

# **Mentoring Educational Leadership Doctoral Students: Using Methodological Diversification to Examine Gender and Identity Intersections**

This manuscript has been peer-reviewed, accepted, and endorsed by the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) as a significant contribution to the scholarship and practice of school administration and K-12 education.



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An essential component to learning and teaching in educational leadership is mentoring graduate students for successful transition to K-12 and higher education positions. This study integrates quantitative and qualitative datasets to examine doctoral students' experiences with mentoring from macro and micro perspectives. Findings show that students have varied perceptions on what constitutes quality mentoring and wide-ranging experiences in terms of the quantity and quality of mentoring experienced. Moreover, findings suggest that the ways students perceive and experience mentoring is related to their identity factors, especially gender. Findings have implications for strengthening this essential component of leadership preparation programs; and thus, recommendations for different strategies, programmatic supports, and structural changes within university departments and professional organizations are forwarded.

A mentor is a person who works towards integrating a neophyte into a professional capacity, and this relationship is reciprocal and changes over time (Williams-Nickelson, 2009). The evolution of the mentor–mentee relationship is essential to professional and research preparation and the overall experience of a doctoral program. For doctoral students specifically mentoring helps them develop the skills necessary to “integrate their professional identities of researcher, teacher, and engaged public scholar” (Colbeck, 2008, p. 14). By the end of their formal training, doctoral students who receive quality mentoring have greater research productivity, higher quality training, and more extensive professional and networking opportunities compared to doctoral students without adequate mentoring (Kurtz-Costes et al., 2006).

While important work on mentoring has been conducted in schools of education (Creighton, Creighton, & Parks, 2010), research specific to educational leadership doctoral students’ experiences with mentoring is relatively sparse (Mansfield, Welton, Lee, & Young, 2010; Mullen, 2008). Educational leadership preparation programs vary depending on the institution, but usually consist of graduate-level programs that train students to become school principals, superintendents, policy analysts, higher education administrators, and future educational leadership professors (Young, 2015). Although there are ongoing discussions evaluating educational leadership preparation programmatic quality (Orr, 2012; Young, Murphy, Crow & Ogawa, 2009) especially pertaining to how, if at all, the program prepares students to be social justice oriented and anti-racist leaders (Diem & Carpenter, 2013; Welton, Mansfield, & Lee, 2015; Young, Gooden & O’Doherty, 2015), less attention has been dedicated to mentoring approaches specific to the preparation of future educational leadership faculty members (Mansfield et al., 2010; Sherman & Grogan, 2011; Young & Brooks, 2008). An increasing number of scholars, however, are calling for intentional conversations on this issue, many of which demonstrate a particular interest in gender identity and complex intersections--such as race, social class, age, sexuality, language, ability, and citizenship--within educational leadership preparation programs (Killingsworth, Cabezas, Kensler, & Brooks, 2010; O’Brien, 2014; Reddick, 2011; Rusch, 2004).

In addition to drawing attention to the need for more scholarship in this area, researchers have called for the diversification of the methodology used to research the experiences and progress of women in academe. For example, Paglis, Green, and Bauer (2006) argued that researchers should continue to move beyond the use of small, narrow samples, and examine the extent to which their results can be generalized to broad student populations. Moreover, the strong investment in qualitative approaches to explore mentoring women in academe has left many unanswered questions concerning quantitative differences between men and women’s experiences in doctoral programs as well as between women from different groups (e.g., racial, socio-economic, religion, etc.).

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to employ a diverse set of methodological approaches to examine educational leadership doctoral students’ gendered as well as relevant intersecting identity experiences with mentoring in their preparation programs. A diversification of methodology is important to gather doctoral students’ perspectives on mentoring from various vantage points at the macro and micro level. Borrowing from the field of sociology, macro-level approaches examine the phenomena of study at the systems level, paying attention to large-scale patterns or trends (Patton, 2015). In contrast, micro-level approaches consider more face-to-face, small-scale interactions between individuals or within a group (Knorr-Cetina, 2015). For the purpose of this article we accomplish a diversification of macro and micro approaches by integrating datasets from two previous studies. The first study offers a micro-level perspective

through qualitative methodology, including an open- and close-ended questionnaire and collaborative focus groups to understand the challenges, opportunities and mentoring supports available to female graduate students in educational leadership departments. Whereas the second study lends a more macro-level perspective by using a 30-item web-based exploratory survey to examine quantitative differences between men and women's experiences with mentoring in educational leadership doctoral programs across the United States.

We integrate and re-analyze the original data collected through the above two prior studies to discover similarities and differences in participants' perceptions on mentoring, and in doing so; offer implications and recommendations for higher education policy, practice, and future research based on the new findings that emerged during reanalysis. The following research questions guided the present study:

1. How do graduate students in educational leadership define mentorship?
2. What specific mentorship activities do educational leadership graduate students experience?
3. Are there differences in experiences according to gender, race, and other identity complexities?

## Literature Review

### Perspectives on Mentoring

There is no one-size-fits all approach to mentoring, given the goals, context, and the relationship between the mentor and protégé changes over time (Schunk & Mullen, 2013; Mullen, 2008). Although a protégé's growth is the primary goal of mentoring, the mentor can equally benefit from the relationship. Given the variability of the nature of mentoring dynamic overtime, Mertz (2004) suggested that the relationship is actually more so a continuum in the form a pyramid where the involvement and intensity of each role increases from the base to the apex. For example, a *role model* would be at level one of the pyramid because its function is primarily to provide psychosocial development, a less involved endeavor. An *advisor*, which is located at the midpoint/level three of the pyramid, typically provides guidance and professional development, a responsibility that requires more engagement. However, a *mentor* sits at the apex of the pyramid because at this stage the relationship is largely geared toward brokering the protégé's career advancement, a duty that requires the highest and most intense level of involvement (Mertz, 2004).

Similar to differences in mentoring roles, there are also variances in how a mentor-protégé are selected and paired. More formal mentoring programs have specific selection criteria and interview processes for the mentor as well as the protégé. Even though mentoring can be a targeted effort where protégés are selected based on need, interests, and demographic and identity characteristics; there are some models where the protégé self-selects to participate and determines the type of mentoring dynamic they seek (Dawson, 2014). Either the mentor or the protégé can decide whom they will be matched with, and this is commonly based on similarities in academic discipline and interests, as well as identity factors (Dawson, 2014; Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Reddick, 2011, 2012; Reddick & Young, 2012; Young & Brooks, 2008).

There are various forms of mentoring and each type serves a different purpose. Mentoring involves providing the protégé with psychosocial and career-related supports that are either *formal* or *informal* (Mullen, 2008; Shunk & Mullen, 2013). Formal mentoring is typically

offered in a structured programmatic format that cultivates the protégé's professional learning and aspiration building. Informal mentoring is a relationship that develops naturally and occurs anywhere in society, such as an academic setting, the workplace, social, and even during family activities (Inzer & Crawford, 2005). Another similar distinction is *traditional* versus *alternative mentoring*. Traditional mentoring is more of a top down relationship where knowledge is transmitted from the mentor to the protégé and can result in censoring the protégé's voice. Whereas, alternative, or progressive, mentoring is when power is shared between the mentor and protégé, and the relationship aims to affront power hierarchies for a more democratic mentoring dynamic (Mullen, 2012). Another similar shared power arrangement is *peer mentoring*, where a person with similar status and experience mentors the protégé (Eshner et al., 2012). Finally, a *step-above mentor* is someone who is a level above the protégé in experience and professional progress (Eshner et al., 2012). No one mentoring type is more effective than another, as each mentoring relationship may prove useful to a protégé in different ways (Eshner et al., 2012).

