Soft Skill Development in Formal Mentoring Programs:

The Experience of Peer-Mentors in Higher Education

by

Margret Leigh-Kathryn Hurlburt

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Approved November 2020 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Nathan D. Martin, Chair
Kate Vawter
Victoria Theisen-Homer

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2020

ABSTRACT

There is a growing necessity for learning opportunities that promote the development of soft skills among college students as they prepare to participate meaningfully in a global, knowledge-based world. Through conducting in-depth interviews with 9 peer-mentors with first, second, and third year levels of experience in Arizona State University's LEAD (Learn Explore Advance Design) mentoring program, this thesis seeks to understand the ways in which soft skill development is promoted through participation in a formal mentoring program. The LEAD (Learn Explore Advance Design) mentoring program recruits mentors who have completed the LEAD (Learn Explore Advance Design) program classes during their freshman year, are current Arizona State University students in their sophomore year and above, and seek to support and guide other students. Findings reveal that peer-mentors gain a number of valuable soft skills through the mentoring experience: self-awareness, adaptability, teamwork and collaboration, and verbal communication. Additionally, students increased their self-efficacy and ability to seek support. Given these benefits, higher education institutions should seek to increase access to mentoring opportunities. Mentoring programs provide a powerful avenue by which to increase student success, improve inclusivity on campus, and advance justice and social transformation in an increasingly globalized world.

This thesis is dedicated to the matriarchs in my family, Susan Lockbeam, Judy Hurlburt, Mary Estudillo, and my late nana Viola Ann Garcia. May they continue to guide me and watch over me in life and in spirit.

ACKNOWELDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge a number of individuals who have graciously supported me throughout my academic career and enabled me to reach the finals stages of my Masters research. Firstly, I would like to thank my thesis chair, Dr. Nathan D. Martin, for guiding me throughout my research and challenging me to rethink the purpose of what it means to fully complete a Masters level thesis. This opportunity provided me with an elevated level of appreciation of the need for thorough research and desire to share transformative ways to support students in higher educational spaces. I would also like to thank my committee member, Dr. Kate Vawter, for mentoring me not only throughout my research, but throughout my college career. Without her care, I truly believe I would not be in the position I am as a student, professional, and person. Her constant mentorship and keen knowledge of what it means to assist undergraduate students lead me to be who I am today, and for that, I have the utmost gratitude. In addition to this, I also thank Dr. Victoria Theisen-Homer for being a source of inspiration and counsel in the pursuit to humanizing education. In the time I have spent learning from her expertise, I have grown as an individual and professional in higher education encouraging students coming from all backgrounds to understand what it means to be truly cared for by an institution. Also, I would like to thank my teammates Danielle Okezie and Katie Evensen Riggs for their patience during the stressful days of work and school. Their continued encouragement and advice have driven me to be a leader in my own life. Lastly, and currently not least, a big thank you to my family members, my mother, Karlyn Kaye Hurlburt, my siblings, Christopher Belanger, Alexuz Bazan, Johnny Estudillo, my aunt and uncle, Christine Estudillo-Peña, Sal Peña, my grandfathers, Joe Estudillo, and Carl Hurlburt, and some of

my dear friends, Carolina Loera, Halie Hurtado, Julia Preston, John Hernandez, Emily Núñez-Eddy, and Alyx Alcala for their unwavering support and love throughout this tedious process. There are many others that have supported me through this process and for that, I am indebted to each of them for I would not be where I am today without each and every one of the individuals who have taken the time to be kind, uplifting, and understanding of the person I have become through these years of lessons and growth. I am excited for the journey ahead with the people I love by my side.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION 1

LITERATURE REVIEW 2

Global Campus.....3

Mentoring Programs and Student Success Opportunity 4

Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills 6

Soft Skills and Self-Efficacy.....8

Opportunity Gaps 10

METHODS 12

The LEAD Program 13

Participants and Recruitment 14

Interviewing 14

Researcher Positionality.....15

Coding.....16

RESULTS 18

Self-Awareness 18

Adaptability.....20

Teamwork and Collaboration 25

Verbal Communication 28

FINDINGS 31

Self-Efficacy and "Mentor Identity" 32

Asking for Help..34

Limitations 35

DISCUSSION 36

Access and Reform 37

Inclusivity 37

Humanizing Education...39

REFERENCES 40

APPENDIX

A PATICIPANT INFORMATION 49

B RECRUITMENT MATERIAL 51

C CONSENT FORM 53

D INTERVIEW GUIDE..56

E SOFT SKILL CODEBOOK 58

F CODE USAGE FIGURES...60

G CODE USAGE TABLES 62

H UNIVERSITY EXEMPTION FOR HUMAN SUBJECT

TESTING 64

In my second year as an undergraduate learner at Arizona State University, I began working in a newly designed mentoring program, the LEAD mentoring program, as a mentor to freshman learners transitioning into university life who were enrolled in LEAD program courses. In my time as a mentor, I began taking on leadership roles and gained confidence in my ability to meaningfully participate in a global, knowledge-based society through the opportunities I had in academic career. However, this was not the case for many fellow graduating peers who did not have similar opportunity; they were more uncertain about their futures after graduation. This divided thinking is connected to the skills graduates are told are essential and the skills necessary to engaging in the increasingly globalized world.

