors, peers, and role-set workers. As the findings of Chapters 5 and 6 illustrated, a quality experience of an assignment is generally one that positions you to build competence, credibility, and confidence. Establishing a solid foundation is most often the result of a pattern of developmental assignments.

Message #4: Be Particular

Today, there is no grandeur or brilliance in being a “Jackie Robinson” in the early-entry career phase or junior period of development in an organization. African American males navigating their early careers should look closely at the cultural diversity of the organization and avoid organizations that clearly have a poor record of promoting diversity.

Message #5: Take Charge of Your Own Career

Be seen as a professional who is characterized by openness to feedback, is oriented toward learning, has the ability to set personal goals, and possesses an internal definition of success. High-quality performance is critical at every step. Because adages such as, “Business organizations are political and business relationships count,” and “It’s not who you know, but who knows you,” and “Minorities have to be twice as good as Whites” continue to be part of the cultural milieu of organizations, commitment to excellence is essential.

Contributions to the Field and Final Remarks

This study found that White male mentors understood the needs, believed in the capabilities, contributed to the growth, and provided extended effort to foster the development of their African American male protégés. The quality experiences of the mentoring relationship allowed the protégés to build competence, confidence, and credibility among other supervisors, peers, and role-set workers in the organization. The protégés' exposure and acceptance in the mentoring relationship was often the result of a pattern of assignments that allowed them to grow and form relationships with other workers in the organization.

Most discussion of mentoring supports the notion of the protégé looking upward for relationships. Yet, in this study, peer relations were revealed to be a vital link and a strong source of protégé support. Peers and role-set workers in today's vibrant workplace also are likely to become superiors and managers tomorrow.

For this reason, I would emphasize the importance of developing a portfolio of peer relationships early in your career to support personal and professional career development. An over-dependency on one mentor can leave a junior person vulnerable if the mentor should decide to end the relationship or leave the organization.

In summary, I would emphasize three important points that a junior person would do well to heed: (1) build your competence along with a good performance record and reputation within the context of your organizational unit and beyond; (2) develop a portfolio of peer relationships early in your career that support your personal and professional career development; and (3) build a constellation of mentors to include supervisors, peers, and fellow role-set workers.

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APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A: EXPLANATION OF STUDY AND INFORMED CONSENT
FORM**

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Title of Investigation: AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PROTÉGÉS AND THEIR
MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MALE MENTOR IN MAJORITY
CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

Principal Investigator: Vernon L. Carraway
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Advisor: Dr. Ronald L. Jackson
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Rm. 234 Sparks Building
Pennsylvania State University 16802
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EXPLANATION OF THE STUDY

“Cross-Cultural Mentoring Developmental Relationships” is a research study conducted by Mr. Vernon L. Carraway, a doctoral candidate in the College of Education, Workforce Education & Development Program at The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16801. Mr. Carraway under the supervision of Dr. Ronald L. Jackson, Associate Professor The Pennsylvania State University, seeks your permission to conduct in-dept interviews in your university program.

COMMITTEE REVIEW

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the following:

Workforce Education & Development Program Faculty Committee, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park

Dr. Ronald L. Jackson	Committee Co-Chairperson
Dr. Judith Kolb	Committee Co-Chairperson
Dr. Ian Baptiste	Committee Member
Dr. Richard Walter	Committee Member
Dr. Edgar Yoder	Committee Member

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research study will be explored to better understand the co-created meanings, thoughts and lived experiences of the interactents participating in a cross-cultural developmental relationship that exist between an African American male and a White male mentor in the American workplace.

INFORMATION TO BE USED

Information for this study will derive from a set of in-depth semi-structured interviews among cross-cultural mentoring pairs for the purpose of better understanding the lived experiences of both interactants (African American male and a White male mentor) individuals. All information found a shared between this researcher and the researched will be used to further the current knowledge-base and to expand career and mentoring theory of this phenomenon.

CONFIDENTIALITY

No names, no identifying numbers, no treatments, and no interventions are part of this study. Information obtained from this study will NOT be used for any other purpose and will be held in the strictest confidence by this researcher. No individual information will be disclosed in any form. Individual and mentoring dyad data will be included in the researcher's doctoral dissertation and may be submitted for publication.

POSSIBLE RISKS

NONE, and there will be no anticipated discomfort from this study. This research study will in no way, alter or interfere with the hosting program, individual participant involvement, education or any aspect of university policies and procedures.