Even academia has its own mentoring distinctions. *Academic mentoring*, as coined by Fletcher and Mullen (2012), consists of faculty, advisors, or supervisors involved in learning relationships that provide career and personal development for undergraduates, graduates, and junior faculty alike. Similarly, *mentoring* and *advising* are interconnected, which explains why the concepts are mistakenly used interchangeably (Jones, Wilder, & Osborne-Lampkin, 2013). For instance, *mentoring* is one key responsibility of an *academic advisor* in addition to providing students with academic guidance and supervision (Jones et al., 2013; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). However, Mertz (2004) would argue that mentoring calls for a higher level of commitment and trust than advising. An advisor can choose to simply serve as an administrative or informational resource, whereas, the mentor surpasses an advisor's level of commitment by using their networks to support the protégé's career advancement. Mentors are also more readily emotionally vulnerable in sharing their thoughts, hopes, and personal struggles, which in turn builds a more trusting relationship between the mentor and protégé (Mertz, 2004). Ultimately, the mentor and advisor, even with the variability and similarities between the two roles, are both in their own right connections that are essential to a doctoral student's academic and social integration (Jones et al., 2013).

## **Mentoring in Doctoral Education**

Investing time and commitment to a doctoral program can be rewarding for a graduate student as s/he hones the skills necessary to ask questions related to society's gravest concerns, and work to transform their curiosities into innovative and impactful research. Moreover, doctoral studies can be particularly gratifying when one achieves their goals of entering the professoriate or other professional advancement. However, the means to this fruitful ends can be quite trying due to the high pressure academic environment as well as the mysteriousness involved when the unwritten codes for navigating the doctoral program fail to be communicated directly (Mullen, 2012; Young & Brooks, 2008). Hence, mentoring supports can be essential to getting the best out of what doctoral education can offer.

Given the academic intensity of a doctoral program, students may also need mentors for psychosocial support to help reduce stress and feelings of isolation that may arise during their studies. Although doctoral students can rely on their academic advisor for guidance on degree requirements and work closely with their dissertation advisor on refining research and writing skills, a mentor provides even more extensive personal and professional support that exceeds the

bounds of the doctoral program (Jairam & Kahl, 2012; Holley & Caldwell, 2012). It is important for mentors, regardless of their formal or informal position, to be mindful of the importance and impact of their communication style. As Jairam and Kahl (2012) in their survey of doctoral students found, if faculty mentors' communication with students is negative and even adversarial, they will both provide poor professional examples and hinder students' productivity.

Doctoral students frequently identify peers or "academic friends" as psychosocial support more so than faculty (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). In their study of a university sponsored doctoral mentoring program for underrepresented students (women, minorities, and first-generation college graduates), Holley and Caldwell (2012) found peers provided useful information just by simply sharing their experiences navigating the doctoral program, and these peer networks in general helped create a more inclusive community. Also, a mentor's psychosocial support can assist a doctoral protégé in mediating work-life-balance concerns. Work-life balance is especially important for doctoral students in the education fields as they are more likely to have previous professional experience in P-20 education and often continue this work full-time while pursuing their graduate studies; whereas, graduate students in the arts, sciences, and engineering are more likely to attend graduate school full-time (Shulman, Golde, Bueschel, & Garabedian, 2006).

Finally, doctoral students may also rely on mentoring resources external to the university and doctoral program. *External mentoring* is provided by a number of academic and professional organizations, associations, foundations, networks and clearinghouses. This form of mentoring focuses on developing mentoring connections that support research, scholarship, grant, and award opportunities. In comparison, *internal mentoring* may include any of the aforementioned mentoring formats, and is often dependent on the university and doctoral programmatic context and resources (Mullen, 2012). This constellation of mentoring (Ensher, Thomas, & Murphy, 2001), per receiving mentoring from a multitude of sources, creates the type of broad based network that will prove useful once the doctoral student is actively seeking a faculty position or any other professional position they desire.

### **Mentoring in Educational Leadership Preparation**

*Cohort mentoring* is the most studied mentoring strategy in educational leadership doctoral programs and has been found to be particularly effective for scholar-practitioners (Preis, Grogan, Sherman, & Beaty, 2007, p. 6; Mullen & Tuten, 2010). These doctoral students enter programs with prior professional experience and a "larger frame of reference to draw from" as adult learners. The adult learning and cooperation requisite to a cohort structure mimics skills that will be required of educational leadership students in the workplace (Mullen, 2012; Mullen & Tuten, 2010). Cohort mentoring, also known as a *mentoring scaffold*, can be a peer driven or a faculty-student collaborative group that unceasingly supports educational processes and goals for doctoral students primarily, but can benefit academic mentors as well (Mullen, 2012; Mullen & Tuten, 2010). Preis et al. (2012) in their review of research on educational leadership preparation programs discuss how students in cohort models feel a strong sense of community, support, and develop lifelong relationships. However, doctoral cohorts are not the only source of formal cohort mentoring, as some of the most productive mentoring spaces are developed through informal student initiatives such as dissertation writing groups, etc. Furthermore, the Internet has generated a number of possibilities via online peer support groups for doctoral degree completion and academic career resources (Mullen, 2012)

Educational leadership programs are comprised mostly of students who are working full-

time as educators while pursuing their doctoral studies part-time. Therefore, cohort mentoring provides the mutual support necessary to alleviate some of the challenges with achieving work-life balance while in a doctoral program (Mullen & Tuten, 2010). A cohort is also a learning community where members help one another resolve issues and deal with apprehension and feelings of doubt that may arise at times (Mullen & Tuten, 2010). Research has shown that doctoral students involved in a mentoring cohort feel a sense of accountability to the group, and the cohort plays a crucial role in students' academic progress, doctoral program retention and completion, and overall well being (Mullen, 2012; Mullen & Tuten, 2010).

### **The Role of Gender and Intersectional Perspectives**

Although there are some consistencies in how mentoring is defined in the research, it is important to understand that the semantics may change when gender and various identity intersections such as race, social class, age, ability, sexuality, language, and citizenship status are added to the mentoring dynamic. Gender especially matters to how mentoring is defined, understood, and experienced. Female doctoral student representation in the United States has exceeded that of males (Aud et al., 2013; NCES, 2009). However, it is too soon to claim victory as gender politics and inequities still thrive in the academy. Despite the progress in female doctoral enrollment, few will feel the fulfillment of being hooded at the graduation ceremony, because attrition rates for female and racial minority doctoral students are significantly higher than White males (Aud et al., 2013; NCES, 2009). The inequities women face while pursuing the doctoral degree suggest that their experiences with mentoring may also be met with challenges. Bell-Ellison and Dedrick (2008) used the 34-item *Ideal Mentor Scale* to determine if there are gender differences in what doctoral students at one large state research university considered an ideal mentor. The researchers found there were more similarities than differences in how both men and women conceptualized their ideal mentor. However, female participants were more concerned about feelings of confirmation and acceptance from their mentor. In other words, female participants valued a mentor who believed in them.

Race also has considerable impact on a doctoral student's socialization (Felder, Stevenson, & Gasman, 2014). Hence, it is important for doctoral programs to acknowledge how racial experiences effect a student's mentoring connections, because ignoring the role of race only hinders, not supports, academic success and degree completion. Even still, doctoral programs do not function in a vacuum. The way in which mentoring is racialized at the doctoral programmatic level is a product of the university institutional culture and structures. For example, predominately white institutions (PWIs) can be considerably racially hostile, and for this reason they struggle to effectively recruit and retain both faculty and graduate students of color (Reddick & Young, 2012). PWIs have a well-documented history of racial exclusion that still creates institutional and structural barriers for racial minority access to higher education, especially at the doctoral level. Reddick and Young (2012) argue that a mentor should be candid with their protégé about the campus racial climate. This level of honesty about racism can only strengthen the mentoring relationship as students can be more prepared for what they may experience and strategic in navigating the campus as well as their doctoral program (Reddick & Young, 2012). As such, research on educational leadership preparation emphasizes effective race-conscious and ant-racist mentors who are not only forthcoming about issues of race, but also advocate for graduate students of color both "interpersonally and institutionally" (Reddick & Young, 2012; Young & Brooks, 2008, p. 408).

Yet, achieving a doctoral degree is a complex journey and therefore, intersectional approaches to identity are necessary to understand the nuances of mentoring. For example, female doctoral students of color experience both racism and sexism, and alleviating this interlocking oppression would require both feminist and race-conscious approaches to mentoring. As one possible solution, Jones, Wilder, and Osborne-Lampkin (2013) used key concepts of Black Feminist Thought to develop a conceptual framework for advising responsibilities, which included helping Black female graduate students: 1) decode the hidden curriculum, 2) develop as researchers, and 3) develop as professionals.