In an increasingly globalized world, it is imperative that students gain expertise in leadership, communication, teamwork, and other skills necessary to transcend the borders of traditional education. While traditional college courses prepare graduates with hard skills for the workforce, enabling them to earn a living, a broader set of soft skills are also needed to engage in a today's globalized world (Rowe, 2017).

While most current research focuses on the mentee benefits, the skill development of mentors have been relatively neglected. Undoubtedly, mentoring relationships can have a direct effect on a mentee's academic success and future potential, however the benefits to mentees is not the focus of this research (Bayer et al., 2015). The purpose of this thesis is to understand the how being a mentor provides opportunities for soft skill development, particularly in terms of, increased self-efficacy, and greater comfortability in asking for help and seeking support from coaches. Through engaging in mentorship

and developing these soft skills, student mentors can become active agents in the pursuit of social transformation.

The guiding research question for this study is: What influence does the mentoring experience have on the soft skill development of the mentor?

The following sections include the examination of the current literature available on mentoring, skill development, and how these relate to self-efficacy theory and opportunity for these skills to grow within higher education. Further, a description of the qualitive methods used for this research while considering the positionality of myself as a researcher throughout the coding of the data collection. The findings within are based on my analysis of the interview responses and further speculations of the data for continued research in this area. Finally, the discussion aims to not conclude the conversation of mentoring in higher education, but to deepen understanding and implications for the need of continued research in mentoring program practices within globally expanding higher educational spaces.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mentoring is "a dynamic, shared personal relationship in which a more experienced person acts as an adviser, guide and role-model for a less experienced person" (Steinmann, 2006, as cited in Schultz, 2010, p. 432). A mentor invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person by acting as a supporter, sponsor, guide, counselor, protector, encourager and confidant (Oddell, 1990). Additionally, mentoring relationships can span the life course or take place across smaller time frames, such as in high school or higher education (Steinmann, 2006). The overall enrollment rate of those who have graduated high school entering into

secondary education has increased by 40 percent from 2000 to 2017 (McFarland et al., 2019). This thesis extends this by gathering further insights on the effects of mentor programs on the peer-mentors themselves, with an emphasis in soft skill learning development of the first through fourth-year students coming to college in the age of an increasingly globalized world. The following section reviews the current literature focused on how mentoring in higher education influences student success, informal and formal mentoring, the contrast between hard and soft skills, the soft skill connection to self-efficacy and "I-Thou" relations, and the gap in present opportunity for students to expand in these areas.

Global campus

Brustein (2007) uncovers that colleges are evolving to expand education access to learners every year by becoming a "global campus" (p. 382). This expansion has led to a number of changes to increase efficiency on college campuses, including growing class sizes, digitalizing coursework, and increasing the workload of faculty members. Though these changes have increased efficiency and enabled universities to provide an education for a growing number of students, they have resulted in a number of unforeseen issues. Among these include a lack of opportunities for students to develop essential soft skills and opportunities to create organic, meaningful relationships with peers, faculty, and staff on campus. Existing scholarship demonstrates that implementing peer-mentoring programs increases student retention rates and results in greater levels of satisfaction related to the college experiences of mentees (Chambliss, 2018).

As universities have become increasingly internationalized, meaning they have increased the mobility of people, programs, and campuses, they have experienced a

significant growth in diverse student bodies, including an increase in the attendance of students from marginalized groups (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). Higher education institutions have responded to these changes by implementing a number of programs that aim to assist marginalized students in achieving their educational and future goals; one such program being mentoring (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016).

Mentoring Programs and Student Success and Opportunity

Peer-mentoring programs in higher education provide an opportunity for students to be involved on campus and to develop in a supportive environment that provides counseling, feedback and information beyond what is shared in the classroom (Ehrich et al., 2004; Astin, 1984). The theory of student involvement (Astin, 1984) argues that student success is shaped to a large degree by the extent to which students devote time and energy to campus organizations and are involved in campus life. Mentoring programs can create meaningful academic, professional, personal and community-driven networks among fellow students on campus and beyond. However, the potential benefits student involvement can go unrealized without sufficient formal mentoring focused on the skill development essential to becoming a "globally competent" college graduate (Brustein, 2007, p. 382).