BENEFITS FROM THE STUDY

Studies such as this serve to advance the knowledge in the field of student Work-Based Mentoring Program and eventually lead to improvements in employee workplace development.

PARTICIPATION

Participation in this study is VOLUNTARY and there is no penalty or loss of benefits for refusing to participate or withdrawing from this study at any time. Procedures are designed to safeguard the subjects' privacy, welfare, civil liberties and rights.

CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

I have read the above information, have had an opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction, and I understand the nature, benefits and risks of the study. I voluntarily agree to participate.

I understand this research may not directly benefit me, and I understand that no guarantees can be made as to the outcome of this study. I agree to respond to the questionnaires of this study and authorize release of information as specified above. This consent is valid for MM/DD/YY through MM/DD/YY.

Student's Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT STATEMENT

The Pennsylvania State University

Title of Investigation: AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PROTÉGÉS AND THEIR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MALE MENTOR IN MAJORITY CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

Principal Investigator: Vernon L. Carraway
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Dear _____:

My name is Vernon Carraway, and I am a doctoral candidate enrolled in The Pennsylvania State University, Workforce Education and Development Program. Also, Dr. Ronald L. Jackson, Associate Professor of Communication Arts & Sciences serves on my dissertation committee and serves as Co-Chair Committee member and advisor for this study. Together, we are presently in search of research subjects that would be interested in being a part of my dissertation study. The title of my study is: AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PROTÉGÉS AND THEIR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MALE MENTOR IN MAJORITY CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS.

I am interested in young African American male college students' thoughts, feelings and, perceived experiences as they relate to a cross-cultural or cross-race mentoring experience they currently have or have experienced in the past year. As the title of this study illustrates; a cross-cultural or cross-race mentoring experience is the composition of a White male mentor with an African American male protégé participating in a mentoring relationship within the context of a predominately White organization.

This study will require of each respondent to participate in one, face-to-face semi-structured in-depth, to be digitally recorded and will last for the duration of ninety minutes. The main purpose of these face-to-face semi-structured in-depth interviews is for the participant to describe their background to include; their upbringing, parental

education and work ethic, neighborhood in which they resided, and cross-cultural relationship experiences with Whites during their secondary school experience in chronological order or as they experienced it.

The information ascertained from these single, face-to-face-interview session will assist the researcher in gaining a thick description of each participant's perspective. Additionally, the researcher will gain a deeper understanding on each participant's career experiences and development as a protégé participating in a career cross-cultural mentoring relationship. Our interest is to discover how African American males frame these issues and "tell their own stories"

This signed informed consent document will be kept in a secure place until the conclusion of this study, at which time this documents will be officially destroyed. In the event that this research is published, your name will not appear in the finished product of the dissertation.

This study involves not risk to you; no risk to your physical or mental health beyond those that you may experience in the normal course of everyday life. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding your rights as a subject to this research, please direct these concerns to the Office for Regulatory Compliance in room 212 Kern Building, The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania 16802 or you may wish to contact this office by telephone at (814) 865-1775.

This is to state that I, _____, agree to participate in a ninety-minute interview with the principle investigator of this study, as a part of a research dissertation requirement at The Pennsylvania State University. I understand the information given me, and my questions concerning what I will contribute to this study have be satisfactorily been answered. To the best of my knowledge and belief, I will not be paid or compensated for answering any and all questions presented to me during the interview session with the principle investigator of this research project. I also understand that answering any and all questions in this study is voluntary, and that I reserve the right to stop the interview at any time and to contact Dr. Ronald L. Jackson by telephone or electronically by e-mail at anytime.

I further understand and have been informed by the principle investigator of this research project that I am to keep a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX C: PROTÉGÉ INTERVIEW OUTLINE

AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PROTÉGÉS AND THEIR MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS WITH WHITE MALE MENTOR IN MAJORITY CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS

RQ1: Do formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships involving White male mentors to African American protégés provide effective career development functions to African American protégé/students?

1. Can you describe for me, how do you perceive your mentor has helped you in pursuing your career?
2. Can you describe for me, the primary job responsibilities your mentor has assigned to you?
3. Can you describe for me, your work assignments in detail?
 - Who else was involved in your work assignments?
 - Who initiated their involvement?
 - Did you feel that the assignments in which you worked to be cooperative?
4. Can you describe for me, when did you feel your relationship with your mentor became more focused on the development of your career?
5. Can you describe for me, in detail, when you perceived that your mentor began to assign specific career-related assignments to you?