Moreover, pairing the mentor-protégé based on similar race and cultural identities has proven beneficial; in fact, researchers have found that a number of intersecting identity factors are important to the mentoring relationship (Holley & Caldwell, 2012; Mansfield et al., 2010; Young & Brooks, 2008). Based on the context and circumstance, a doctoral protégé may find it is important to have a mentor who can speak to similar experiences related to gender, age, or family relationships (Holley & Caldwell, 2012). Consequently, a number of researchers on mentoring have found that women and racial minorities more heavily rely on a “diverse constellation of mentors who vary in organizational affiliation, status, and personal characteristics than White men” (Ensher, Thomas, & Murphy, 2001, p. 420). To date, the majority of mentoring research examines identity politics relative to gender and race, and while important, research should extend beyond this binary to explore how a multitude of mentoring intersections shape a doctoral student’s mentoring dynamic.

## **Methods**

### **Study One: Qualitative Analysis.**

The purpose of study one was to explore and contribute to the meager body of research on the role of university educational leadership preparation programs in preparing women leaders. Educational leadership preparation research had yet to explore ways in which mentorship provides additional capital for female graduate students. Study one sought to understand the challenges facing and the opportunities available to female graduate students in educational leadership departments. The study used qualitative methods to explore the constructs of educational leadership preparation and mentorship of female graduate students. The following research questions guided collection efforts for study one:

1. What have been participant’s gender-related experiences in their educational leadership doctoral programs?
2. What are their perceived needs for success as female educational leadership graduate students?
3. What is the nature of their experiences with mentorship?

For this study we employed a purposeful sampling of female graduate students enrolled in a PhD educational leadership program at a highly respected, research extensive public university, which was also a University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) member institution. This sampling strategy resulted in a sample of 12 women who varied demographically. Qualitative methods were informed by the work of feminist theory and were used to explore participants’ experiences and perceptions with the larger purpose of understanding the implications of their experiences for the development of strategies and programs intended to support female graduate students in educational leadership preparation

programs.

The 12 female participants completed a preliminary questionnaire to determine both individual demographic variation and the degree to which the students had received mentoring. The participants ranged in age from late 20s to late 50s, with one identifying as Black, two Asian, two Latina, and six identified as White. When asked their country and language of origin, a majority of the women (75%) were born in the United States, while other representative countries included Mexico, South Korea, and Taiwan. A majority of the women (75%) claimed English as their language of origin; while, three of twelve grew up speaking Spanish, Korean, or Mandarin in the home. A fourth woman stated that she grew up speaking both English and Spanish in the home while growing up. Of the twelve participants, five were single, five were married, one was divorced, and one was engaged. Five women were parenting, grand parenting, or taking care of elderly parents, or some combination of the three. Not all married participants had children and not all those parenting had partners. Eleven of twelve participants described their sexuality as, “hetero” or “straight” while one woman described herself as, “gay.” Five of twelve participants were first-generation college graduates.

Additionally, we conducted a collaborative focus group interview with the 12 participants. As researchers we served as facilitators of the discussion, yet the focus group was collaborative given we wanted the participants to relate as much as comfortably feasible (see Ritchie, 2003). We split the participants into two focus groups, and met with each group for a total of approximately 6.5 hours.

Data analysis for the original study consisted of coding by teasing out themes, making clusters, and writing summaries, and we conducted member checking by sharing tentative conclusions with participants (Creswell, 2003; Wolcott, 1994). The following themes emerged from the participants’ stories in the original study data: constraints within the organizational culture, personal and familial sacrifice, struggles with identity, questioning self, and experiences with mentoring. (Please, consult Authors, 2010 for additional details). The findings pointed to important implications for the roles that university leadership preparation program structures might play in supporting female graduate students and their career success. The conclusions offered recommendations for the development of mentoring programs for female graduate students. Limitations for study one included a small sample size that was not conducive to generalizability, as the purpose of the original study was to understand a particular case, rather than to make generalizations to the larger population of graduate students.

## **Study Two: Quantitative Analysis**

Study two consisted of a descriptive statistical analysis of an exploratory survey. This study was exploratory in that we did not aim to draw conclusions; rather we hoped to investigate and further define a problem in need of additional study and greater clarity (Babbie, 2007). Typically exploratory studies involve smaller sample sizes and focused inquiry on a particular issue within an understudied population. Such studies are also focused on determining the suitability of methods employed in order to improve research designs for future studies (Babbie, 2007). The following research questions guided the development of the survey instrument and data interpretation for study two:

1. How do graduate students in educational leadership define mentorship?
2. What specific mentorship activities do educational leadership graduate students experience?



3. Are there differences in experiences according to gender?
4. How can the present study methodology be strengthened in future research endeavors?

The design of the survey for study two was based on the findings from study one. After completing study one we realized the need to expand our investigation to include a larger sample across a variety of institutions. Furthermore, the thematic qualitative analysis from study one helped us identify and determine constructs and related survey questions that should be explored in study two (e.g., the female doctoral students in study one articulated that there was a need for more formal and informal mentoring, and that this mentoring should begin as soon as they enroll in their doctoral program).

Subsequently, the survey instrument was developed with the assistance of a group of cross-generational female scholars who examined a draft of the survey instrument during planned work sessions at two major professional conferences—University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) and American Educational Research Association (AERA)—during the 2009-2010 academic year. This group of over 20 women, who are noted research experts on gender equity in the field of educational leadership, shared constructive feedback to increase the validity of the instrument prior to administering the exploratory survey. Feedback from experts satisfied face and construct validity as this process merited the quality in the development of survey constructs, and ensured that survey questions corroborated and expanded upon existing research and would make an important contribution to the educational leadership preparation field (see Mertens, 2010).

This feedback process resulted in a 30-item web-based survey consisting of mostly closed-ended questions and a few open-ended questions—that included multi-item measures based on a Likert scale, and questions that required the participant to either report a frequency, answer yes or no, or select any responses from a list that apply (see Table 1). The survey consisted of a set of questions focused on the following six constructs: factors that accelerated or hindered the student's program progress, indicators of academic productivity, job- and funding-related issues, programmatic support to succeed in the field, perspectives on quality mentorship, and the nature of the mentor-mentee relationship.

The survey participants were selected with a combination of purposeful and random sampling. We focused on doctoral students enrolled in educational leadership preparation programs at 90 University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) member institutions varying in size or total enrollment and type (e.g. public vs. private). Since participation was voluntary, only those willing to participate were included in the final sample of 78 survey participants. Our survey sample consisted of 52 women, which was more than twice that of men, 26. This sample distribution is on par with national trends, given in 2010 approximately 66.7% of students enrolled in doctoral programs in the education field were women (Gonzalez, Allum, & Sowell, 2013). The majority of the sample was White females. Among females in the sample, 73 % of participants identified as White, 12% Asian, 10% Black or African American, 2% were Hispanic, and 4% identified as multi-racial. Overall, the male students comprised: 62% White; 12 % Asian; 12% Black or African American; 8% Hispanic; 4% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and; 4% multi-racial. Participants were enrolled in the following educational leadership preparation programs: K-12 leadership studies (69% of male vs. 40% of female); educational policy studies (31% vs. 29%, respectively); higher education administration policy (19% vs. 23%, respectively); community college leadership (4% vs. 2%, respectively); superintendency preparation (12% vs. 2%, respectively) and; curriculum and instructional

leadership programs (19% vs. 17%, respectively).

In our analysis of the survey data we reported each of the set of questions as descriptive statistical analyses such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, and percentages in SPSS version 13. Demographic data were reported as percentages. All data were analyzed using frequency, crosstabs, or independent sample t-test (Table 1). Any statistically significant data were reported at either a  $p = .05$  (\*) or  $p = .01$  (\*\*) level of statistical significance.