Mentoring has been generally understood in the context of informal relationships where a more experienced individual provides advice and acts as a role model seeks for a less experienced protégé (Nottingham et al., 2017). Informal mentoring relationships often grow organically and emerge from shared interests and personal and future goals (Nottingham et al., 2017). In contrast, formal mentoring programs are guided by an established organization with "a program and dedicated process for mentorship, and

mentors and mentees are purposefully paired by the organization rather than organically matched" (Nottingham et al., 2017, p. 245).

As Nottingham et al. (2017) claims, while informal mentoring is generally thought to be more valuable than formal mentoring relationships, as universities, such as Arizona State University, missions evolve to be "measured not by whom it excludes, but by whom it includes and how they succeed," more students from varying experiences of mentorship are entering into unknown territory and would benefit from established and formal guidance to develop essential skills and attitudes needed to navigate through the institution and life after graduation (Arizona State University, 2015).

Informal mentoring is a natural part of relationship building that occurs throughout one's day-to-day life in society, the workplace, as well as in social, professional and family activities (Inzer et al., 2005). Inzer et al. (2005) explains that either person in the relationship may initiate the dynamic, the mentor to help the other, and the protégé to gain wisdom from the other trusted person (p. 35). According to Cotton and Ragin's (1999) study, one result of informal mentoring is that protégés were much more satisfied with their mentors than those with formal mentors, however, as access to higher education expands, relying solely on informal mentoring relationships to form organically is an unreliable solution. Formal mentoring is not as powerful as informal mentoring in some ways, but it is a process that institutions should still pursue (Inzer et al., 2005).

The benefits of formal mentoring are expansive, mentors begin to share and take pride in their protégé's accomplishments, renewing their commitment not only to their mentor role, but to their academic success as well (Williams, 2000 as cited in Inzer et al.,

2005). The formal mentoring experience not only creates enthusiasm, camaraderie, and professionalism among the team of mentors, it also positively impacts the entire culture of the program by promoting the values, norms, and standards of the organization (p. 36). It is in organizations, such as higher education, best interest to foster high-quality mentor-mentee relationships where the shaping of the learner's attitude is important; skills can be learned, but it is possible that mindset or attitude can be learned most powerfully from mentor unto mentee (Lawrie, 1987 as cited in Inzer et al., 2005, pg. 36). For example, mindset and attitudes surrounding classroom protocols, furthering academic success, and soft skill development in areas to assist students retention until graduation.

Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills

Hard skills relate to the abilities and forms of intelligence used when performing technical job duties and administrative work (Levasseur, 2013). Although hard skills (e.g., logic, analytical thinking, rigor, and strategic, long-term vision) are often emphasized in discussions of preparing students for future employment, a qualitative study of project management professionals finds that soft skills are more important to long-term job success (Azim et al., 2010 & Newell, 2002, as cited in Levasseur, 2013). However, the formal college curriculum (particularly in the more technical disciplines, such as science or engineering) places more emphasis on hard skill development, shifting the development these vital soft skills to the job setting (Levasseur, 2013).

Soft skills are interpersonal skills (e.g., character traits, attitudes, and behaviors) learned through actions overtime and often in informal spaces outside of a classroom or office space, and include qualities like common sense, social-awareness, and a positive persona; the capacity of which soft skills people possess differ per person (Robles, 2012).

Furthermore, soft skills require the personal motivation to learn and an environment of support to foster one's development (Levasseur, 2013, p. 569). Goleman (1998) argues that there is substantial overlap between emotional intelligence, soft skill development, and career readiness. Companies promoting that their greatest values are set in hard skills have actually more so from benefited from employees proficient in soft skills because they have enabled and enhanced personal development, learning capacities, and willingness to participate in future goals and successes (Goleman, 1998; Gibb, 2014).

Traditional college course settings and modes of instruction are not directly conducive to developing soft skills. Soft skills are difficult to teach and even harder to evaluate in a classroom setting (Gibb, 2014; Murti, 2014). While soft skills are deemed to be important, in most cases, graduates are not aware of the growing need for them throughout or after college; therefore, do not possess them, this reoccurs happens because of the ongoing mismatch of demand in the workplace after college and knowledge gained about and of them from their college courses (Murti, 2014, p. 34). On top of the greater effects, Gibbs (2014) finds that learners either will continue to develop their social abilities and attain personal integration into significant communities, or they will inevitably risk the consequences of not being sufficiently sociable to integrate into life after graduation (p. 459). Caruana (2011) argues that academic content leads to a series of development of soft skills, only when students are involved in different activities outside of the formal curriculum.