RQ2: Do formal matched cross-cultural career mentoring relationships involving White male mentors to African American protégés provide effective psychosocial functions to African American protégés/students?

1. Can you describe for me, what you think attracts you to your mentor?
2. What has been the most satisfying aspect of your relationship with your mentor?
3. What has been the most frustrating aspect of your relationship with your mentor?
4. What have you gotten from your association with your mentor?
5. Are there ways in which you feel your racial difference influence the relationship?
 - Have you discussed racial issues with your mentor?
 - Do you talk about how your own racial difference influences the relationship?

- Can you tell me, how you would describe your mentor's attitude on race?
- Can you describe for me, how aware were other people in the organization of your relationship with your mentor?
- What do you perceive to be their reaction?
- Did you ever feel that other persons in the organization were resentful or envious about your relationship with your mentor?

APPENDIX D: EXIT LETTER

553 Brittany Drive
State College, Pennsylvania 16803

Dear Participants:

Thank you for your participation in my inquiry into the African American male protégés career cross-cultural mentoring experiences with a White male mentor. In total, five African American male protégés and four White male mentors participated in this study. Initially, my goal was twenty participants; however the ten voices I heard were powerful and provided valuable insights into the lived experiences of African American males involved in a cross-cultural career mentoring relationship.

Your involvement and sharing of information in this study will help extend the field of knowledge as well as to better help others to better understand the developmental process of a cross-cultural career mentoring relationship. Also, future researchers, practitioners, and large and small organizations alike will benefit from your reflections and powerful insights from this study.

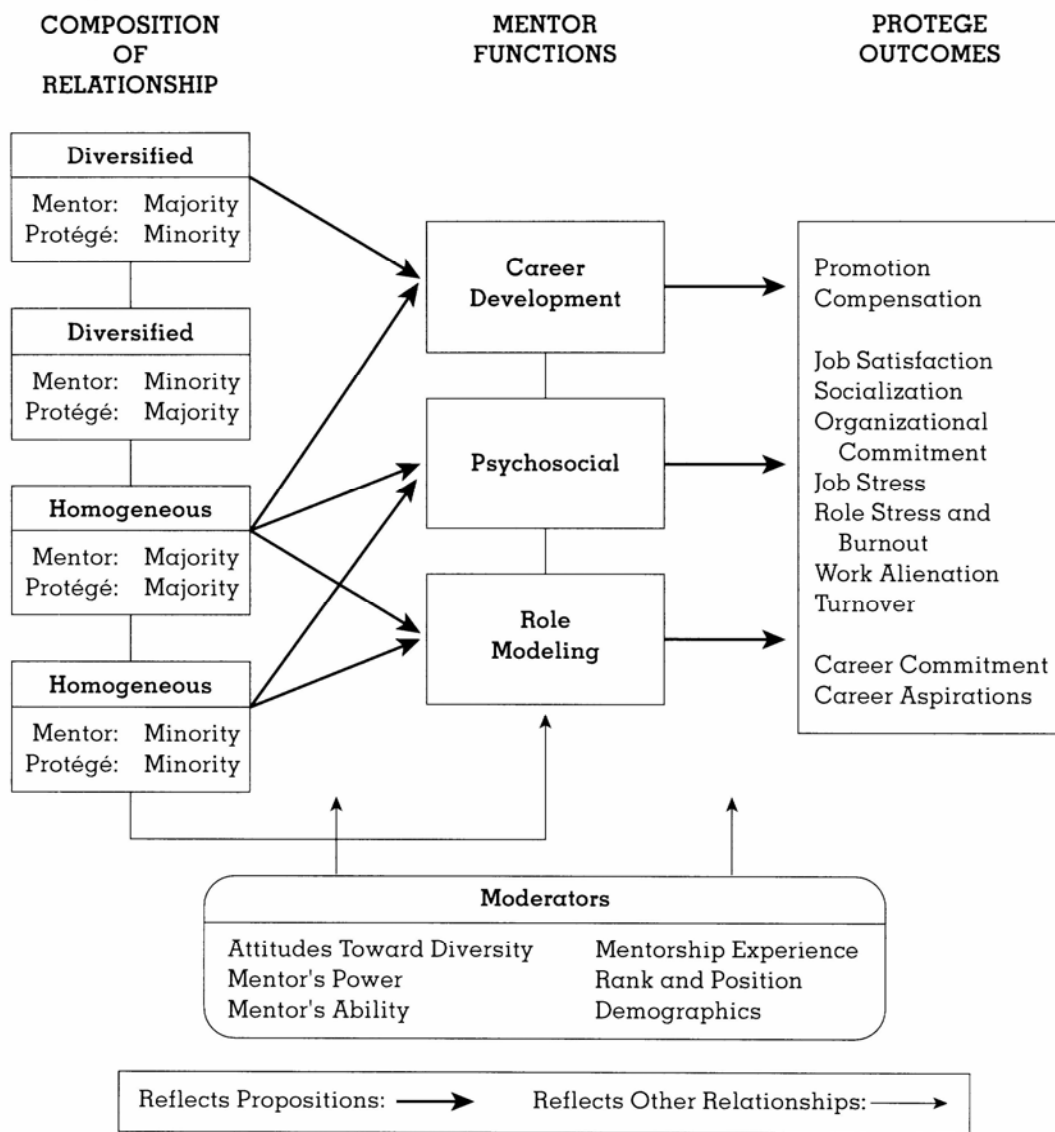
Once again, thank you for your participation. I appreciate the valuable time spent and the level of commitment provided me during the brief period that our life journey crossed paths in the form of our interview session.