One major limitation of conducting surveys is that the methodology is unable to measure contextual nuances and complexities that the participants experience with mentoring in their educational leadership preparation program (Patton, 2008). This is especially important given how a person identifies is typically complex, representing a number of fluid, intersectional identities, and unfortunately the categorical nature of survey items do not capture the extent of these nuances (Waikoo & Carter, 2009). Moreover, each educational leadership preparation program has its own context specific social, cultural, and political institutional and organizational attributes that fluctuate, and are challenging to fully signify in a single or longitudinal survey administration.

Table 1  
List of questions and statistical analyses

Question topic	Types of questions	Reported as	Statistical Analysis
Factors accelerating program progress	Likert scale	Percentages	Crosstabs
Factors hindering student program progress	Likert scale	Percentages	Crosstabs
Publication and conference presentations	Frequency	Frequency, percentages	Crosstabs
Job and funding related issues	Yes or No	Frequency, percentages	Crosstabs
Program support for success in the field	Likert scale	Mean, standard deviation, Cohen's D effect size	Independent sample t- test
Students' perspectives of quality mentorship	Select applicable responses	Frequency, percentages	Crosstabs
Relationship between mentor & mentee, part 1	Yes or No, Select applicable response	Frequency, percentages	Crosstabs
Relationship between mentor & mentee, part 2	Likert scale	Mean, standard deviation, Cohen's D effect size	Independent sample t- test
Connections to mentors	Select applicable responses	Frequency, percentages	Crosstabs

## Integrating the Two Studies

In accordance with mixed methods research methodology, the data for study one and two were collected in sequential timing, where the collection and analysis of one type of data occurs after the collection and analysis of another. As stated earlier the qualitative data for study one was collected first and informed the quantitative survey development for study two (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The point of interface, or the process where quantitative and qualitative research studies are integrated or mixed, occurred after the data was collected (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). We also, according to mixed methods approaches, mixed the quantitative and qualitative strands of research during interpretation, hence, we integrated and analyzed both sets of data after the data was collected. Therefore, the process of mixing the qualitative and quantitative data during interpretation “involves the researcher drawing conclusions or inference that reflect what was learned from the combination of results from the two strands of the study, as by comparing or synthesizing the results in discussion” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 67).

In conclusion, the overall integration of the two studies is representative of a *convergent parallel design*, the most widely known mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The purpose of a convergent parallel design is to collect different, but related data on the same topic, as well as to use qualitative research strengths to compensate for quantitative research weaknesses, and vice versa. A convergent parallel design is also useful in triangulating findings by comparing and contrasting quantitative and qualitative results, in addition to developing a more complex and “complete understanding of a phenomenon, and comparing multiple levels within a system” (p. 77). As such in the presentation of the findings for the present study, the convergent parallel design enabled us to more complexly examine mentoring in educational leadership preparation by examining macro level perspectives of the phenomenon via quantitative methods and comparing this to more micro and contextual perspectives via qualitative methods. Figure 1 represents a visual flowchart of the procedures used for implementing the convergent parallel design for this present study.

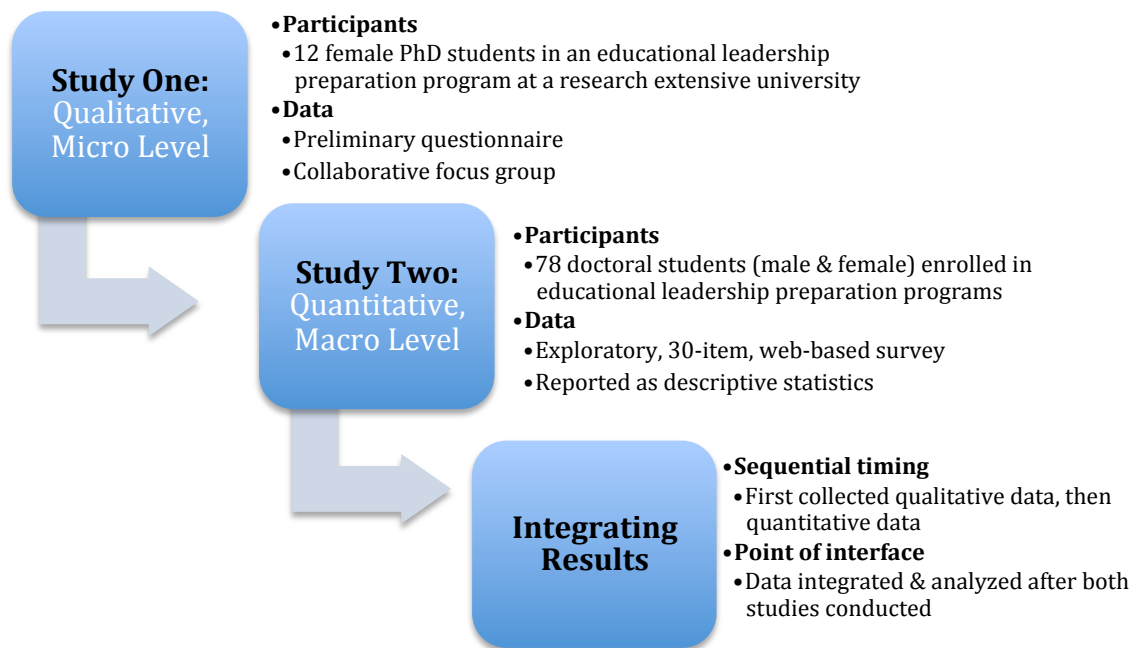


Figure 1. Integrating Study One and Two: A Convergent Parallel Design

### Research Findings

Three major themes emerged upon re-analyzing the integrated quantitative and qualitative datasets from study one and two: 1) students’ perceptions of quality mentoring, 2) experiences with mentoring activities, and 3) subsequent differences in experiences according to intersecting identity factors. Participants emphasized how professional and career development is essential to theme one, quality mentoring. While, three additional subthemes surfaced for the second and third major themes. For theme two, participants emphasized the importance of programmatic support for success in the field and how the dynamics of the mentor/mentee relationship, as well as the modes of connecting with a mentor weigh on their overall experiences with mentoring.

Lastly, for the third major theme, participants discussed how unwanted stereotypes associated with their various identities generated feelings of doubt, caused them to question their self-worth, and adversely affected their access to mentoring.

### **Students' Perceptions on Quality Mentorship**

Quality mentorship emerged as a major category in participants' responses to many of the focus groups discussions and questionnaire. Quality mentoring was emphasized as an essential first step in setting a premise for successfully preparing scholastic *competence* in the field by a majority of the focus group participants. We followed up this major finding from our focus group data with a central question on the survey instrument that asked doctoral students to define mentorship as well as identify their perceptions of quality mentorship (Table 2). The total percentage for each option under this survey item added up to 100% because participants were allowed to choose as many options as applied to them in their educational leadership program. All survey participants agreed that a quality mentor should provide constructive feedback and critiques (92% male, 87% female), and almost equally as many participants indicated that quality mentors provide professional support and foster the development of research ideas (96% male, 98% female). However, leadership skills (62% male, 52% female), financial support (38%, 58%), and career counseling were to a somewhat lesser degree selected as necessary to mentoring.

Obtaining skills related to a career in academia were also denoted as key components of quality mentoring. For instance, close to three-fourths of survey participants indicated that mentoring should include guidance in grant writing and publishing (73% males, 75% females) and garner writing expertise (73% male, 68% female). At large, respondents reported a quality mentor provides moderate assistance in the development of leadership skills (%62 males, 54% females) as well as career counseling (%65 males, %60 females). Yet, 52% of female students in comparison to 73% of male students deemed it important that a mentor assist students with presentation skills.

The focus group respondents also articulated striking similarities in what constitutes quality mentoring. Respondents used descriptors such as *close*, *trusting*, *nurturing*, *supportive*, and *advice-giving* to signify a quality mentoring relationship. The mentor-mentee dynamic was also described as a learning exchange between a master-novice by which a junior scholar learns from the senior scholar skills such as conducting research and writing. Likewise, three focus group participants agreed a mentor should provide critical correction as needed. Whereas, two participants perceived learning how to navigate the politics and rules of the field—especially the “hidden and unhidden rules”—as an essential element to mentoring. Moreover, two participants saw mentoring as a potential lifetime commitment and a moral calling. For instance Margaret recognized that:

The mentor is neither paid nor rewarded to do this work. It is usually something that is done to “pay it forward” because this person received the same kind of treatment and training and wishes to do likewise. (Or this person did NOT receive it and wishes they did and they recognize it is a necessary cycle or circle of knowledge to strengthen a profession).