An example of the ways in which university programs have previously encouraged the development of both soft and hard skills can be found in the "Research Success and Structures Support" program at the University of Witwatersrand (Geber,

2009). Here, new researchers participated in six courses related to research writing skills, effective speed reading, and time and stress management, which promoted the development of researcher's hard, technical skills. In addition to this, participation in this program encouraged the development of participants soft skills, as they were paired with trained coaches that provided support as they developed their identities as researchers and improved their interpersonal interactions. This study found that in addition to developing both hard and soft skills which increased participants' efficiency and success, participant's also demonstrated an increase in self-efficacy (Geber, 2009, p. 436).

Soft-Skills and Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to individuals' belief in their capacity to carry out tasks successfully, to actively shape their environment, and the consequent impact this self-belief has on their motivation and achievement (Bandura, 1989; Schulze, 2010). In this manner, self-efficacy is an important soft skill that is positively related to training motivation and performance, as is an internal locus of control and conscientiousness (Schwoerer et al., 2005). Although self-efficacy was once conceptualized primarily in individualistic terms, the way one's capacity for beliefs change over time and the ways these beliefs affect motivation and achievement are increasingly found to be determined through social relationships (Martin & Downson, 2009).

Individuals learn about themselves and create a sense of belonging with their collective system through influence, modeling, and open communication with others in various social domains. Zaccario et al., (1995) describes that particular social domains, such as systems of higher education, develop a sense of collective efficacy as individuals come together to create a plan for action to meet shared action goals and demands; along

with feeling connected, individuals develop beliefs and values that are consistent with their relational environment (p. 328).

Mentoring programs and other extracurricular activities that are aligned with the academic goals of the collective system have the potential to promote self-efficacy in a safe and caring environment (Zaccaro et al., 1995, p. 342). When successful, such programs can help students to develop social skills, social capital, and a sense of control and autonomy (Martin & Downson, 2009). Wigfield and Tonks (2002) emphasize the role mentors' beliefs and behaviors have in the academic development of students. Mentors are likely to model problem-solving strategies and supportive communication with others, which over time helps mentees gain their own sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Furthermore, mentors can also be prepared to model relational behaviors when they are putting their efforts into creating meaningful relationships.

Relationships in education are a vital underpinning of student motivation, engagement, and achievement (Bandura, 1989). However, traditional methods of college instructions, such as large lecture-based classes, as well as new methods, such as online instruction, can make it difficult to foster engagement and form relationships. In this way, mentoring programs have the ability to promote a stronger sense of self-efficacy in mentors because of the innate focus of soft skill development that they would otherwise not gain solely through formal curriculum.

Buber's (1923) classic "I-Thou" relationship theory, which stems from a recognition of reciprocated equality between two beings, can be helpful to understand self-efficacy and soft skill development in student mentors. A level of reciprocity is formed when the mentor and mentee are committed to similar goals ranging from broad

educational and career goals, personal relatability, understanding of each other, and vision of long-term success. The opposite of the “I-Thou” relationship is the “I-It", or when one views the other party as an object to be used and experience and fails to recognize them as an equal (Guilherme et al., 2012). Those who recognize and build “I-Thou” relationships with one another through dialogue are better able to establish trust and respect (Buber, 1923), while acknowledging that both the mentor and mentee are capable of teaching and learning from one another; this is a student-centered and “bottom-up” approach to education.

Building an I-Thou relation with practicing mentors encourages them to trust in others and in themselves, create self-efficacy, and to fulfill their role as a mentor. Based off Bandura’s (1977) self-efficacy research, as these relational behaviors are modeled, the mentors will continue the cycle of creating meaningful relationships with mentees and will encourage the success and achievement of not only their mentees education success, but for their own success long-term.

Opportunity Gaps

There is a growing need for mentoring programs in higher education with emphasis’ in soft skill development. To develop self-efficacy, learners need opportunities for acquiring and developing their interpersonal skills and social relationships (Bandura, 1989). In higher education, there is a lack of time, resources, coaches, and the education surrounding soft skill learning. Extra-curricular programs, such as mentoring, are an excellent opportunity to progress learners forward after graduation. This research is intended to spark conversation of the growing need for mentoring programs in higher education with emphasis’ in soft skill development.

This thesis aims to understand what soft skills mentors find the most applicable to their experience, how they have learned these skills through a mentoring program, and discovers what areas of soft skill learning are not as prominently noted in their mentoring experience. Although mentoring programs can be effective, access to such mentoring opportunities has been limited and uneven (Darwin & Palmer, 2009). Mentor relationships can be organically created through proximity and interests. While these organic relationships can be effective and foster positive development outcomes, students' and potential mentors' growing number of daily responsibilities presents an obstacle to their formation (Inzer et al., 2005). Although mentoring has been incorporated into higher educational programs, there continues to be a lack of formal mentoring opportunities that emphasize soft skill development. As a result of this lack of opportunity, existing mentoring programs largely fall short in their potential to advance the necessary skills that students need to be successful post-graduation; namely, valuable soft skills.

Institutions of higher education need to continue growing in their awareness of the lasting effects mentoring programs have on students and staff (Atkins, 2019). As more students attend college, there is continued need for additional support of learners who have questions and concerns (Inzer et al., 2005). Students may begin college with the knowledge of what a mentor is from people in their past, whether they have been teachers, family members or coaches; these relationships have helped them navigate through their world prior to college. However, as proximity and interests change, these same relationships may not continue throughout the students' college years, leaving many students vulnerable to not having the guidance they need to reach graduation.

Examples of resources afforded from mentoring relationships include sharing resources the institutions provide for students that they may not have otherwise known were offered to them as well as having someone to talk to for a greater understanding of themselves and their future goals. As institutions strive to be more inclusive in their acceptance standards, supporting students requires increased opportunities for them to excel in their programs (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). It is to the benefit of no one to measure inclusivity at an institution based on acceptance rates, rather it is beneficial to measure the amount of programming, leadership and graduation retention of student learners dismissed in the early history of higher education.

Without acknowledging the history of higher education, it will continue to lack the genuine support needed to provide a quality education to all student learners. As the backgrounds of student learners have grown more diverse, the opportunities for quality mentoring support need to increase (Aguirre & Martinez, 2007). It is critical for institutions to recognize the need for formal mentoring opportunities in order to promote success for all students. In the next section, I will be sharing the methods of how this study contributes and adds to the current research available surrounding quality formal mentoring opportunity.

METHODS

Mentorship has significant influence both directly and indirectly to the success of mentees and mentors in programs and organizations they are involved in (Inzer et al., 2005), As mentioned in the previous section, opportunities for students to develop soft skills, self-efficacy, and meaningful relationships can be limited as higher education becomes a more globalized space (Brustein, 2007). The need for implementation of soft

skill development programming in the new world of higher education is evident throughout current research. However, methods to fulfill this greater goal of broadening true access to education has been limited. Throughout my research on soft skills developed through mentoring, it became clear that the softs skill developed through being a peer-mentor was not only a takeaway from participants mentor experience, but from their college experience at large. In the following section, the methods of this study will be presented by discussing the LEAD formal mentoring program, the information, recruitment, and interviewing of participants, my own positionality throughout the research, and the coding process of the data collection to further understand how and which soft skills were developed by mentors.

The LEAD Program

Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were used to develop a rich, detailed explanation of soft skill development in mentors currently involved in a formal mentoring program. The LEAD mentoring program is a network of peer-mentors guided by professional staff to provide academic, professional, and personal support to freshman students completing classes in the LEAD program. Freshman students who are enrolled in a cohort classes, after completing their first year, have the opportunity to apply to become LEAD mentors. LEAD mentors are supported by supervisors to ensure that while mentors are supporting students, they are also being supported in areas of their own need throughout their college experience. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of The Arizona State University.

Participants and Recruitment

Of the 52 students mentors currently involved with the LEAD Program, 10 mentors were selected for recruitment based on a purposive sampling method (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 1990) to assure representation from different mentor classes and levels of mentoring experience. However, due to scheduling conflicts, one interview could not be conducted, resulting in a final interview sample of 9 mentors at different levels of experience: 3 second year students (with one semester of mentoring experience), 3 third year students, and 3 fourth year students (see Appendix A for participant information). Although a small sample, based on the depth of the data the participants provided and common themes that emerged, theoretical saturation was achieved after the nine interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

All participants were invited to participate in the study via e-mail and scheduled interviews through the web scheduling program "Calendly". The web program provided an efficient and confidential sign-up experience. Following the sign-up, the participants received a confirmation email from the website and a text or email reminder from the research the day prior or of the scheduled interview time (see Appendix A for recruitment material).

Interviewing

All in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face and were recorded and transcribed verbatim with the participants permission (see Appendix B for consent form). These interviews were semi-structured to allow new ideas to emerge. Interview times ranged from 30 minutes to 60 minutes with an average of 44 minutes. The interviews took place on either the Tempe or Downtown Phoenix Arizona State University

campuses in private rooms reserved prior to the interview. These locations were decided by determining the participants availability based on their class and work schedules.

One pilot interview was conducted for this research with a former mentor in the LEAD program; this interview is not represented in the data. The interview question guide underwent minor revisions after completion of the pilot study to modify phrasing of questions that were not easily interpretable by the interviewee (Spradley, 1979; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Additionally, interview questions where confirmed to be appropriate and relevant with the participants supervisors prior to interview recruitment (see Appendix C for interview guide).

Researcher Positionality

Prior to reading further, it is important for readers to note, after graduation from Arizona State University in 2018, I began working at another company and started my graduate degree program. I never intend to be re-hired with the LEAD program as a full-time employee, but half way through my graduate program, I received a job offer to work with LEAD again. I was initially concerned with what this meant for my research. Was it ethical for me to supervisor mentors that I may be interviewing for research? How would my experience in the program potentially affected the shape of finds, conclusions, and the interpretations drawn in the study? Glense and Peshkin (1992) share a cautionary note about conducting research in one's own workplace and raise the issues of power and risk to myself, the participants, and the site.

I would like the readers to know, I acknowledge these limitations and believe it is important for those to be aware of this in future sections. Perhaps, alternative data was received as an inside researcher that affected my findings. An outside researcher may

have been received less structured responses because of lack of fear of judgement or retaliation from a supervisor. However, this research and data is significant on its own and my involvement with the program does not diminish the data of which the participants shared. Additionally, while I am on a team of supervisors, I did not specifically supervise 6 out of the 9 participants; and of those participants, I had only supervised them for one semester total.

Coding

I used deductive coding strategies to create a template of codes (Crabtree & Miller, 1999). The interview transcripts, codes and memos were entered securely into the Dedoose database, a cross-platform analyzing program. This study conducted combined coding technics of qualitative and grounded theory processes (Charmaz, 2006). Coding-process consisted of the open, axial, and selective coding. The initial coding in this research was completed through open coding to determine major categories of information (Creswell, 2007), guided by a template based on the National Association of Collegiate Employers (2019) Job Outlook list of skills employers want to see on a students' resumes as well as 21 other soft skills from various mediums (see Appendix E for soft skill codebook). These codes were originally used to establish a greater understanding of how soft skill are beneficial for graduate entering the workforce; as the research grew, I began to discover that soft skill development needs were not only limited to workforce readiness, but for participating in the global world at large.

From these initial codes, axial codes were established to relate categories to subcategories and to bring the data back together again in a coherent whole (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60). The final step was completing selective coding, taking the models and

developing propositions that interrelate the categories in the model (Creswell, 2007). Throughout the research, four sub-codes – coaching and asking for help, pedagogy, relationship building, and the "mentor stigma" – consistently reoccurred in each primary code section (see Appendix F for code usage figure). Through the codes and sub-codes, I was able to assemble a story that describes the interrelationships of each category (see Appendix G for code usage tables).

To reduce the problem in coding, there is no denying the existence of preconceptions that may influence how codes are attended and interpreted (Charmaz, 2006). The preconceived theoretical concepts may have provided a starting point, but did not automatically determine the codes for data analysis (Charmaz, 2006, p. 68). It is acknowledged that "a fine line exists between interpreting data and imposing a preexisting frame on it"; through illuminating the experience of participants, the codes created a bridge between what was described and the emerging analysis of the data (Charmaz, 2006, p. 68).

Microanalysis was used for all the interview to ensure that no important ideas or constructs were overlooked (Creswell, 2013). Codes and memos were created for each new idea and themes that were found to be conceptually similar in nature or related in meaning were grouped together as concepts (Creswell, 2013, p. 352). These concepts were then developed through constant usage, with the most relevant concepts being integrated to form a theoretical framework. The next section shares the results collected from participant interviews and how the results of the soft skill development was exhibited throughout participants own formal peer-mentoring experience in a formal mentoring setting.

RESULTS

The results of this study is reoccurring underlying themes found in the interviews that I found to most closely explain the exhibition of the soft skill development among mentors (self-awareness, adaptability, teamwork, and verbal communication). These quotes accounted for the variations of interview responses on a person-by-person basis and represented significant findings from the collected data. The following sections will focus on study's most prominent soft skills that emerged in the data: self-awareness, adaptability, teamwork, and verbal communication; each are represented through interview quotes from each section.

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness, as defined by Goleman (1998), is the ability to recognize one's internal states, preference, reactions, resources, and institutions. Self-awareness is one of the five components of emotional intelligence (Mayer & Salovey, 1993, p. 433). Self-management and interpersonal competencies are elevated based on own's own self-awareness and empathy (Goleman, 1998, p. 9). For the purpose of this study, self-awareness was coded as instances when mentors reflected on their personal experiences through storytelling and recalling of moments when they became particularly self-aware.

In several instances, mentors described self-awareness in relation to how others perceived them. For example, two first-year mentors noted that they did not perceive themselves to be knowledgeable as others were or to the extent they believed a mentor "should" be. However, more experienced mentors, second- and third-year mentors, noted that their confidence was less connected with the way others viewed them and more focused on the way they internally perceived themselves. These differences by level of

experience suggests that with time mentors grew less likely to associate their self-perception and confidence together. Goleman (1998) defines this as one's ability to recognize their own personal strengths and limitations (p. 9).

Mentions of adaptability were paired with responses coded as self-awareness 17 times. Adaptability is being able to self-manage attitudes and actions when sudden circumstance arise in order to reach a successful result (Goleman, 1998, p. 10). These two codes went together consistently, especially in mentors' recollections of having to adapt to their role, mentees, classroom and cohort environment, and the faculty member they work with. In particular, several mentors discussed how they grew self-aware when trying to connect with their mentees and adapting their behavior so they not only listened to their mentees but also shared about themselves, even if it risked feelings of vulnerability. For example, the second-year mentor notes,

> When you don't connect with students, [I] feel like, I may not be that good of a mentor. But, just the fact of that, you know you're going to connect more with some students than you will with others.

Mentors repeatedly mentioned adaptability in the context of self-awareness, whether it be, sharing about themselves to get to know more about their mentees or having to recognize their behaviors and the behaviors of others to most effectively perform their role. These examples highlight the interconnectedness of these soft skills.

Many mentors valued being able to look back on in the mentor program and see growth, which was seen as difficult but desirable. Across all interviews, there were twelve mentions of the word "grow" in conjunction with a response coded as self-awareness. These mentions described experienced in a variety context though most often when describing experience in college and in the mentor program. This was mentioned

by mentors at all experience levels. While first-year mentors pinpointed their growth from mentee into mentor, second- to third-year mentors acknowledged the growth they had seen in themselves year to year. This suggests that challenges arise in those with less time in their mentor role may want to be able to look back on their growth, but struggle to pinpoint the skills needed to improve as a mentor (Goleman, 1998, p. 10). However, acknowledging this, leads me to believe their emotional intelligence is indeed high, but more reflection is needed to fully understand the level of growth they have had in their own experiences.

Overall, interviews revealed the strong need for mindful reflection and continual self-awareness in order for mentors to be prepared to guide mentees as they navigate the college years (Goleman, 1998). In this way, soft skills like self-awareness reflect a type of emotional intelligence that can support the development of other important traits such as self-management and interpersonal skills (Goleman, 1998; Meeks, 2017).

Adaptability

Adaptability, as referenced above, is being able to self-manage attitudes and actions when sudden circumstances arise in order to reach a successful result (Goleman, 1998, p. 10). These emotional and physical responses allow mentors to adapt quickly to new environments, people, and situations. In the research, adaptability is closely related to being able to "filter" and adjust to settings, personal backgrounds, experiences, attitudes, and understanding of the world around them. However, mentors express that it is learned through their experience that adaptability is more than "fitting in" or changing themselves to their surroundings.

It is evident from each participant (nine out of nine) that adaptability is a soft skill that needs time to develop and grow in. There was a growing understanding of self as mentors described the moments when it was necessary for them to adapt. The significance of this in mentoring is discussed in literature through acknowledging best practices for soft skill development in the workplace is being adaptable to new and evolving skill needs (Gibb, 2014). Gaining this skill not only increases one's emotional intelligence, it prepares them for greater job performance in future roles (Goleman, 1998).

Adaptability was coded as mentors began to think about their personal experience through reflection, storytelling, and explicit recalling of moment when they adapted to new settings, people, and experiences.

It was noted by mentors in their interview responses that adapting can be difficult to do without comparing themselves to others around this. This was observed to have been mentioned in the general sense; comparing self to their mentees, co-workers, faculty, and supervisors. As Goleman (1998) defines, adapting is seen as being able to adjust to the circumstances at hand. However, this interpretation can be taken to an extent that can form an unhealthy relationship between adapting to a setting and a mentor feeling confident in their ability to mentor effectively. The mentors value the learned difference between adapting and "changing" themselves fit into a setting; over time they found there is no "one size fits all" to mentoring because in every situation a new perspective is formed. For example, a third-year mentor shares,

> Trying to, dealing with different people, and trying to find the best way to advise them with their situation. Or like, cause, one doesn't fit all when it comes to mentoring, so like, dealing with different backgrounds and different attitudes and

> stuff like that and not taking everything to heart. So, yeah, dealing with people, and how to give advice to other people. Because the way I give advice to my brothers, I can't do that to like, to the people I'm mentoring. So finding a balance of wanting to be real with them but you also want to not be rude. But also encouraging. So, that was kind of hard in the beginning.

Acknowledging the difficulty of adapting to different circumstances and the time it takes to practice building the self-efficacy to mentor without comparing one's self or situation to others. It is not a skill formed overnight and takes learning experiences to grow a greater confidence; the exemplified mentor in their third year of mentoring knows they are still learning about this trait, recognizing that it takes time to develop. In the meantime, mentors may choose to filter their emotional responses in these different circumstances.

Filtering emotions to respond to situations logically, as defined by a mentor in their second-year of mentoring, allows them to feel more in control of their reactions to difficult situations. This was prominent in the following instance where the second-year mentor shares,

> …And then filtering yourself, that's probably one of the biggest ones, because sometimes I've noticed that with my mentees they can be really opinionated on stuff and personally I could have a very different opinion, but I don't want to get into a debate or make them feel like they can't come up and talk to me about stuff so really having – personally for me, if I feel like I have knowledge on something, I really want to say it so like having to tell myself "say oh okay or interesting".

In not all cases, the mentor and the mentee are going to understand each other, so it takes time to adapt and find ways to connect that are not tied with solely mutual interests or opinions. This filtering allows for participants to accept information and monitor how it makes them feel rather than reacting out of emotion; without a greater

sense of self-awareness, this practice can be perceived by both the participant and the engaged party by not being authentic to self.

As interviews with mentors shows, adapting is being able to authentically respond in a logical way to altering opinions that their emotions do not overrule. The research shows that it is important for a mentor to have a greater understanding of self to adapt most effectively to a situation. Effectively meaning, understanding the difference between acting in a way that is inauthentic, perpetuating this idea of "mentor identity" or "imposture syndrome", and adapting to a situation to best fit the needs of the mentor and the mentee.

Adapting is also noted by mentors to be closely related to acknowledging failure and being able to learn from the experience. Mentors mention their relationship to failure has substantially adjusted since being in a formal mentoring program. Previously, they would avoid or not experience failure, and through experience they have begun acknowledging that in moments when failure did happen, it was tied to their endeavor to "do it all on their own." This acceptance of failure and willingness to reach out for help is in efforts to not experience it in the future. A third-year mentor, reflects this by saying,

> No one can carry the whole world on their shoulders and, like by themselves… and you have a support system! You have a family and friends who are willing to help you, all you got to do is ask for help.

This was most discussed by more experienced mentors, second-year and above, who learned that they no longer needed to "do it all on their own," how this level of thinking usually led them to fail more often than if they asked for help. However, the willingness to fail was also often tied with examples of mentors learning that being independent is more than doing everything on their own.

Adapting to new challenges as a mentor was most successful when they did not try to do it on their own. While failure is inevitable, it is important for mentors to feel they have a system of support to turn to. The mentors in the study who did not have a mentor prior to becoming one talked more about the challenges of adapting to their mentor role rather than those who had models of mentors in college.

Those who had a mentor in their freshman year of college had a better understanding of the expectations and role of being a mentor. A second-year mentors says,

> I definitely think it was like that because my first year of college was all adapting and learning how things work. I didn't have a mentor. And I wish I did because there were so many things I wish I would've known as a first-year student they could have told me. And so, I personally felt like if I were to have a mentor I would want it to be someone fun and cool. I don't want it to be another professor. Not that professors are bad but you aren't going to go talk to your professor when you ever you feel like you want to. Just having that mentor being able to go and talk to.

This was coded on the basis of the researchers interpretation of a participants relationship with adapting and their understanding of what it meant to be a mentor. Data was not collected on the "life mentors" participants had outside of the LEAD program, however, some participants who did have previous life mentors shared testimony on the role they took in their mentoring experience now being a peer-mentor in college. By having a mentor influence, they were more aware of what they needed to do to succeed in their role because they had previous experience of where they were supported as a mentee and a model for what being a mentor meant; leading them to not focus to much on any one area of supporting mentees.

In addition to having a better understanding of what the role entails, mentors also found that "too much focus" on adapting to solely academic support was detrimental to forming meaningful relationships with the mentees they worked with. As stated in the literature review, Bandura (1986) finds relationships in education a vital underpinning of student motivation and Buber's (1923) I-Thou relationship model encourages dialogue that encourages trust and respect to build these relationships. When mentors were not attempting to connect on the interests of the mentees outside of academic needs, the personal relationship was more difficult to obtain and the mentor did not gain as much experience out of it. On paper, mentors are asked to be an academic support to mentees, however, it is evident some are more focused on wanting to be able to form meaningful relationships with their mentees. