INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP OF MENTOR SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE, MENTOR SELF-EFFICACY, AND SIMILAR ETHNIC BACKGROUND ON THE STRENGTH/QUALITY OF THE MENTOR AND MENTEE RELATIONSHIP

A Dissertation

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ABSTRACT

Youth who are exposed to more adversities in life and at-risk for engaging in delinquent behaviors have been found to be less likely to have a caring adult in their life. Mentoring is among one of the most evidence-based preventative interventions/supports applied to at-risk youth in order to promote resilience/protective factors. Youth mentoring is a pairing of a child or adolescent with an adult who offers encouragement, guidance, and support. Mentors have a variety of individual characteristics and qualities that they bring to the mentor-mentee relationship. Some characteristics that lead to effective mentoring are wisdom/knowledge, a strong emotional bond between the mentor and mentee, and a mentor who offers guidance and/or instruction. Little is known about the effect mentors' own social-emotional competence has on the relationship with at-risk youth. The present study aimed to identify the relationship of mentors' social emotional competence, mentors' self-efficacy, and match of mentor-mentee ethnic background on the quality of the mentor and mentee relationship. Sixty-six mentors were recruited from various mentor organizations from three different cities in the state of Texas and online forums. A statistically significant positive relationship was found between the mentors' self efficacy and strength/quality of mentor-mentee relationship. There was not a significant relationship between mentors' social emotional competence and mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship. Mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship was reliably predicted by mentor's self-efficacy. Ethnic match backgrounds were found to not have a significant effect on the mentor-mentee strength/quality of the relationship. Although the moderating effect of mentor self-efficacy and mentor social emotional competence increases the mentor's strength/quality of relationship, it only explained .6% increase of the variance therefore was not statistically significant. A major limitation to this

study was the small sample size. The nonsignificant results particularly with mentor-mentee ethnic match could have been due to the small sample size. These findings highlight the importance of research identifying mentor qualities that strengthen the mentor-mentee relationship. In addition, results of this study have valuable implications for the training of future mentors.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Curtis and Kaylynda Bull. I am in awe of all your wisdom, positivity, and encouragement. Thank you for being a listening ear when I needed it. I thank the Lord that he has given me parents like you both.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story. -Josh Shipp

Statement of the Problem

Children who become productive and successful adults, report having a caring adult in their childhood who provided them with the encouragement, support, and guidance they needed to pursue healthy life choices. It has been calculated that 8.5 million (about 20%) of youth lack a supportive caring adult in their life (Cavell et al., 2009). Many of the children without caring adults in their lives are from disadvantaged communities and homes (Cavell et al., 2009; Murphey et al., 2013). Children who lack caring adults have been found to be more likely to engage in higher risk behaviors, as well as are vulnerable to more life difficulties (Cavell et al., 2009). Higher risk behaviors may be represented as delinquent behavior, substance use, school drop-out, physical and psychiatric problems, divorce, chronic unemployment, demands on the welfare system, and further criminal activity (Keating et al., 2002). Research from more than six decades has identified low socioeconomic status, single-parent household, incarcerated parents, foster care, homelessness, and lack of familial support, as major contributing/risk factors to children's problem behaviors (Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, 2011). Children from at-risk families and backgrounds are more likely to want a mentor or positive role model in their lives (e.g., 29% of all youth versus 37% of all at-risk youth) and can recall a time in their life growing up when they wished they had a mentor but didn't (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2014).

In order to minimize the effects of these risk factors on youth, psychologists have developed and tested many intervention and prevention programs. Mentoring programs are among the most studied intervention programs to prevent and minimize the effects of socio-cultural risk factors for youth (DuBois et al., 2011). Research has found that resilient youth, who are more successful at transitioning from risk-filled backgrounds to productive adult lives, are consistently distinguished by having a caring adult in their life (Cavell et al., 2009). Caring adults often come in the form of mentors from various community or school mentor organizations. By providing advice, guidance, and support to their mentee, mentors can play a positive role in a child's life by impacting the youth's personal wellbeing, as well as the relationships surrounding the child or adolescent such as interpersonal relationships with family and peers (Goldner & Mayseless, 2009; Murphey et al., 2013). Furthermore, having a mentor has shown to be associated with improved youth's self-esteem, relationships with parents and peers, school connectedness, academic performance, and reduction of risky behaviors such as substance use and violence (Cavell et al., 2009). Research has found that youth who have been exposed to mentoring report reduction in aggressive behaviors, substance abuse,, and reductions in suspensions (Jolliffe and Farrington, 2007; Rhodes et al., 2005; Rollin et al., 2003). Mentoring programs have also been found to be an effective intervention to reduce delinquency in youth (Tolan et al., 2014). Furthermore, youth with mentors have shown significant improvements in their overall problematic behaviors (Keating et al., 2002). Additionally, youth with mentors in their lives have been found to be more likely to stay calm and controlled, more likely to show an interest in learning or participate in afterschool activities, less likely to be bullied, and less likely to feel sad or depressed (Murphey et al., 2013).

Mentor-mentee relationships can be formal or informal and vary in the environment in which the relationship is fostered. A United States government website devoted to providing facts and tools related to evidence-based youth programs (Youth.Gov) identified caring, empathic, consistent, and long-lasting relationships as essential components to the mentor-mentee relationship. The overall quality or strength of the mentor-mentee relationship has been found to be a positive component in creating long-lasting and impactful mentor-mentee relationships (Rhodes et al., 2017).

Mentors vary in the strengths, characteristics, and/or qualities that they bring to the mentor-mentee relationship. Self-efficacy is particularly important for mentors who are mentoring at-risk youth. Previous research has found that a greater sense of mentors' self-efficacy is positively related to longer lasting mentor-mentee relationships and decreases in the amount of obstacles in the relationship (Parra et al., 2002). Additionally, a mentor's social emotional competence (e.g., self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) has been shown to positively impact the mentor's overall satisfaction and effectiveness within the mentor-mentee relationship (Kepler, 2014). Another important factor within the mentor and mentee relationship is match in ethnic background between the mentor and mentee. Mentors with similar ethnic backgrounds as their mentee have been found to have a greater sense of connection, increased openness, and ability to discuss some of the unique challenges that they may be facing (Symons & Ponzio, 2019; Turney, 2013). When comparing same-race matches with cross-race matches, youth with same-race matches reported an increase in self-esteem. Boys with same-race matches reported an increase in academic competence and girls with same-race matches reported an increase in school value (Liang & West, 2006). Understanding the self-efficacy, mentor-mentee ethnic match, and social-

emotional competencies of mentors can provide implications for future mentor recruitment and support, as well as lead to better understanding for how to build a positive mentor-mentee relationship.

Since building a positive relationship is one of the most important components of good mentoring, it is vital to understand the contributing factors and skills a mentor needs to build a positive mentor-mentee relationship. The following areas will be investigated and appear to be noteworthy within the literature: a) mentor-mentee relationship quality/strength b) mentor social emotional competence b) mentor self-efficacy c) mentor-mentee ethnic match. No existing study has investigated the following variables together, as well as identified the stronger variables, therefore this study seeks to bridge this gap and provide more insight within the literature.

Purpose of the Study

This study will focus on examining the relationship between the mentor-mentee relationship of at-risk youth and mentors recruited from three different mentor organizations in Texas and online forums. This research will explore the relationships and impacts of a mentor's social emotional competence, self-efficacy, and various other demographic information including ethnic background on the mentors' perceived quality/strength of the mentor-mentee relationship. Furthering the research and understanding of these qualities within a mentor will help organizations to recruit, train, and support mentors, as well as help mentors to better understand the ways in which they may grow themselves to strengthen their mentor-mentee relationship.

Research Questions

This study gathered self-reported data from mentors for at-risk youth to answer the following questions.

1. Is there a significant relationship between a mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor strength/quality of the relationship?

   Hypothesis 1: A positive relation between a mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, self-efficacy, and strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship is expected to be found.

2. Which variable (mentor self-efficacy vs. mentor social emotional competence) is a better indicator of predicting the strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship?

   Hypothesis 2: Mentor social-emotional competency is expected to be a stronger predictor of the strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship when compared to mentor self-efficacy.

3. To what extent does the mentor's perceived quality of mentor-mentee relationship differ by ethnic background match between mentor and mentee?

   Hypothesis 3: Mentors' reported ethnic match with mentee is expected to predict a positive mentor-mentee relationship.

4. To what extent is mentor's self-efficacy related to mentor's perceived quality of mentor-mentee relationship and is this relation moderated by the mentor's social emotional competence?