However, one respondent highlighted that each student's mentoring needs vary:

It depends. I think the “needs” change as the student scholar grows. I am also cognizant

of individual differences/needs. Also, I wonder if these definitions would fluctuate according to gender and age.

Even still, some focus group participants recognized that some faculty mentors in their department, especially female faculty, had little time to provide individualized, tailored mentoring specific to preparing for an academic career because they were already overly encumbered with professional responsibilities, such as a high advising and mentoring load. Dana noticed how a senior male faculty had formerly published with a few of his students in a high-ranking academic journal, but acknowledged that her own faculty mentor, a female, was professionally overextended, and therefore might not have the opportunity to publish with her. Dana lamented that, “When Dr. Duvall was here he made sure all his students were published, if you go back to the [journal title]. I’m sure if Dr. Hart [my mentor] had the time she would publish with me.”

A few participants such as Chun Hei admitted that they do need a mentor who is a “psychological supporter.” Similarly, Marisela wanted a mentor who demonstrated care by showing an interest in her life outside of the academic setting. Marisela wanted,

Someone who shows a caring interest by asking about my family and interests outside of academics. I say this because anyone who knows and listens to me will constantly hear me talking about my family. Finally, someone who doesn’t mind greeting with a hug.”

Contrary to the focus group responses, psychosocial and emotional related factors were the least indicated as important to quality mentoring by survey participants. Slightly over half of the survey participants felt that quality mentors provide personal care and support (54% males, 54% females) and work-related emotional support (50% males, 58% females). Approximately a third specified that it was necessary for a mentor to provide emotional support for personal issues (31% males, 27% females) and assist with resolving conflicts (31% males, 29% females). Whereas, focus group participants did regard learning conflict resolution skills from their mentor as vital, especially equity and social justice concerns. For example, focus group participant Jasmine expressed frustration with the lack of emphasis on other forms of oppression that intersected with gender such as race, which prompted her to question whether students would be prepared to effectively address racial conflicts in the workplace and even conduct their own future research on racial issues:

People complain about folks talking about Black issues too much, but we are not even talking about Black issues. I feel like Dr. LaSalle is the first professor that has allowed me to talk about Black issues and poverty issues here. In fact, we can’t even talk about poverty and race, so how can we even talk about these issues if we aren’t ready to talk about gender?

Jasmine was seemingly frustrated that her value for being forthright about equity and social justice may not align with that of potential faculty mentors. Her sentiments reflect the majority of survey participants’ responses, where three-fourths expect to have a faculty mentor who can model integrity and ethical behaviors.

Table 2  
*Students' Perspectives of Quality Mentorship*

Quality Mentorship	Gender					
	Male			Female		
	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%
Professional support	26	24	92	52	45	87
Constructive feedback & critiques	26	26	100	52	52	100
Development of research ideas	26	25	96	52	51	98
Development of leadership skills	26	16	62	52	28	54
Personal care & support	26	14	54	52	28	54
Work-related emotional support	26	13	50	52	30	58
Connections to financial support	26	10	38	52	30	58
Emotional support for personal issues	26	8	31	52	14	27
Provides career counseling	26	17	65	52	31	60
Networking	26	24	92	52	43	83
Grant writing & publishing	26	19	73	52	39	75
Develop writing expertise	26	19	73	52	35	68
Assists with presentation skills	26	19	73	52	27	52
Resolves conflict	26	8	31	52	15	29
Fosters integrity & ethical behaviors	26	20	77	52	37	71

### Experiences with Mentoring Activities

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding what mentoring services their doctoral program provided to enable them to succeed in the field, as well as questions that assessed the dynamic of the relationships they had with their mentors. Survey respondents were also asked to identify how they were connected to their mentors either formally, informally, or via a program external to the university. We then compared the quantitative survey responses to focus group participants' responses to a questionnaire, which asked specific questions about their experiences with mentoring.

**Program support for success in the field.** Survey participants reported what service their program provided to enable them to succeed in the field. Responses from male students are mostly consistent with female students' viewpoints (Table 3). Both male ( $\mu = 2.38$ ) and female ( $\mu = 2.22$ ) respondents, collectively, reported their educational leadership doctoral programs offered academic support, as well as opportunities to acquire advice and sharpen the skills, knowledge, and experiences necessary for success in the educational leadership field. Though, when it involved research and scholarship skills, such as preparing and writing publications and grant proposals (men  $\mu = 2.15$ , women  $\mu = 1.71$ ), and guidance on conference and research presentations (men  $\mu = 2.19$ , women  $\mu = 1.63$ ), students indicated that their programs provided a lesser degree of support and instruction (Table 3). Consistent with participants' lack of emphasis on the psychosocial and emotional facets of what may involve quality mentoring, all participants (men  $\mu = 1.77$ , women  $\mu = 1.68$ ) reported that their doctoral program provided limited emotional support and showed limited interest in their personal lives. Furthermore, knowledge, training, and advocacy toward obtaining funding for their doctoral studies (men  $\mu = 1.58$ , women  $\mu =$

1.51), as well as networking and building professional relationships (men  $\mu = 2.08$ , women  $\mu = 1.67$ ), was insufficient to a certain extent for all respondents.

Table 3  
*Program Support for Success in the Field*

	Gender						<i>Cohen's D</i>	<i>Effect Size R</i>
	Male			Female				
Services of Leadership Preparation Programs	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Academic support & advice	26	2.38	0.804	50	2.22	0.679	0.215	0.107
Networking & building professional relationships	26	2.08*	0.686	52	1.67*	0.76	0.566	0.272
Advocacy toward funding my doctoral studies	26	1.58	0.809	51	1.51	0.784	0.088	0.044
Emotional support & interest in personal life	26	1.77	0.908	50	1.68	0.741	0.109	0.054
Instruction to prepare & write publications	26	2.15*	0.732	52	1.71*	0.936	0.524	0.253
Guidance on conference & research presentations	26	2.19*	0.749	52	1.63*	0.886	0.683	0.323
Opportunities to discuss skills & knowledge	26	2.19	0.801	52	1.98	0.804	0.262	0.13
Opportunities to gain skills, knowledge & experiences	26	2.27	0.724	52	1.92	0.813	0.455	0.222
Instruction on how to write grant proposals	26	0.92	0.891	52	0.83	0.678	0.114	0.057

**Relationship between mentor and mentee.** For all sub-items under the survey question assessing the relationship between mentor and mentee participants were able to select multiple responses, and the percentage of each option added up to 100% (see Table 4). According to the survey data 89% of male students and 67% of female students have informal or formal mentors. However, there was a noteworthy difference between where male versus females' faculty mentors were located, with 81% of male students reporting their mentors were at their universities, and 65% of female students had mentors at their institutions (Table 4). Additionally, there were differences in the frequency in which men and women met with their mentors. Over half, 54%, of male respondents and only 25% of female students reported meeting with their mentors monthly, whereas 15% of female and 13% of male students met with their respective

mentors weekly. All statistics affiliated with the sub-item *meets with the mentor once per year* were statistically significant.

Survey participants were then asked to rate their mentor-mentee relationship using a four-item Likert Scale (Table 5). We coded strongly agree as 3, agree as 2, disagree as 1, and strongly disagree as 0. Both males and females ratings of their mentor-mentee relationship were consistently similar. All participants alike reported fairly positive relationships with their mentor by strongly agreeing that their mentors helped them improve their work product; were supportive, encouraging, and motivating; and were accessible and able to provide constructive and useful critiques of their work. Also, male ( $\mu = 2.48$ ) and female ( $\mu = 2.57$ ) participants felt that their mentors demonstrated content expertise in their area of need. Still, focus group participants had quite the opposite response about their relationship with their mentor. Case in point, Meg was concerned there was minimal expertise in her program for her research interests. She criticized,

There has to be someone here at the University that is interested in teacher quality policies, because the people at the capitol don't know what they are talking about. I don't feel the love from anybody, and I am begging, and I am looking for this artificial relationship.

Comparably, five of the focus group participants were concerned that they receive insufficient guidance on how to conduct research and prepare publications. Diana was worried because she needed “a research assistantship, cause I need something about the research process. I chose this university because I like research.” Kayla expressed similar concerns that lack of mentoring may reflect poorly in the job search because, “There is competition for jobs, but mentorship in terms of research, and that is particularly frustrating because I don't want to be a professor, I want to do research. And I have no idea how to do that or where to do that.”

It was clear that survey participants' relationships with their mentors primarily served academic and professional functions, not personal. Male and female doctoral students comparably on average marginally considered their mentors as friends, and thought their mentors were less effective in providing direction and guidance. Still, male students felt less comfortable sharing personal information with their mentors. Though, one inconsistency was that more females strongly agreed that their mentor demonstrated content expertise in an area of need. Definitively, all doctoral students, both survey and focus group respondents, desired more networking opportunities, with the hope that their mentors could help them make additional professional contacts. To articulate this point, focus group participant Jasmine felt that one of her professors made an effort get to know students personally. She felt one professor in particular, “Dr. Collins has done a lot for mentorship, he is probably the one person I talk to just to sit down and talk, and he knows nothing about what I am doing.” Whereas, Grace had a different experience with her informal faculty member who she worked on several research projects with and as a teaching assistant. Grace said that her faculty mentor is, “certainly concerned with my progress as a student and researcher, [but] our interactions are more task-focused and not more generally focused on cultivating me as an academic.” This dynamic with her faculty mentor worked for Grace as she could seek other mentoring needs from her parents because,

both of my parents, who are professors, albeit of disciplines unrelated to my own, have also always served as my mentors. As individuals who understand academia and, of course, my own individual strengths and objectives, they have always proved invaluable in guiding me towards achieving my academic pursuits.



Table 4  
*Relationship Between Mentor and Mentee*

	Gender					
	Male			Female		
	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%
Currently have informal/formal mentor*	26	23	89	52	35	67
Mentor at same institution	26	21	81	52	35	65
Meet with mentor weekly	26	3	12	52	8	15
Meet with mentor monthly	26	14	54	52	13	25
Meet with mentor once per semester*	26	4	15	52	12	13
Meet with mentor once per year	26	1	4	52	1	2
Almost never meet with mentor	26	1	4	52	0	0

Table 5<sup>1</sup>  
*Relationship Between Mentor and Mentee*

	Gender							
	Male			Female			<i>Cohen's D</i>	<i>Effect Size R</i>
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Mentor was accessible	23	2.52	0.665	35	2.46	0.561	0.1	0.05
Mentor demonstrated content expertise in area of need	23	2.48	0.79	35	2.57	0.558	0.131	0.066
Mentor supportive, encouraging, & motivating	23	2.61	0.583	35	2.46	0.657	0.241	0.12
Mentor helped improve work product	23	2.64	0.581	34	2.32	0.727	0.483	0.236
Mentor helped me network	22	2.22	0.736	35	1.97	1.243	0.245	0.121
Mentor helpful providing direction & guidance	23	2.35	0.775	35	2.03	0.857	0.392	0.192
I consider mentor a friend	23	2.13	0.92	35	1.94	0.802	0.22	0.11
Mentor provided constructive & useful critiques of work	23	2.57	0.59	35	2.42	0.657	0.24	0.12

<sup>1</sup> Most of the Cohen's D effect sizes for this set of questions are approximately at or below .2, indicating that the magnitude of the effect between the differences in men and women's responses is relatively small. The effect size for *my mentor was helpful in providing direction and guidance* is .392, which is between .2 and .5. However, the effect size for *my mentor helped me improve my work product* is .483, and when rounded up to .5 indicates that the relationship between the differences in men and women's responses is in the medium range.

**Connections to mentors.** According to the survey data 38% of male students and 56% of female students were assigned doctoral program advisors (Table 6). However, all students reported formal mentoring programs were a rarity. In terms of making initial mentoring connections, 35% of male students and 21% of female students took the initiative to approach their mentors based on personal interests in their mentors’ work. Approximately 11.5% of male and 17% of female students reported their mentors approached them to form a research or professional collaboration. Only 4% of both female and male students were introduced to their mentors by another individual, professional network, or organization.

Table 6  
Connections to Mentors

	Gender					
	Male			Female		
	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%
Mentor is assigned program advisor	26	10	38	52	29	56
Mentor assigned through formal mentoring program	26	3	12	52	1	2
I approached mentor due to interest in his/her work	26	11	42	52	12	23
Mentor approached me to begin research/professional collaboration	26	3	12	52	9	17
I was introduced to my mentor by individual or organization	26	1	4	52	2	4

For the questionnaire focus group participants were asked, “Do you now or have you ever had a formal/informal mentor in your current program? If so, please briefly explain.” Two of twelve (17%) of respondents reported having strong informal and/or formal mentoring relationships with dissertation chairs or other professors with whom they conduct research. Marisela wrote, “I have been closely mentored during my two years at [Central University] by my advisor...I have had two professors within my program who have been informal mentors as well as multiple faculty from [another department].” Marisela worked consistently as a graduate assistant since entering the program.

Six of twelve (50%) students expressed that after “working at it” for two, three, or four years, they have either developed informal mentor/mentee relationships with at least one fellow student or professor or have developed a positive, but sometimes limited, relationship with their dissertation chair. Maria named eight different professors – female and male – who have checked in with her from time to time to gauge her progress, while two of those professors were named as confidants that she could share the “true challenges that I feel.” Maria also named eight students– female and male – who have acted as encouragers. She adds: “By mentor, I mean someone who cares for my welfare. Since at this time I have informal mentors, I do not have specific times that I meet with anyone nor do I have set times to meet on a consistent basis.”

Four of twelve (33%) participants reported having no formal or informal mentoring relationships now or in the past in their educational leadership doctoral program. Grace wrote that she has, “no formal mentor :( I’m not even sure who my advisor is.” Of all participants, nine of twelve (75%) believed they needed significant increases in the amount and type of mentoring they received in order to be successful as students and future academicians. Moreover, some

form of mentorship needed to begin as soon as they entered the program, when many felt especially vulnerable.

### **Experiences According to Intersecting Identities**

Female survey and focus group participants alike revealed how unsolicited stereotypes based on their gender and other intersecting identities precipitated structural and emotional roadblocks in their doctoral studies. Consequently, female participants were burdened with a number of interlocking forms of oppressions—such as racism, sexism, classism, age-ism, xenophobia, and homophobia—that generated feelings of doubt and questioning of self. Sadly, participants experienced doctoral programmatic inequities, such as insufficient funding and employment opportunities, that were also deleterious to their self-worth. Moreover, work-life balance concerns, especially personal and familial sacrifices, could support and or hinder their academic progress. Subsequently, participants discuss how their complex intersection of identities impacted their mentoring opportunities and relationships.

**Questioning self.** Female survey respondents in particular reported their progression through the doctoral program was impeded by struggles with self-doubt and negative experiences with advising and mentoring (Table 7). Consistently, all survey participants (men  $\mu = 1.77$  and women  $\mu = 1.68$ ) reported that their doctoral program provided limited emotional support and displayed limited interest in their personal lives (Table 7).

Similarly, almost all women in the focus group expressed feeling that something was wrong with them due to unwanted stereotypes and difficulties they were facing as a result. Emma, Julie, and Margaret questioned their identities as “older women.” Despite coming into the program with a wealth of experience, knowledge, and skills, each wondered aloud why they seemed to be passed over for research and assistantship opportunities: “What is wrong with me? Is it because I am a woman? Is it because I’m old?” All three expressed that they felt they were being looked at negatively because of their sex, age, and perceived body image.

It had been nearly thirteen years since Emma had last been in school and when she first began the PhD program. She admitted, “I am not the biggest whipper snapper.” There were computer programs and new learning techniques that were not around when she was last in school and she felt it took her an inordinate amount of time to acclimate to being a student again. Emma felt that since she needed more time to complete assignments and understand new systems, some of her professors and peers were impatient with her; causing her to feel discriminated against because of her age. Emma avoided disclosing her age and seemed to have internalized the identity stereotypes that are placed on her because she was an “older woman” who never married or raised children:

It’s different when you are in your 40s and you have other things that pile on. I’m really sensitive about my age. That’s why I don’t try to broadcast. I could have taken the marrying and having kids route. Maybe something is wrong with me. Maybe I’m not attractive enough.

Emma described the unwanted identity stereotype “marking” her as a possible “lesbian” and/or “spinster.” During the focus group other participants tried to support Emma by reminding her of her many accomplishments and assets, such as speaking multiple languages and experiences living in Latin American countries for many years. It seemed that even with all her success, the

additional weight of uninvited identities was becoming a part of her repertoire – a repertoire she fiercely resisted.

Margaret, a year ahead of Emma in the PhD process, felt uncomfortable about her age in the beginning of her graduate studies. But Margaret learned to be proud of her experiences and use her “old lady” identity to benefit her research agenda. Margaret celebrated her 20-plus years of professional experience in the education field, and though it had been painful at times, began to learn how to use her professional and life experiences to gain respect from professors and peers as well as benefit her present work on behalf of children. After she described some uncomfortable experiences dealing with sexual harassment and age discrimination, the group urged Margaret to remember that being a woman in her 40s has given her the life experiences to better negotiate and resolve conflicts with professors, unlike some students who could potentially be manipulated by professors and peers because of their inexperience. In addition, the women encouraged Margaret further by noting how being in her 40s gave her a context that others in her PhD cohort do not have that enhances her research lens. Emma agreed and said, “I remember the attempt to assassinate Reagan. I have a context to something.”

As first-generation college graduates, five of twelve participants felt they learned the expectations of the academic world through trial and error. Without family members or peers affiliated with academe and middle-class life, they said they were unaware of the norms, rules, and mores of a PhD program. Jasmine often saw her low socioeconomic identity superseding her racial identity in the academic world. Jasmine said she felt out of place in academic settings not always because she is a Black woman, but because she grew up poor. Jasmine said, “Most professors assume that you know something or are connected to something. I feel that most professors come from a privileged background.” Because of her Black, female, low socioeconomic identity Jasmine said, “I anticipate being judged, and someone is going to look at me and say, ‘What are you doing here?’”

Chun Hei and Zhen-Zhen, both international students, revisited their feelings of isolation because they are English language learners. Zhen-Zhen found it difficult to join study groups with her peers when she first started the program. When Zhen-Zhen started the PhD program most students already established study groups and she could not figure out how to join one, or she often felt that her peers avoided her or failed to invite her to be a part of their study group because she was an English Language Learner. Zhen-Zhen said if it was not for two female classmates who invited her to be a part of their group and, “took care of me,” she would carry on in extreme isolation. Zhen-Zhen described an incident where two international students in one of her classes were excluded by her peers and were left to work by themselves for a class project. Zhen-Zhen asked the two international students why they were in a group of two and not with other students for support. The students replied, “I don’t know, no one wanted to work with us.”

**Unequal job and funding issues.** From the survey data, 14% of female students reported their program progress was to a great extent constrained by erratic funding, insecure funding, or lack of funding, while none of the male students reported funding issues. Similarly, 52% of women versus 31% of the men responded that they were engaged in time consuming graduate research assistantships or other employment that was irrelevant to their progress (Table 8). Moreover, when examining the rate students secured fellowships and grants, we found that 42% of male students received fellowships or grants in comparison to 31% of female students in the sample. Likewise, a higher proportion of male students, more than 73%, were employed by their institutions, while a lower proportion of female students, 44%, were employed by their

universities. Consequently, female students (29%) were more likely to hold a position outside of the university than male students (4%) did (Table 7).

The female survey participants' limited funding and job opportunities corroborates focus group responses. In the focus group discussion, all participants admitted that they at some point in time during their doctoral studies suffered from either being jobless, having insecure job offers, or lack of jobs related to their studies. Most aired a number of difficulties they endured navigating the organizational cultural and accessing institutional resources in their educational leadership department. Their apprehension stemmed from a lack of university and departmental clarity on how to secure financial assistance and employment. Karen, a single mother of three, was especially troubled by the insufficient information about available graduate assistantships and the selection criteria for any potential opportunities. The scarcity in job and funding prospects at times created an antagonistic and competitive environment. Karen went on to add that she embraced the competition at times, but not when funding and job calls failed to be clearly and fairly announced and posted. The women suspected that the inequities they faced were partly due to networks they were not privy to since positions were seemingly offered to male students who had developed social relationships with their professors. Female participants shared examples of how their male classmates often socialized with male professors while playing basketball or going out for drinks. Although these social settings were unassociated with graduate studies, they still garnered privileges for male students that advanced their academic careers.

Zhen-Zhen was the only international student in her cohort. Both Chun Hei and Zhen-Zhen described the political complexities of being international students. Zhen-Zhen said, "I am not qualified for student loans because I am an international student." Chun Hei shared the financial struggles of being an international student. She did not have a research assistantship, and without an assistantship she had to pay the more expensive international student tuition rate versus the in-state rate guaranteed to international students who are awarded research assistantships. Chun Hei described how the overlapping forms of oppressions she endured made it difficult to access job and research opportunities in her PhD program:

I am not only a second language learner student, but I am also an international student. And I am Asian, and there are few Asian students in our department. Most of the international students do not have any jobs... There are no mentorship programs for international students.

Chun Hei also felt discriminated against in the research assistant hiring process because she is an English language learner. Chun Hei was not afraid to reveal the pain she felt as a female international student:

I just need to share my agony. I have been searching for a job a long time. The only thing I am qualified for is the Division of Dining services as a waitress. I am a doctoral student. I do not have a mentor. I need mentorship and networks. I am very lonely. At least if I had a mentor and support I would feel much better. I am feeling isolated like an island. I am glad to share my difficulty.

Still, not all was loss. On occasion individual professors would provide helpful information about financial assistance, such as conducting volunteer work in order to receive discounted rates for major conferences. Nevertheless, participants pronounced that their female classmates provided the most rewarding mentoring. Melanie appreciated how, "We have learned

to look out for each other. Us women. We all search the internet for fellowships and calls for papers and so on. We e-mail them to each other. We read each other's papers . . . Our stuff is often rejected because we don't have anyone but each other for guidance. Ultimately, the women relied heavily on their female peer networks to compensate for what formal mentoring was lacking. Their female peer networks produced some of the most nurturing and rewarding mentoring relationships. Unfortunately, despite their reliance on each other Melanie added that even though women are proactive "not just sitting around and complaining... it's hard not to get discouraged. It's like we're spinning our wheels and going nowhere."

**Personal and familial sacrifice.** Among the survey respondents, specifically 12% of female students and none of the male students reported to a great extent marital or family problems constrained their program progress (Table 7). While only a smaller portion of the female survey respondents made personal and familial sacrifices during their doctoral studies, several focus groups participants had children and/or devoted their time to caring for aging parents. During discussions the women exhibited vulnerability by opening up about intense moments when time devoted to doctoral studies encumbered upon their family life. A few participants, such as Karen, worked fulltime while pursuing their doctoral studies. Karen worked as an assistant principal while taking two doctoral courses a semester. This level of work placed stress and strain on her family life, especially with her children, who were struggling in school. Karen said her children would often "tease" her about the limited time she spent at home and say, "Where is my real mom? You are not my real mom!"

Notwithstanding the stress and sacrifice, being a dutiful caregiver was instinctive to the women's identities. This sacrifice was especially so for women who were first-generation college graduates, as their families relied on them for financial support. Though caring for others at times exacerbated imbalances in the women's doctoral studies, these same caring relationships provided essential affective support. For instance, Gabriella's adult daughter often proofread Maria's papers and "help[ed] raise" her teenage son. Thus, identities linked to added stress and strain would occasionally be the greatest source of support.

Table 7  
*Factors Hindering Student Program Progress*

	Gender							
	Male				Female			
	<i>n</i>	Not At All	Some Extent	Great Extent	<i>n</i>	Not At All	Some Extent	Great Extent
Doubts or uncertainties about ability to earn a doctoral degree	26	58	38	4	51	60	27	13
Erratic funding insecure funding or lack of funding	26	46	54	0	52	46	40	14
Child care responsibilities*	26	50	42	8	52	75	13	12
Caring for parent other family members are not your own children	26	73	27	0	51	75	21	4

Marital or family obstacles/problems**	26	50	50	0	51	73	15	12
Personal illnesses or injuries	25	85	12	0	52	81	17	2
Poor or inattentive advising or mentoring services	26	73	23	4	50	67	21	12
Not finding the right mentor advisor early enough	26	62	27	11	50	60	31	9
Few or no productive research experiences opportunities	26	50	42	8	51	64	21	14
Time consuming research appointments irrelevant to progress	26	65	35	0	52	71	21	8
Time consuming outside employment irrelevant to progress	26	31	42	27	52	52	29	19
Results reported as percentages								

Table 8  
*Job and Funding Related Issues*

	Gender					
	Male			Female		
	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%	<i>n</i>	Frequency	%
Have you received any fellowships grants?	26	11	42	52	16	31
Do you currently or have you ever held an assistantship?	26	11	42	52	28	54
Did you have an internship or practicum experience?	26	8	31	52	13	25
Did you work in a full time 30 hour a week job at anytime?	26	20	77	52	38	73
Held position inside of university**	26	19	73	52	23	44
Held position outside of university**	26	1	4	52	15	29
Did you interrupt your doctoral studies during a Fall or Spring semester?	26	4	15	52	6	12

## Discussion and Recommendations

Using a diversification of methodological approaches that are both quantitative and qualitative helped us understand how mentoring in educational leadership preparation could be viewed at a macro level to examine issues systemically across the field, while also focusing in on the nuances that occur at the micro level within a specific context. Researchers have shown how both mentors and protégés experience tension in the mentoring process (Mullen, 2012; Griffin & Reddick, 2011). Either party faces institutional and structural challenges that can strain the mentoring relationship. This suggests that the mentoring dynamic is not only influenced by the individuals involved, the mentor and protégé, but also by larger systemic forces that are indicative of the department, university, and even the field of educational leadership. Thus, more research is needed that examines mentoring more complexly, holistically, and systemically.

Although the integrated studies we presented were conducted separately and we cannot form causal relationships between the two studies, together the two studies offers complimentary perspectives from different vantage points on mentoring that are useful to drafting recommendations for improving mentoring structures, practices and opportunities in educational leadership preparation, as well as suggestions for future research on the subject. Specifically, our analysis identified three major set of findings: 1) students' perceptions of quality mentoring, 2) experiences with mentoring activities, and 3) differences in experiences according to intersecting identity factors. Below, we discuss our findings and recommendations for policy and practice in relation to each of these themes.

In our research, participants emphasized how professional and career development were essential to quality mentoring. Both survey and focus group participants identified training and guidance on research and writing and opportunities to build professional networks as two key mentoring supports, which were often lacking in their educational leadership doctoral programs. The salience of these themes in both studies could suggest that mentoring insufficiency is not just an issue of an individual institution, department, or academic program, but could be indicative of a wider deficit in educational leadership programs in the United States.

In our previous research on mentoring in educational leadership preparation, we suggested that interventions for academic development expand to the broader field (Welton et al., 2015). This is especially important for doctoral students interested in a career in the professoriate, who will need to be skilled in research and writing to thrive. Academic development consists of cultivating a doctoral student's writing and research skills and providing an introduction to scholarly networks that would be beneficial to the student's potential academic career (Grant & Simmons, 2008). We strongly recommend that organizations with significant influence on the field, such as the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) and the National Council of Professors in Educational Administration (NCPEA) collectively work to support the *academic development* of doctoral students in educational leadership.

In addition to the emphasis participants placed on programmatic support for academic success in the field, participants also highlighted the importance of the mentor/mentee relationship and how this relationship impacted their overall experiences with mentoring. Importantly, the majority of survey participants reported that their educational leadership preparation programs did not provide emotional support and showed limited interest in their personal lives. Whether participants felt they needed emotional support, however, was more mixed. While focus group participants reported that they need more emotional support to contend with the subjugation they faced from a number of identity stereotypes as well as the



stress of work-academia-life balance concerns, only a limited number of survey respondents felt that they needed “psychological” and emotional support. One possible inference from survey participants’ responses is that “you don’t know, what you don’t know,” meaning that if they did not receive psychosocial and emotional support from their programs, they may not have recognized it as a desired resource. Regardless, the fact that some students were able to articulate their need for mentoring support that extended beyond advising and developing academic skills implies the importance of having such supports available.

However, in developing any mentoring program it is essential that higher education institutions ensure that the program is adequately resourced, consistently applied and implemented by all faculty members who work with doctoral students. The latter is particularly important given that research on mentoring demonstrates that both faculty of color and female faculty already tend to carry an extra burden of service duties (e.g., diversity related service, committee work, and academic housekeeping and higher mentoring and advising loads) (Reddick, 2011; Reddick & Young, 2012). Moreover, additional service, especially service that is associated with the “emotive” side of academic growth, is often assigned to female or racial minority faculty in the department. This has been referred to in the research as *mothering work* for female faculty and *identity taxation* for faculty of color (Ford, 2011; Griffin & Reddick, 2011; Reddick & Young, 2012) and can distract faculty from other critical areas of tenure, especially research. We recommend that institutions take care not to overburden female faculty and faculty of color. Instead we suggest searching for solutions that acknowledge that the inequities in mentoring are indeed institutionalized and systemic, and therefore should be approached as such.

With regard to our third major theme, participants discussed how unwanted stereotypes associated with their various identities generated feelings of doubt, caused them to question their self-worth, and adversely affected their access to mentoring. The focus group method, used in study one, provided participants an open forum to disclose the number of intersecting oppressions they faced with mentoring in their doctoral program and in general. However, the questioning of self and feelings of self-doubt associated with multiple and intersecting identities, was evident in the data collected through both study one and two.

Respondents articulated how they faced oppression for not just one aspect of their identity, but multiple; and this compounded oppression often happened simultaneously. Focus group participants were deeply concerned about how they would survive and whether they could thrive in their doctoral program due to the number of microaggressions they experienced in the process. Microaggression is typically a term to describe “incessant, subtle, yet stunning racial assaults” that students of color contend with on a daily basis (Yosso, Smith, Ceja, Solorzano, 2009, p. 360). The unwanted racial stress associated with microaggressions, leads to chronic mental, emotional, and physical trauma also known as racial battle fatigue (Smith, 2004; Yosso et al., 2009). Unfortunately, the violence our focus group participants experienced on the battlefield was not just racism and sexism, but also interlocked with xenophobia, ageism, classism, and even linguicism. Given the powerful impact of oppression, particularly multiple and intersecting oppressions, we recommend that mentoring approaches be intersectional and address the complexity of doctoral students’ identities.

Currently, the field of educational administration offers mentoring through individual institutions as well as through professional associations. The above recommendations have focused primarily on the actions that universities can take as they seek to provide quality mentoring. Professional associations currently offer national programs such as the David L.

Clark scholars program, jointly sponsored by American Educational Research Association's (AERA) Divisions A (Administration), L (Policy), and UCEA; the *Mentoring Mosaic* sponsored by National Council of Professors in Educational Administration (NCPEA); the William L. Boyd National Educational Politics Workshop sponsored by the Politics of Education Association and UCEA, and the Barbara L. Jackson scholars sponsored by UCEA. These programs are instrumental in preparing hundreds of educational leadership doctoral students for the professoriate, the fourth program providing mentoring for doctoral students of color (see Grant, 2009; Reddick & Young, 2012; Simmons & Grant, 2008; Young & Brooks, 2008). Yet, based on our research, we urge these programs to take an intersectional identity approach to mentoring so participants can be prepared for the reality of the identity politics they will face once they are professionals in educational leadership. We also challenge ourselves and other researchers to expand and deepen the research base on mentoring needs in educational leadership to incorporate an intersectional identity perspective, and to seek ways to both quantitatively and qualitatively represent the full breadth of educational leadership doctoral students' experiences and needs as they prepare for success in their future careers.

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