My Warmest Regards,

Vernon L. Carraway

APPENDIX E: FIGURE 1. COMPOSITION OF RELATIONSHIP, MENTOR FUNCTIONS, AND PROTÉGÉ OUTCOMES

FIGURE 1
Composition of Relationship, Mentor Functions, and Protégé Outcomes



Source: Ragins, B. R. (1997). Diversified mentoring relationships in organizations: A power perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(2), 505.

APPENDIX F: SAMPLE AUDIT TRAIL RECORD

Participant	Date	Location	Interview # Observations	Interpretations
Bernie	Interview # 1 2/4/2006	330 Grange Building	Bernie's speaking to the "entry shock phase" and his becoming acclimated to the organization and his initial assignment task. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annoyance in his voice • breathing deeply • multiple pauses for deeper reflection • right leg appears to continually shake from the ball of foot to knee Bernie appears to be reflecting on a host of discerning issues about past project team members.	Individuals make some of their most difficult transitions at the beginning of their careers, including entering and becoming acclimated to the organization and job. While the pressures of the "entry shock phase" can make it hard for Bernie to see beyond the immediate assignment task, help from project team members would help him to avoid the pitfalls of an early career.
	Interview # 2 2/9/2006		Bernie appears to continue harboring very strong premonitions or feelings of his being rejected and/or unwanted by past project team members. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annoyance in his voice • right leg appears to continually shake from the ball of foot to knee 	Earning higher-level task-assignments and thriving in one's new role in the organization is a result of being able to get the career and psychosocial support that mentors, sponsors, and peer relationships can provide.

**APPENDIX G: CATEGORIES AND THEMES OF CROSS-CULTURAL
CAREER MENTORING**

Table 5.1. Categories and Themes of Cross-Cultural Career Mentoring

Categories	Themes
Protégé Background	Parental Work Ethic Adaptability & Responsibility across Cultures Educational Experiences Neighborhood Environment
Career Function	Entry Shock Phase Growth Process & Learning from Experience
Psychosocial Function	Organizational Relationships & Connections

Vernon L. Carraway

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Education

The Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania
Ph. D., Department of Workforce Education & Development, May 2008
Concentration, Training & Development
Minority Executive Development

Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts (in collaboration with)
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts
Post Graduate Work, School of Theology – Social Ethics, 1980 - 1983

University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida
Masters of Education, College Student Personnel Administration, 1976

Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania
Bachelors of Arts, Sociology, May 1974

Professional Experience

Penn State University 2001-Present
Counselor, Student Support Services Program

The Larson Consolidated Group, St. Petersburg, FL 1994-Present
Human Resource Management Training Consultant

Electronic Systems & Associates, Inc., St. Petersburg, FL 1988-1993
Executive Director, Human Resources & Staff Development

Pinellas County Urban League, St. Petersburg, FL 1993- 1994
Therapeutic Counselor

Phoenix Consortium, Nashville, TN 1983-1988
Personnel Specialist

Northeastern University, Boston, MA 1981-1983
Academic Counselor, African-American Institute

Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA 1977-1980
Act 101 Counselor/Assistant Instructor

Teaching and public speaking experience available on request.