   Hypothesis 4: The effect of mentor self-efficacy on mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship is expected to be moderated by mentor social emotional competence.

Theoretical Framework

Resiliency theory is an important framework and perspective on which to view at-risk children engaging in mentor-mentee relationships. One of the most notable contributors to the theory is Dr. Norman Garmezy, a developmental psychologist. Resiliency theory is a conceptual

strengths-based framework that leads to better understanding of why some youth, in spite of risk exposure, develop into healthy adults and lifestyles (Zimmerman, 2013). The theory suggests that there are certain protective factors, like mentoring, that can positively impact a child's life, as well as may be a buffer for a child against potential risk factors or negative consequences that may occur in their life (Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw, 2008; Werner, 1993). Three clusters of protective factors have been identified as fostering resilience.

> "1) characteristics of the individual, such as intelligence and an appealing disposition; 2) characteristics of the family, such as its consistent and close relationships and socioeconomic advantages; and 3) characteristics of the community, such as bonds to non-related adults who are positive role models, connections with community organizations, and good school" (Masten & Coatworth, 1998).

Mentors align under the third cluster by providing a positive role model outside of the family system. Research has shown that children who identify as having a significant bond or attachment in their life, are more likely to experience more success in overcoming adversity (White-Hood, 1993). The attachment figure may be a parent or family member; however, can also be filled by a mentor. Mentors can promote resilience in their mentees by "providing care and support, high and realistic expectations, and meaningful social participation" (Klein et al., 2006). This support is particularly important for at-risk youth who may not receive this type of care and support or attachment from their families, friends and peers, or schools. Furthermore, it is important that mentors are providing appropriate care and support to their mentees, as well as promoting and modeling healthy social emotional skills.

Social learning theory created by Bandura provides a valuable model to conceptualize the ways in which mentors model behavior, such as social emotional skills to their mentee, as

well as help to increase the resilience within their mentees. Social learning theory, “explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences" (Kim et al., 2008, p. 277). Social learning theory is composed of four mediational processes including: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura & Walters, 1977). The theory focuses on social interactions that include role modeling, supervised feedback, verbal instruction, which in turn influences new behavior (Durlak et al, 2015, p. 24). In the mentor-mentee relationship, the mentee is learning and interacting with his or her mentor to gain the skills and acquisition to learn new positive behavior. The mentor also has the ability to provide feedback and instruction to better help the mentee in their future and overall social emotional growth (Aschenbrener & Johnson, 2017). Social learning theory recognizes the way in which youth are given the opportunity to learn and watch the actions and expectations of their mentor to then use in their adult life (Durlak et al, 2015, p. 24). It is important for mentors to have confidence in their skills and have strong self-efficacy to model positive behaviors to their mentees, as well as positive skills themselves.

Research has found that there are several qualities or characteristics within a mentor and mentor-mentee relationship that can lead to greater positive outcomes for the mentee and overall effectiveness. Throughout the literature, building a positive relationship between the mentor and mentee has been found to be one of the most important factors to creating lasting and impactful effects for mentees (Morrow & Styles, 1995). Mentor characteristics that contribute to building a positive relationship are wisdom, offering guidance, and building an emotional bond between the mentor and mentee (DuBois & Karcher, 2013). Furthermore, it is important to investigate the aspects of building an emotional bond between the mentor and mentee. A similar upbringing, ethnic background, or experiences may contribute to building that connection.

Aside from having strong family and adult relationships, ethnic identity has been identified as a critical protective factor in the primary/individual cluster of resiliency development. Minoritized youth who have a strong positive ethnic identity have been found to have a higher self-esteem and good relations with family and peers (Phinney, 1993). Mentors and mentees matched with similar ethnic backgrounds may help the mentees to view themselves in a more positive light, as well as increase the connection and trust with their mentor (Sánchez et al., 2014). Ethnic identity development theory developed by Jean Phinney is a helpful model when viewing the impact ethnic match may have on the resilience of at-risk youth. Ethnic identity development can be defined as "the way in which individuals come to understand the implications of their ethnicity and make decisions about its role in their lives" (Bernal & Knight, 1993, p. 64) The model of ethnic identity development is composed of three stages. Stage 1 is unexamined ethnic identity, when the individual has not yet explored their own ethnicity and may accept the attitudes of the dominant culture (Bernal & Knight, 1993, p. 66). Stage 2 is ethnic identity search/moratorium and occurs when the individual is exploring their own culture or ethnicity (Bernal & Knight, 1993, p. 69). Exploration can occur through talking with friends or family, learning culture customs, and reading literature surrounding their culture. Stage 3 is ethnic identity achievement when the individual accepts membership into their culture and is open to other cultures thus resulting in a secure ethnic identity (Bernal & Knight, 1993, p. 71). The three stages do not correspond to specific ages. Individuals may spend their entire lives at one of the three stages of ethnic identity development (Phinney et al., 1990), however, adolescence is a major developmental stage for identity development and growth. Ethnic identity development may vary due to the environment, resources, and people that the individual is surrounded with. A recent study found that individuals in the "achieved ethnic identity stage

were more often involved in community activities" and had more opportunities for interpersonal contacts (Maehler, 2022). This is an important finding when considering mentees having involvement in a mentor program and the ability to build an interpersonal relationship with their mentor.

A mentor of a similar ethnic background can help to further their mentees ethnic identity development and help them potentially move to either stage 2 of exploring their identity or stage 3 of accepting their identity. Previous research has shown that ethnic identity and resiliency have a significant correlation with each other and that further ethnic identity search has contributed to greater resilience (Caroline et al., 2006; Zheng, 2021). By matching mentors with mentees of similar ethnic background, conversations may occur between the mentor and mentee surrounding their culture, as well as mentees may come to further understand and accept their culture. These conversations may lead mentees to have an overall better sense of their own self-perceptions.

Resiliency theory, social learning theory, and ethnic identity development theory are important frameworks when looking at the protective factors and role that mentors can have on at-risk youth. The theories identify the need for healthy relationships that model essential skills and foster connection between the mentor and mentee. Strong positive relationships and support are vital to help at-risk youth with many life challenges that may arise. When given the opportunity to build healthy relationships, youth are then able to learn healthy behaviors and lifestyles. Furthermore, these healthy behaviors are reinforced and encouraged in interactions with their mentors. These models suggest that mentors can have tremendous positive outcomes on mentees, however, this is with the assumption that the mentors have the appropriate skills and self-efficacy to model these behaviors to their mentees. This research will look at the ways in which mentor qualities such as ethnic match, mentor social emotional competencies, and mentor

self-efficacy may impact the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship, which in turn will hopefully lead to more resilient youth.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mentoring Overview

Tierney et al. (1995) said it best when describing mentoring, "there is nothing so heartwarming, comprehensible, and reassuring as an adult befriending and supporting a younger person." In today's society many children may be in need of a role model or figure to look up to. Families, schools, and neighborhoods have changed in ways that have drastically reduced the amount of support provided to children. An estimated 16 million youth, 9 million of which are more at-risk, will reach adulthood without connecting with a mentor of any kind (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2014). Children from at-risk families and backgrounds are more likely to want a mentor (29% of all youth versus 37% of all at-risk youth) and can recall a time in their life growing up when they wished they had a mentor but didn't (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2014). With that in mind, there is a need for mentoring programs and mentors to provide youth with support.

Mentoring Description

Mentoring can be defined as, "the pairing of an adult with a student identified as needing assistance, as a non-stigmatizing, positive intervention that can help youth develop protective factors" (Allen-Meares, 1995). This definition really focuses on the protective factors and resilience characteristics that can develop when youth have a positive and trusting mentor in their life. Another definition from The *Handbook of Youth Mentoring* defines mentoring as, "a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support, and encouragement aimed at developing the competence and character of the mentee" (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). The mentor and mentee relationship can

take on, “an emotional character of respect, loyalty, and identification” (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1990).

Although there are numerous mentor programs and mentors around the world today, they all seem to have similar goals in mind. The number one goal identified by mentoring programs in the 2016 National Mentoring Program Survey was that of simply providing mentees with a caring adult in their lives (Garringer et al., 2017, p.2). Additionally, other common goals or areas in which to positively impact mentees included: life and social skills, general youth development, academic enrichment, career exploration, leadership development, and college access (Garringer et al., 2017, p. 2). Having a supportive relationship between a young person and a non-parental adult can play a vital role in positive youth development (Scales et al., 2006). A child may only need one person believing in them to make a true impact in their life. With that in mind, a positive mentor with these elements and goals in mind has the potential to provide that kind of impact.

Positive Effects of Mentoring on At-Risk Youth

An at-risk child is generally defined as, “youth who come from single-parent homes, who show signs of emotional or behavioral problems, and who lack the support to navigate developmental tasks successfully” (Keating et al., 2002). These children can be at risk for higher rates of physical and psychiatric problems, divorce, chronic unemployment, substance abuse, demands on the welfare system, and further criminal activity (Keating et al., 2002). Specifically, with at-risk youth, mentoring programs have shown to have a positive impact on reducing substance use (Rhodes et al., 2005), aggressive behaviors (Jolliffe and Farrington, 2007), and problematic behaviors (Keating et al., 2002). Additionally, mentors have shown to provide critical support for children that are at risk for negative life events, poverty, or even trauma

(Garmezy, 1987; White-Hood, 1993). Mentoring has also shown to have a positive effect on problems related to school such as a reduction in suspensions, number of infractions on school property, and a reduction in days of sanction (Rollin et al., 2003). Additionally, having a mentor has shown to increase the chance of mentees going on to higher education, have better school attendance, and have an overall better attitude towards school (Herrara, DuBois, & Grossman, 2013). A mentor can truly impact the ways in which these children see the world and interact with those around them.

Tierney et al. (1995) explored the effects of the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentor program. They hypothesized that participating in the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentor program would impact the children in the following ways: reducing antisocial activities, improving academic outcomes, better relationships with friends and family, improved self-concept, and social and cultural enrichment. The authors also hypothesized that "having one successful relationship would carry over to a youth's other relationships by helping them to trust others, express anger more productively, and generally become better able to relate to others effectively" (Tierney et al., 1995). Results from the evaluation found that the mentees were more likely to build trusting relationships with their parents or guardians, as well as less likely to lie to them. Mentees in the program also reported to feel more supported and less criticized by their peers and friends. When parents received a survey concerning the programs' effectiveness, 63% of parents reported that the program greatly improved their children's behavior (Tierney et al., 1995). Specifically concerning the domain of social emotional wellness, "55% got along better with family members, 70% got along better with their friends, 83% had improved self-esteem, 58% had fewer behavior problems, and 60% became more responsible" (Tierney et al., 1995).

Within a study looking at the effects of mentoring on higher risk youth, results found that mentees positively improved their social skills and academic functioning (Stephen, 2018). Recently, children within the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentor program have shown statistically significant improvements in their scholastic competence, educational expectations, grades, attitude towards risky behavior, parental trust, and acknowledging that they have a special adult in their life (Mitchell, 2019). The support of a mentor is found to be a protective factor that can positively impact a child's life and can therefore buffer a child against potential risk factors or negative consequences that might occur in their life (Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw, 2008; Werner, 1993). With these results in mind, it is important for at-risk youth to be involved in mentoring programs due to the potential positive impacts that it could have on their life, as well as protective factors related to future higher risk behaviors.

A recent meta-analysis of 70 mentoring outcome studies with a sample size of 25,286 youth was conducted to look at the outcomes of youth mentoring programs (Raposa et al., 2019). Results found that mentoring has positive effects on youth's health, psychological well-being, and social outcomes. Programs with a greater percentage of mentors working in helping professions showed greater effects. This may be due to helping professionals having an increased knowledge on working with youth in at-risk situations, as well as having a greater sense of self-efficacy in their abilities to help. A mentee's race or ethnicity did not appear to show substantial variance in mentee effectiveness. It is important to note that youth mentoring has significant effects and can be beneficial for youth of all races and ethnicities (Raposa et al., 2019).

Characteristics of Good Mentoring

The Handbook of Youth Mentoring, Second Edition identifies three core elements of being a good mentor, these include: greater experience or wisdom, offers guidance or instruction, and an emotional bond between mentor and mentee (DuBois & Karcher, 2013). Although there are many characteristics and qualities to good mentoring found in the literature, one of the essential themes noted to creating an impactful mentor and mentee relationship is that of building a positive relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Mentors in which focus on building the relationship have been found to have a more satisfying relationship for both the mentee and mentor (Morrow & Styles, 1995). A positive relationship can be established by creating a connection that fosters mutuality, trust, and empathy between the mentor and mentee. Additionally, if a bond between the mentor and mentee does not form, then both the mentee and mentor may disengage from the relationship before it lasts long enough to have positive effects on the mentee (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). In order to build a positive relationship between a mentor and mentee it is important for a mentor to have social emotional competence and skills. Social emotional competence encompasses an individual's self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self management, and relationship skills (Kepler, 2014).

Contributing Factors to a Positive Mentor-Mentee Relationship

Mentor-Mentee Relationship Quality

Mentor-mentee relationship quality has been shown to have significant influences on mentee's outcomes (De Wit et al., 2019; Leyton-Armakan et al., 2012). A recent study looking at the Big Brothers Big Sisters Mentor program in Canada found that one of the key mechanisms posited for explaining why some mentored youth experience positive development outcomes more than others, is that of the quality of their relationship with their adult mentor (De Wit et al.,

2019). Factors that contribute to having a high-quality mentor-mentee relationship, is that of feelings of closeness and mutual trust between the mentor and the mentee (De Wit et al., 2019). Another youth mentor program called Campus Connections found that mentoring relationship quality was positively associated with mentors' experiences (Weiler, Boat, & Haddock, 2019). The Student Mentoring Program found significant interactions between mentor-mentee relationship quality and goal setting/feedback oriented activities on youth outcomes (Lyons, McQuillin, & Henderson, 2019). Similar research has found high correlations between mentor-mentee relationship quality and improved interpersonal relationships with family and peers (Goldner & Mayseless, 2009). Additionally, high mentor-mentee relationship quality is correlated with more stable and longer mentoring relationships (De Wit et al., 2019). Mentorship quality has been found to predict mentor-mentee relationship length (Rhodes et al., 2014). When challenges arise a positive mentoring experience has been found to promote persistence in the mentor-mentee relationship (Karcher et al., 2005).

Mentor and Mentee Social Emotional Competence

In a mentor mentee relationship, mentees have the opportunity to truly internalize and apply social emotional learning skills that they are learning with their mentor. Mentor programs have shown to have positive effects on the mentees social emotional competence (Komosa-Hawkins, 2012). Research has found that, "mentoring is a promising practice for improving the social-emotional strengths of adolescents and/or protecting them from the risks associated with adolescence." In addition, mentoring has been found to improve parental relationships and perceived social support, which can then contribute to a child's overall self-esteem and self-worth. Having an increase in self-esteem and self-worth can impact the child or adolescent's social-emotional health (Komosa-Hawkins, 2012). Overall, mentoring has shown positive

outcomes by increasing the mentees interpersonal strength, school functioning, growth in affective strength, and growth in career strength (Komosa-Hawkins, 2012). Interpersonal strength helps improve the way in which individuals communicate and listen to those around them. Affective strength helps one to better regulate and recognize their feelings and emotions. Both interpersonal and affective strength relate to positively impacting the mentee's social emotional wellness. This is an exciting time for mentoring, specifically within the realm of social emotional outcomes. These skills are beneficial to all children and have shown to have lasting impacts on their lives.

Social emotional competence is important for all individuals, particularly mentors who may be modeling these skills to youth. Mentors who model and display positive emotions particularly when difficult circumstances arise, actively model those social emotional skills to their mentee. Social emotional skills are important to develop in both mentees, as well as mentors. Research has been shown that the optimal mentor effectiveness and satisfaction is fostered by a mentor's self-awareness, self-management, and interpersonal communication (Kepler, 2014). Therefore, it is important for mentors to have social emotional competence and skills to thus be able to impart and model those skills to their mentees.

Researchers have found that targeting "specific developmental assets and positive development outcomes such as having mentors engage with mentees in activities designed to enhance the social and emotional competence of youth" may help to increase the effectiveness of the mentor-mentee relationship, as well as the mentor program as a whole (Erdem et al., 2016). With this in mind, it is important for mentors to have optimal social emotional skills to be able to engage in activities surrounding social emotional development, as well as display these skills naturally with their mentee. Overall, a mentor's social emotional competence is an important

factor that can have effects on mentee's outcomes. Furthermore, it is important to investigate the social emotional competence of mentors and how that may affect the overall mentor-mentee relationship quality.

Mentor Self-Efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy can be defined as a "person's belief about their capabilities to produce effects" (Bandura, 1994). Mentors have a certain amount of confidence or belief in their abilities to produce an impact within their mentee. Self-efficacy particularly for a mentor's confidence level is an important component in the mentor-mentee relationship. Many mentors report having feelings of personal inadequacy when it comes to being a mentor and feel as though they may not be able to contribute to their mentee's positive development (Eby & Lockwood, 2005).

Mentors of mentees exposed to challenges and various risk factors are more likely to experience shifts in their own degree of confidence or ability to form a positive mentoring bond with their mentee, which can then in turn affect the overall quality of the mentor and mentee relationship (Boat et al., 2019). A recent study in 2016 found that greater mentor self-efficacy, as well as increased experiences working with youth were identified as buffers to the negative environmental stressors that may affect the length of the mentor-mentee match (Raposa et al., 2016). A greater sense of mentor self-efficacy has been shown to impact various areas within the mentor-mentee relationship including increasing the amount of mentor-mentee monthly contacts, increasing the activity involvement within the mentor organization, and decreasing the amount of overall mentor-mentee relationship obstacles (Parra et al., 2002). An overall positive mentoring experience promotes an increase in self-efficacy for the mentor (Faith et al., 2011). Mentor self-

efficacy has shown significant effects on the mentor-mentee relationship and is important to buffer against obstacles that may arise within the relationship.

When looking at mentor self-efficacy and mentor social emotional skills, it is important to understand the relationship between each other, as well as see how they both may affect the quality/strength of the relationship. Research has shown that mentors are seeking out trainings to better equip and increase their skill level as mentors, therefore it is important to understand the effects of a mentor's social emotional competence/skills on the overall confidence of the mentor (Garret, 2014; Mboka, 2018). When mentors have increased skill levels, they may feel more confident in themselves to have an impact on their mentee's life.

Although mentor self-efficacy has been found in the literature to be an important component in the mentor mentee relationship quality/strength, a mentor's social emotional competence and skills was hypothesized to be a more impactful variable due to the importance of modeling those skills to their mentee, as well as individually having the skills necessary to handle any obstacles that may arise in the relationship.

Similar Ethnic Background Match

Mentors come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, cultures, and life experiences. Effective mentor programs have reported positive impacts when mentors of similar ethnic background, life circumstances, and language are paired with mentees (Symons & Ponzio, 2019; Turney, 2013). Mentees report having a greater sense of connection and ability to be open with their mentor about any challenges that they were experiencing. A youth mentor program specifically for English learners found the mentees received increased support and encouragement from their mentor when they shared similar life experiences and ethnic

background (Turney, 2013). Additionally, mentors were shown to have an increased understanding of their mentee's challenges (Turney, 2013).

A meta-analysis looked at the best practices in youth mentoring programs and found that matching mentors and youth based on common interests was important (DuBois et al., 2002). Furthermore, similar ethnic background and culture may be a common interest or way in which the mentor and mentee can build a connection. Additionally, mentors report wanting and needing more culture-specific information and training to better serve their mentees (Stephen, 2018). Although training in those areas are important, if mentors are already familiar with the culture or ethnic background due to it being similar to their own, then they may be more sensitive and already aware of the culture-specific information needed to support their mentee. Mentees who have a limited amount, or no, positive same-race/ethnicity role models in their lives may benefit from a same-race mentor-mentee match. Mentoring programs can promote positive ethnic or racial identity among minority youth (Sánchez et al., 2014)

When assigning or pairing mentors with certain mentees, it may be important to understand the positive impacts that mentors of similar backgrounds may have on the students' outcomes. If able, a mentor who has a similar ethnic background, first language, or country of origin may be important components to consider when matching a mentor with a mentee. This study will investigate the effects that mentor-mentee similar ethnic background has on the quality of the mentor and mentee relationship.

Gaps in Current Literature

In this chapter, the literature has demonstrated the positive effects of mentoring on at-risk youth (Vanderbilt-Adriance and Shaw, 2008; White-Hood, 1993), as well as the importance of building a positive relationship between the mentor and the mentee (Morrow & Styles, 1995).

Additionally, several studies identified important attributes of a mentor including, social emotional competence (Kepler, 2014) and self-efficacy (Raposa et al., 2016), as well as the positive effects that similar ethnic background has on the mentor-mentee relationship (Symons & Ponzio, 2019; Turney, 2013). Through a resiliency theory lens, mentoring can act as a protective factor for at-risk youth to learn skills to be resilient to many of life's challenges and obstacles (Klein et al., 2006).

As social emotional competencies and programs are gaining recognition, it is important to look specifically at the social emotional skills of mentors especially since they are modeling these skills to their mentees. Additionally, more research needs to be conducted to investigate the magnitude of racial and cultural processes on the mentoring relationship quality, particularly regarding closer mentor to youth bonds (Sánchez et al., 2014). It is also important to see if mentor social emotional competence may act as a moderator between mentor self-efficacy and mentor-mentee relationship quality/strength. Mentors who have more social emotional development and skills may have an increased sense of confidence in themselves, which thus may impact the overall quality/strength of the mentor mentee relationship. This added information may provide practical implications to the field of mentoring and may encourage mentor organizations to seek out social emotional training and support for their mentors.

The literature has focused on different characteristics and impacts surrounding mentoring, however, few existing studies have considered all the variables of interest and their relationship between each other. Thus, the current study seeks to bridge the gap in this area and provide more insight on these important factors for mentoring youth.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Sixty-six mentors were recruited from three different mentor organizations in Texas and online forums. The mentors varied in ethnicity, age, gender, socio-economic status, level of education, and mentor-mentee relationship length. Descriptive statistics of the participants are reviewed in chapter four.

This research study was conducted using the following statistical methods: correlation analysis, multiple regression, and independent t-test. To investigate the needed sample size of the study, a priori power analysis was conducted in an online power analysis program called G*Power 3.1. G* Power has been found to be useful for behavioral and social sciences, as well as various other disciplines (Faul et al., 2007). The program performs "high-precision statistical power analyses for the most common statistical tests in behavioral science" (Erdfelder et al., 1996). The program has been used by many researchers since 1996 (Erdfelder et al., 1996). Additionally, the program has been shown to be more efficient and precise compared to earlier power charts and tables (Faul et al., 2007). The youth mentoring literature suggests medium to moderate effect sizes on outcomes, therefore a medium effect size was chosen in these priori analyses (Raposa et al., 2019). Furthermore, with a Power (β) of 0.80, an alpha ($\propto$) of 0.05, and a cohen's f effect size of 0.15, for a linear multiple regression model with three predictors the total sample size needed was 77. For the correlation analysis, with a Power (β) of 0.8, an alpha ($\propto$) of 0.05, and Correlation ρ H1 of 0.3 the total sample size needed was 64. For the independent samples t-test, with a Power (β) of 0.8, an alpha ($\propto$) of 0.05, and an effect size of 0.5 the total sample size needed was 102 with 51 participants in each group. The sample size

criteria was met for the correlation analysis with the amount of mentor participants that completed the surveys; however, it was not met for the independent samples t-test and the linear multiple regression.

Procedures

Mentors were asked to complete various self-report measures (e.g., Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale, Mentor Strength of Relationship Scale, and Social Emotional Competencies Scale) via an online- survey format (i.e. via Qualtrics). Surveys were sent out to three different mentor organizations in Texas and online forums. If the mentor chose to provide their email address, they received a $10 amazon gift card sent via email after completing the survey. Sixty-two mentors provided their email address and therefore received the amazon gift card via email.

Instruments

Study measures examined participants' demographics, self-efficacy related to mentoring, perceived mentor-mentee relationship quality, and social emotional competencies (e.g., self-regulation, social competence, empathy, and responsibility). If the participants had multiple mentees, they were instructed to think of one particular mentee when completing the survey.

Mentor Strength of Relationship Scale (MSoR; Rhodes, Schwartz, Willis, & Wu, 2014)

This measure focuses on the mentor's perspective of the relationship quality between the mentor and mentee (Rhodes et al., 2014). It is a 14 item self-report measure assessing both positive and negative perceptions of their mentor-mentee relationship using two subscales: Logistical (2 items, e.g., "It is hard for me to find the time to be with my mentee") and Affective (10 items, e.g., "I enjoyed the experience of being a mentor," "Sometimes I feel frustrated with how few things have changed with my mentee"). This measure was chosen because it has been found to be the "first mentor-report relationship quality scale with established psychometric

properties (Rhodes et al., 2014) and captures both negative and positive experiences within the mentoring relationship. Participants rate items on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree)* to 5 (*Strongly Agree).* Prior to scoring, negatively worded items were reverse scored. The total score for both subscales was used. When interpreting scores, higher scores represent more positive thoughts or feelings towards the mentoring relationship. The scale was slightly adapted in order to keep with the same word usage as the other measures (e.g., mentor instead of Big and mentee instead of Little). Additionally, the MSoR has been found to have associations between match length within the Big Brothers Big Sisters community-based matches (Rhodes et al., 2014). The internal consistency for the measure for the fourteen items has been found to be strong, ($\propto = 0.85$) (Rhodes et al., 2014). Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was $\propto = 0.82$ demonstrating a good internal consistency.

Mentor Self-Efficacy Scale (MSES; Ferro, Dewit, Wells, Speechley & Lipman, 2013)

Participants completed an 11 item self-report measure assessing the mentor's level of confidence and ability to support their mentee. Participants were asked to rate their own confidence as a mentor in various areas such as, planning activities, giving problem solving advice, and goal setting/achieving. Participants rated items on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (*Not At All Confident)* to 4 (*Very Confident).* When interpreting scores, higher scores correspond with a greater level of mentor self-efficacy. This measure was chosen for the following study since it was one of the first validated mentor self-efficacy scales and has been used in the youth mentoring research related to the mentor-mentee relationship. The MSES has been found to have acceptable internal consistency, ($\propto = 0.81$) (Ferro et al., 2013). Convergent validity for this scale has been found to be acceptable (Ferro et al., 2013). Additionally, predictive validity has

been found to be acceptable for mentor reported engagement (Ferro et al., 2013). Cronbach's' alpha for the current sample was $\propto = 0.90$ demonstrating a good internal consistency.

Social Emotional Competencies Scale (SECS; Ura, Castro-Olivo, & d'Abrue, 2020)

Participants completed a 15 item self-report measure assessing the way that mentors sometimes feel, think, or act. Participants were asked to rate their own social emotional awareness in several areas which include, self-regulation, social competence, empathy, and responsibility. Participants rated items on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 4 (Always). This measure was slightly adapted to change items that used the words teacher or student to instead use mentor or mentee. The internal consistency of the scale has been found to be strong, ($\propto = 0.89$) (Ura et al., 2020). The scale has been found to have convergent validity with the Self-Rated Emotional Intelligence Scale (SREIS) (Ura et al., 2020). Cronbach's alpha for the current sample was $\propto = 0.84$, suggesting a good internal consistency.

Design

For research question #1, a correlation analysis was conducted to see if there was a relationship between the mentor's social emotional competence, mentoring self-efficacy, and strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship. For research question #2, a multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine which variable (e.g., mentor social emotional competence vs. mentor self-efficacy) was the strongest predictor for a mentor's strength/quality of the mentor mentee relationship. For research question #4, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was also used to examine the relation between mentor-mentee relationship and self-efficacy to see if it was moderated by mentor social emotional competence. The predictor variable was mentor self-efficacy and the moderator variable was mentor social emotional competence. The dependent variable was mentor strength/quality of relationship. Lastly, for

research question #3, an independent t-test was conducted to investigate to what extent the mentor strength/quality of relationship differs by ethnic background match between the mentor and a minority mentee. We compared groups with the same ethnic match vs. no ethnic match with the mentees identified as minoritized. There were thirty nine mentees identified as minority mentees. Below are the study's research questions:

- Research Question #1: Is there a significant relationship between a mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor strength/quality of the relationship?
- Research Question #2: Which variable (mentor self-efficacy vs. mentor social emotional competence) is a better indicator of predicting the strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship?
- Research Question #3: To what extent does the mentor strength/quality of relationship differ by ethnic background match between mentor and mentee with the mentees identified as minoritized?
- Research Question #4: To what extent is mentor self-efficacy related to mentor strength/quality of relationship and is this relation moderated by the mentor's social emotional competence?

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Majority of the mentors identified with a white ethnic background (54.5%; *n* =36) and were primarily female (86.4%; *n* = 57). Other mentors reported being male (12.1%, *n*= 8) and one mentor identified as "Other" for gender (1.5%; *n*= 1). Majority of the participants were between the ages 21-29 (39%; *n* = 26), while the remainder reported being 18-20 years of age (4.5%; *n*= 3), 30-39 years of age (18.3%, *n*= 12), 40-49 years of age (28.2%; *n*= 19), 50-59 years of age (7.5%; *n*= 5), and 60 years or older (1.5%; *n*=1). Regarding minority mentors, mentors identified as being Black or African American (12.1%; *n*= 8), Hispanic/Latine (15.2%; *n*= 10), Asian (6.1%; *n*= 4), and from multiple races (12.1%; *n*= 8). Most of the mentors' highest level of degree/school was a bachelor's degree (42.4%; *n* = 28), followed by mentors who reported having received a graduate degree (33.3%, *n*= 22). The remaining 24.3% reported having an associates degree (6.1%; *n*= 4), some college but no degree (12.1%; *n*= 8), and a high school degree or equivalent (6.1%; *n*= 4). Descriptive information of the mentor is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of the Mentor (N=66)

General Demographics Of Mentor	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	8	12.1%
Female	57	86.4%

Table 1 (continued)

General Demographics Of Mentor	Frequency	%
Gender		
Other	1	1.5%
Ethnicity		
Black or African American	8	12.1%
White	36	54.5%
Hispanic/Latino	10	15.2%
Asian	4	6.1%
From multiple races	8	12.1%
Age		
18-20	3	4.5%
21-29	26	39.4%
30-39	12	18.3%
40-49	19	28.2%
50-59	5	7.5%
60 or older	1	1.5%
Highest Level of Degree/School		
High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)	4	6.1%
Some college but no degree	8	12.1%

Table 1 (continued)

General Demographics Of Mentor	Frequency	%
Highest Level of Degree/School		
Associate degree	4	6.1%
Bachelor degree	28	42.4%
Graduate degree	22	33.3%

The mentors identified mentees being from a range of ethnicities including: White (36.4%; *n*= 24), Hispanic/Latino (19.7%; *n*= 13), Black or African-American (13.6%; *n*= 9), from multiple races (12.1%; *n*= 8), some other race (9.1%; *n*= 6), and Asian (4.5%; *n*= 3). Three of the mentor participants did not know their mentees ethnicities or chose not to disclose that information. Half of the mentors reported that their mentees had two parental figures in their household (50%; *n*= 33). The remainder of the mentors reported their mentees living in single parent households (21.2%; *n*= 14), having no parental figure within the household (7.6%; *n*= 5), or chose not to disclose that information. If the mentor had multiple mentees, the mentor was asked to complete the survey with only one mentee in mind. Descriptive information regarding mentees is provided in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of the Mentee (N=66)

General Demographics of the Mentee	Frequency	%
Ethnicity of Mentee		

Table 2 (continued)

General Demographics of the Mentee	Frequency	%
Ethnicity of Mentee		
Black or African American	9	13.6%
White	24	36.4%
Hispanic/Latine	13	19.7%
Asian	3	4.5%
From multiple races	8	12.1%
Some Other Race	6	9.1%
Parental Figures		
0	5	7.6%
1	14	21.2%
2	33	50.0%

Majority of mentors (27.3%; *n*= 18) reported that they had been matched with their mentee for 6 months to 1 year. Other mentors indicated that they had been matched with their mentee less than 6 months (24.2%; *n*= 16), 1 to 2 years matched (22.7%, *n*= 15), 2 to 5 years matched (15.2%; *n*= 10), and greater than 5 years matched with their mentee (10.6%; *n*= 7). When asked whether they had a community-based or school-based match, the majority of mentors reported having a community-based match (57.6%; *n*= 38). Mentors also reported having a school-based match (42.4%; *n*= 28). Mentors identified as being in the same ethnic group as their mentee (45.5%*; n*= 30) and other mentors identified that they were not in the same

ethnic group as their mentee (40.9%; *n*= 27). Nine mentors did not provide information on whether they identified with the same ethnic group as their mentee. All descriptive information regarding the mentor and mentee match can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

Mentor and Mentee Match Descriptive Statistics (N=66)

Mentor and Mentee Information	Frequency	%
Length of Mentor and Mentee Match		
Less than 6 months	16	24.2%
6 months to 1 year	18	27.3%
1 to 2 years	15	22.7%
2 to 5 years	10	15.2%
Greater than 5 years	7	10.6%
Type of Match		
community-based	38	57.6%
school-based	28	42.4%
Identify with Same Ethnic Group as Mentee		
yes	30	45.5%
no	27	40.9%

Descriptive statistics specifically for minoritized mentees was conducted. Majority of minority mentees had been matched 6 months to 1 year (35.9%; *n*= 14). Others reported being matched 1 to 2 years (25.6%; *n*=10), less than 6 months (17.9%; *n*= 7), 2 to 5 years (12.8%;

n=5), or greater than 5 years (7.7%;*n*=3). A little over half minority mentees were in a community-based match (53.8%; *n*=21), while the rest were classified as school-based (46.2%; *n*=18). Majority of the minority mentees were reported not to be in a same ethnic mentor mentee match (57.6%; *n*= 19). Other minority mentees were reported to be a same ethnic mentor mentee match (42.4%; *n*=14) and six mentors did not provide that information. Regarding parental figures in the minority mentees home, most of the minority mentees were reported to live in a two parent household (59.0%; *n*=23), while the remainder were noted to live in a one parent household (20.5%; *n*=8) or a household with no parental figures (10.3%; *n*=4).

Table 4

Minoritized Mentee Descriptive Statistics (N=39)

Mentor and Mentee Information	Frequency	%
Length of Mentor and Mentee Match		
Less than 6 months	7	17.9%
6 months to 1 year	14	35.9%
1 to 2 years	10	25.6%
2 to 5 years	5	12.8%
Greater than 5 years	3	7.7%
Type of Match		
community-based	21	53.8%
school-based	18	46.2%

Table 4 (continued)

Mentor and Mentee Information	Frequency	%
Identify with Same Ethnic Group as Mentee		
yes	14	42.4%
no	19	57.6%
Parental Figures		
0	4	10.3%
1	8	20.5%
2	23	59.0%

Data Analysis

Descriptive Analysis & Normality Assumption

The descriptive statistics of the mentor strength/quality of relationship, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor social emotional competence for all participants are presented in Table 5. The mentor strength/quality of relationship, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor social emotional competence for mentors with minority mentees are presented in Table 6. Skewness and kurtosis were calculated to estimate the normality of this sample. The skewness and kurtosis estimations for all variables were within the acceptable range (skewness of <2 and kurtosis of <7) (Hair et al., 2010; Byrne, 2010). All other assumptions were checked and were within the acceptable range. The mean of the Mentor Strength of Relationship (MSoR) scale was 53.49. The standard deviation of the Mentor Strength of Relationship was 8.07 and scores ranged from 26-70. The Mentor Self-Efficacy scale mean was 34.89 and the standard deviation was 5.93. For the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale scores ranged from 20-44 and the scale had two missing values. The Mentor

Social Emotional Competence scale had a mean of 49.09 and a standard deviation of 5.66. Scores on the Mentor Social Emotional Competence scale ranges from 36-60.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for All participants (N= 66)

Variable	Mean	SD	Range	*N* of Missing Values	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mentor Strength of Relationship (MSoR)	53.59	8.07	26-70	0	-.68	1.32
Mentor Self-Efficacy	34.89	5.93	20-44	2	-.17	-.64
Mentor Social Emotional Competence	49.09	5.66	36-60	0	-.15	-.89

The descriptive statistics for the mentors identified as mentoring minority mentees (*N= 39)* was gathered. The skewness and kurtosis estimations for all the variables were within the acceptable range. For the Mentor Strength of Relationship scale the mean was 53.95 and the standard deviation was 8.6. The MSoR scores ranged from 26-67. For the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale the mean was 34.68 with the standard deviation being 8.6. The scores on the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale ranged from 20-44 and there were 2 missing values. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scale mean was 49.21 with the standard deviation being 6.01. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scores ranged from 39-60. The results of the descriptive statistics for mentors of minority mentees is presented in the below table (Table 6).

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Mentors of Minority Mentees (N= 39)

Variable	Mean	SD	Range	*N* of Missing Values	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mentor Strength of Relationship (MSoR)	53.95	8.6	26-67	0	-1.04	2.12
Mentor Self-Efficacy	34.68	6.44	20-44	2	-.21	-.79
Mentor Social Emotional Competence	49.21	6.01	39-60	0	-.03	-1.19

The descriptive statistics for the mentors identified as mentoring minority mentees with a matched ethnic background (*N= 14)* was gathered. The skewness and kurtosis estimations for all the variables were within the acceptable range. For the Mentor Strength of Relationship scale the mean was 56.29 and the standard deviation was 5.03. The MSoR scores ranged from 46-66. For the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale the mean was 36.92 with the standard deviation being 5.82. The scores on the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale ranged from 28-44 and there was one missing value. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scale mean was 49 with the standard deviation being 6.65. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scores ranged from 39-60. The results of the descriptive statistics for mentors of minority mentees identified as a matched ethnicity are presented in the below table (Table 7).

The descriptive statistics for the mentors identified as mentoring minority mentees with a non-matched ethnic background (*N= 19)* was gathered. The skewness and kurtosis estimations for all the variables were within the acceptable range. For the Mentor Strength of Relationship scale the mean was 53.68 and the standard deviation was 9.63. The MSoR scores ranged from 26-67.

For the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale the mean was 34.61 with the standard deviation being 6. The scores on the Mentor Self-Efficacy scale ranged from 25-43 and there was one missing value. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scale mean was 50 with the standard deviation being 5.58. The Mentor Social Emotional Competence scores ranged from 41-57. The results of the descriptive statistics for mentors of minority mentees identified as a non-matched ethnicity are presented in the below table (Table 7).

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Mentors of Minority Mentees Identified as Matched (N= 14) and non-matched (N=19)

	Matched *(N= 14)*				Non-Matched *(N= 19)*			
	M	*SD*	*Range*	*N of Missing Values*	*M*	*SD*	*Range*	*N of Missing Values*
MSoR	56.29	5.03	46-66	0	53.68	9.63	26-67	0
Mentor Self-Efficacy	39.92	5.82	28-44	1	34.61	6	25-43	1
Mentor Social Emotional Competence	49	6.65	39-60	0	50	5.58	41-57	0

Note: MSoR = Mentor Strength of Relationship

Research Question 1

Is there a significant relationship between mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor strength/quality of the relationship?

A bivariate correlation analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, mentor self-efficacy, and mentor strength/quality of the relationship were related to each other. There was a significant positive relationship between

strength of the mentor-mentee relationship and mentor self-efficacy, r(66) = .62, p < .001. There was a significant positive relationship between social emotional competence and mentor self-efficacy, r(66) = .47, p <.001. The results indicated that the relationship between social emotional competence and mentor strength of relationship was not significant, r(66) =.23, p =.07. Results can be viewed in Table 8.

Table 8

Intercorrelations for Mentor Strength of Relationship, Mentor Self-Efficacy, and Mentor Social Emotional Competence

Variables	1	2	3
1.Mentor Strength of Relationship	__		
2. Mentor Self-Efficacy	.62**	__	
3. Mentor Social Emotional Competence	.23	.47**	__

Research Question 2

Which variable (mentor self-efficacy vs. mentor social emotional competence) is a better indicator of predicting the strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship?

The multiple regression analysis was used to test if social emotional competence and self-efficacy significantly predicted the mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship. The multiple regression results indicated that adjusted R^2 value was .38 suggesting about 38% of the variance in mentor strength of relationship is accounted for by mentor self-efficacy and mentor social emotional competence [($F(2, 61) = 19.972$, $p < .001$]. Mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship was found to not statistically predict mentor social emotional competence (b = -1.20,

p =.41) and did not show any effect (β=-.09). It was, however, statistically significantly predicted by mentor's self-efficacy (b = .83, t = 5.92, p <.001). Mentor self-efficacy was found to have a large effect on the mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship (β = .67). Results can be viewed in the table below (Table 9).

Table 9

Mentor Self-Efficacy and Mentor Social Emotional Competence Impact on Mentor Strength of Relationship Without Moderator

Variable	**b**	β	***SE***	***t***	***P***
Mentor Self-Efficacy	.83	.67	.14	5.92	<.001
Mentor Social Emotional Competence	-1.20	-.09	.15	-.83	.41
R^2	0.38				

Research Question 3

To what extent does the mentor strength/quality of relationship differ by ethnic background match between mentor and mentee with the mentees identified as minoritized?

There was no significant effect on the mentor strength/quality of relationship on ethnic background match between the mentor and mentee t(33) = .92, p = .182, despite same ethnic background match reporting higher strength/quality of the mentor and mentee relationship (M= 56.29, SD= 5.02) compared to participants who did not have the same ethnic match (M= 53.68, SD= 9.63). Six of the mentors with minority mentees did not respond when asked whether they identified with the same ethnic background as their mentee. Results can be viewed in the table below (Table 10).

Table 10

Difference Between Ethnic Match versus Non-Ethnic Match on Mentor Strength of Relationship for Minority Mentees (N=33)

	Ethnic Match		Non-Ethnic Match		t(33)	*p*	Cohen's d
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
MSoR	56.29	5.02	53.68	9.63	.920	.182	.32

Note: MSoR = Mentor Strength of Relationship

Research Question 4

To what extent is mentor self-efficacy related to mentor strength/quality of relationship and is this relation moderated by the mentor's social emotional competence?

The multiple regression results indicated the R^2 changed value was .006 suggesting that the moderating effect of mentor self-efficacy and mentor social emotional competence increases the mentor's strength/quality of relationship by .6%. The F-test shows that the R^2 changed model is not statistically significant [($F(1,60) = .603$, $p = .440$]. The interaction between mentor social emotional competence and mentor self-efficacy was not significant ($b = -0.02$, $t = -0.78$, $p > .10$). This indicates that mentor social emotional competence does not act as a moderator between mentor self-efficacy and mentor-mentee strength/quality of relationship. Results can be viewed in the table below (Table 11).

Table 11

Moderation of Mentor Self-Efficacy and Mentor Social Emotional Competence on Mentor Strength of Relationship

Variables	**b**	*β*	***SE***	***t***	***P***
Constant	3.077	--	6.53	4.74	<.001
Mentor Self-Efficacy	1.64	1.33	1.06	1.55	1.27
Mentor Social Emotional Competence	.44	.34	.74	.6	.55
Mentor Social Emotional Competence * Mentor Self-Efficacy	-.02	-.95	.02	-.78	.440
R^2	.4				
ΔR^2	.006				

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this quantitative study was to develop a better understanding of how a mentor's social emotional competence and self-efficacy impacts the mentor-mentee strength/quality of the relationship. Additionally, the present study hoped to examine the impact similar ethnic match between mentors and minoritized mentees may have on the strength/quality of the relationship. Mentoring has been shown to be an effective intervention program to act as a protective factor for youth who may be at higher risk for life challenges (DuBois et al., 2011). Many at-risk youth are wanting mentors and lack a caring adult in their life (Bruce & Bridgeland, 2014; Cavell et al., 2009). One of the most important components to creating a lasting mentor-mentee relationship and increasing positive outcomes within the mentee is the mentor-mentee relationship quality (De Wit et al., 2019). Research has been conducted to look at the ways to enhance mentor and mentee relationship quality. Furthermore, mentors come into the mentor-mentee relationship with their own skill set and characteristics. It is important for mentors to have social emotional skills to demonstrate these competencies to their mentees, particularly mentees who may be at a higher risk to negative life events or circumstances (Kepler, 2014). Additionally, it is beneficial to understand the confidence or self-efficacy the mentors have in their abilities to demonstrate these skills and be an overall effective mentor.

This study furthered the exploration of mentor characteristics (e.g., self-efficacy, social emotional competence, and similar mentor/mentee ethnic background) on the impact to the quality/strength of the mentor mentee relationship by gathering data from sixty six mentors from three different mentor organizations in Texas and online forums. Participants were asked to provide information from their perspective on the strength/quality of relationship that they have

with their mentee, their own self-efficacy or confidence in being a mentor, as well as their own social emotional competence. If the participant had more than one mentee, they were asked to complete the survey with only one mentee in mind. The mentee they selected was up to their own choosing, however, it was encouraged to use a current mentee if they had one. In addition, they were asked to provide various demographic information such as if they identified with the same ethnic background as their mentee. These variables were selected based on existing literature which supports the relationship of each of those factors in the overall effectiveness and success of the mentor mentee relationship. Although our study's sample size was smaller than the optimal same size for adequate power, a power analysis was run with the actual sample and it was shown to have adequate power.

We hypothesized that there would be a relationship between a mentor's self-reported social emotional competence, self-efficacy, and strength/quality of the mentor-mentee relationship. Previous research has found that a mentor's self-efficacy has an impact on the overall quality of the relationship between a mentor and their mentee (Faith et al., 2002). Furthermore, social emotional skills such as self-awareness, self-management, and interpersonal communication have been found to positively impact a mentor's effectiveness and satisfaction within the relationship (Kepler, 2014). Consistent with existing literature, our analyses yielded a positive relation between mentor self-efficacy and mentor mentee strength/quality of the relationship, as well as a positive relation between mentor social emotional competence and mentor self-efficacy. Inconsistent with the literature, a mentor's social emotional competence was not found to have a significant relationship with the strength/quality of the mentor mentee relationship for the current sample.

Secondly, we hypothesized that a mentor's self-efficacy and a mentor's social emotional competence would predict a mentor's reported strength/quality of relationship. We also wanted to see what variable (e.g., mentor self-efficacy vs. mentor social emotional competence) would be the strongest predictor. We hypothesized that a mentor's social emotional competence would be a stronger predictor. While there has been less research conducted on a mentor's social emotional competence predicting the mentor-mentee relationship strength/quality, research has shown that mentor qualities related to social emotional competence foster stronger mentor mentee relationships (Kepler, 2014). Previous research suggests that a mentor's self-efficacy increases the amount of monthly contacts between the mentor and mentee, decreases the amount of overall obstacles within the mentor and mentee relationship, and increases the activity involvement within the mentor organization (Parra et al., 2002). Our analyses found that mentor self-efficacy and mentor social emotional competence accounted for 38% of the variance in the strength/quality of the mentor and mentee relationship. Mentor self-efficacy was a significant predictor of the mentor strength/quality of relationship; however, mentor social emotional competence was not a significant predictor of the mentor strength/quality of relationship.

In the third research question, we hypothesized that there would be a significant positive effect on mentor strength/quality of relationship for minority mentees matched with mentors of the same ethnic background. Although previous research within youth mentoring have not found significant effects of same ethnic background on the mentor and mentee relationship (Sánchez et al., 2014). Other research has shown that minority youth who are paired mentors of a similar ethnic background have a greater sense of connection, ability to be open, increased support, and increased understanding (Turney, 2013). Although mentor's who were matched with minority mentees with similar ethnic backgrounds reported an overall higher strength/quality of the

mentor mentee relationship it was not significant. It is important to note that the Cohen's d effect size showed a small effect (.32) for ethnic mentor and mentee match. Although this effect size is not statistically significant, this small of an effect size can be meaningful when looking at youth interventions such as having a mentor. The overall sample size of the minority mentees was small and therefore results should be interpreted with caution. A small sample size could result in a "statistically nonsignificant result merely because of inadequate sample size (Type 2 or false negative error)" (Andrade, 2020).

Lastly in the fourth research question, we hypothesized that mentor social emotional competence would act as a moderator on the effect of mentor self-efficacy on mentor strength/quality of the relationship. We predicted that a mentor's social emotional competence would increase their overall confidence/self-efficacy and thus impact the relationsip of the mentor and mentee. Research has shown that social emotional competence and self-efficacy have positive impacts on the mentor and mentee relationship (Kepler, 2014; Faith et al., 2011). Our findings did not yield a significant moderating effect of social emotional competence between mentor self-efficacy and mentor strength/quality of relationship for the current study.

Overall, a possible explanation for the lack of significance in social emotional competence as a relation, predictor, and moderating effect may be attributed to the fact the scale is not specific to mentors. The social emotional competence scale was originally created for teachers, although teachers are similar to mentors, it is important for measures to be captured and developed by the target population, if possible (e.g., mentors) (Boateng, et al., 2018). Using the current scale as a guide, it may be beneficial for future research to develop and implement social emotional competence scales that are specific to the mentor population.

Limitations

There are five major limitations that must be considered when interpreting the results of this study: research informants/reporters, sample size, mentoring experiences, cross-sectional design and instruments used. Thus, the lack of mentee and parent input into the mentor-mentee relationship quality is important to note. Future studies should investigate and gather mentee reports into the quality of the mentor and mentee relationship. Additionally, it may be beneficial for future studies to gather reports from mentee's parents as well. These reports may provide a more thorough and complete picture of the mentor and mentee relationship from all perspectives. The use of multiple informants (e.g., mentees, mentors, and parents) would be helpful to examine the "similarities and differences in informants' perception and investigate their origins" (Goldner & Ben-Eliyahu, 2021). Another limitation was that of the small sample size. A bigger sample size would have increased statistical power to conduct some of our analyses, specifically when investigating the minority mentees. Small or inadequate sample sizes can result in false negative errors or statistically nonsignificant results (Andrade, 2020). It is important to note that the needed sample size for the study was not purposefully ignored, as well as the power of the current sample was shown to be appropriate. The COVID-19 pandemic had a negative impact on recruitment for the study. The original study was a social emotional intervention for mentors to help teach social emotional skills to their mentees, as well as have resources to practice social emotional skills with their mentee. Five participants completed the intervention pre and post questionnaires. At the follow-up survey participants were asked to complete a social validity questionnaire on how they liked the trainings and if found them helpful. The mean for the social validity scale was 24 out of 30. Due to limited recruitment during the COVID-19 pandemic and most mentor organizations transitioning to an online format during those times, the study was

adapted to a regression study using preintervention data collection only. As the effectiveness and growth of mentor and mentee programs continues to grow and make an impact, future studies should work to include a much larger sample size in order to investigate the important qualities and characteristics that contribute to a successful mentoring relationship.

Another limitation to this study was the broad range of mentoring experiences. It may be beneficial for future researchers to investigate one mentor program specifically or a certain type of mentor (e.g., community based mentor vs. school based mentor). This may be helpful to ensure that mentors are coming from similar experiences, time spent with mentee, and environment in which the mentor-mentee relationship is fostered. For example, school based vs. community based mentor programs can have different program focus and mentor characteristics (Herrera, Sipe, & McClanahan, 2000). Another important limitation to mention is that of a cross sectional design for this study. The mentors were at different levels of experiences and time spent with their mentee. A cross sectional design looks at the relationship at a "single point in time" and may not provide "definite information about cause-and-effect relationships." (Moser, 2015). A longitudinal design would have been more appropriate for this study to look at the progress made in the relationship. A longitudinal design would allow the mentor-mentee relationship to foster and grow. It may be beneficial to gather data on the relationship quality at the beginning of the relationship (e.g., first few months) and then evaluate a year into the relationship. The benefits to a longitudinal design are that the researchers would be able to see the "developments or changes in characteristics of the target population." (Moser, 2015). Future studies should look into using a longitudinal design for this type of research on mentors and mentees. Lastly, the one of the Social Emotional Competence scale used within the study was not specific to mentoring. When conducting research, it is important for the scales to be captured

and developed by the target population (Boateng, et al., 2018). Future researchers should look at investigating social emotional competence scales that are specifically targeted and validated with the mentor population.

Future Directions

Within the literature and the current study, mentor self-efficacy has been found to have a significant positive impact on the mentor mentee relationship quality. Future research should look at the ways in which to increase self-efficacy and confidence within a mentor. An avenue to increase mentor self-efficacy and provide support for mentors may be through mentor training. Research has shown that mentors are seeking training experiences to better enhance their abilities to impact at-risk youth, as well as grow in their self-confidence within the mentor-mentee relationship (Garrett, 2014; Mboka, 2018). Providing more support and training opportunities to mentors may have positive impacts on the mentor mentee relationship quality, as well as increase the length of the relationship.

Furthermore, future research studies should look into training for mentors specifically targeted at increasing the mentors' social emotional competence. It would be beneficial to know the impacts that social emotional training may have for the mentors' own skills, as well as how that may affect the mentor-mentee relationship. This type of research may provide a clearer picture on how a mentor's social emotional skills or lack thereof impacts the mentor and mentee relationship. Mentors need to have the abilities to plan activities that enhance their mentee's prosocial behaviors and skills; therefore, it may be beneficial for researchers to have conversations or activities with their mentees surrounding social emotional competencies and increasing these skills. Trainings should also be targeted at increasing the cultural competence of the mentor. A recent study found that mentors are not only looking for trainings to support them,

but also are wanting culture-specific topics concerning their mentees (Stephen, 2018). Mentor programs that have provided trainings have found an increase in mentor cultural sensitivity, as well as their own self-efficacy (Anderson et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Mentoring is an impactful and effective intervention and prevention program that can act as a protective factor for youth who may be at-risk (Klein et al., 2006). In order to continue making an impact on youth, it is important to further our understanding of the characteristics and qualities that foster an effective mentor mentee relationship. Research has been developed to investigate various characteristics and impacts surrounding mentoring, however, few have investigated mentor self-efficacy, mentor social emotional competence, and mentor and mentee relationship quality together. Although there have been studies investigating aspects within social emotional competence (e.g., self-awareness), few studies have looked at the ways in which a mentor's overall social emotional competence and skills plays a role into the mentor and mentee relationship. The more specific mentor qualities/characteristics that can be identified to enhance the mentor and mentee relationship quality the better informed mentor organizations and mentors will be to match mentor and mentees appropriately, train mentors, as well as recruit.

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APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

Please mark the appropriate answers to all questions below:

Select your current age group?

_____ 17 or younger

_____ 18-20

_____ 21-29

_____ 30-39

_____ 40-49

_____ 50-59

_____ 60 or older

What is your ethnicity? select all that apply

_____ Black or African-American

_____ White

_____ American Indian or Alaskan Native

_____ Hispanic/Latino

_____ Asian

_____ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

_____ From multiple races

_____ Some other race. Please specify:_____

What is your gender identification?

_____ male

_____ female

_____ other. Please specify:_____

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

_____ Less than high school degree

_____ High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)

_____ Some college but no degree

_____ Associate degree

_____ Bachelor degree

_____ Graduate degree

How long have you been matched with your current Little?

____ less than 6 months

____ 6 months to 1 year

____ 1 to 2 years

____ 2 to 5 years

____ greater than 5 years

What type of match do you have?

_____ Community-Based

_____ School-Based

What is your mentee's ethnicity?

How many parental figures are in your mentee's household (if known)?

_____

APPENDIX B

MENTOR STRENGTH OF RELATIONSHIP SCALE (MSOR)

DOMAIN: Mentoring Relationship Quality
MEASURE: Mentor Strength of Relationship Scale (MSoR)

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	(Circle One)				
	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1. I am enjoying the experience of being a mentor.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I expected that being a mentor would be more fun than actually it is.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My mentee and I are interested in the same things.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel confident handling the challenges of being a mentor.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Being a mentor is more of a time commitment than I anticipated.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel overwhelmed by my mentee's family difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
7. My mentee has made improvements since we started meeting.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I sometimes feel frustrated with how few things have changed with my mentee.	1	2	3	4	5
9. My mentee and I are sometimes at a loss for things to talk about.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It is hard for me to find the time to be with my mentee.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I think my mentee and I are well-matched.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I get the sense that my mentee would rather be doing something else.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My mentee has trouble sticking with one activity for very long.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel close to my mentee.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

MENTOR SELF-EFFICACY SCALE

Please rate your level of confidence as a Mentor to your Mentee in the following areas.

	Not at all Confident	**Somewhat Confident**	**Confident**	**Very Confident**
1. Sharing with them a personal experience of your own.	1	2	3	4
2. Giving advice on how to deal with a problem that is important to them.	1	2	3	4
3. Helping them to achieve or set goals.	1	2	3	4
4. Making them feel good about themselves.	1	2	3	4
5. Discussing issues or problems occurring in their family.	1	2	3	4
6.Planning activities with them.	1	2	3	4
7. Providing guidance around their future.	1	2	3	4
8. Teaching them a practical skill.	1	2	3	4
9. Helping them get along with others (e.g. peers, teacher, family).	1	2	3	4
10. Educating them about various subject areas.	1	2	3	4
11. Convincing them about the importance of doing well in school.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES SCALE

Instructions: Below is a list of 15 items that describe ways that teachers sometimes feel, think, or act. Read each sentence and select the answer that best describes you.

Response choices: Always (4); Often (3); Sometimes (2); Never (1)

	Always (4)	Often (3)	Sometimes (2)	Never (1)
1. I know how to identify and change my negative thoughts				
2. Other people like to be around me				
3. I try to understand how others feel when they are upset				
4. I am someone other adults can rely on				
5. When life is hard, I don't let things get to me				
6. I make friends with other people easily				
7. I try to understand how my mentee feels when they are upset				
8. I am often told that I make good decisions				
9. I know how to calm down when I am stressed out or upset				
10. My colleagues like to hang out with me				
11. I am a good listener when other people have something to say				
12. Parents of my mentee trust me				
13. Even when things don't go well for me, I'm okay				
14. People outside my organization like me				
15. My mentee trusts me				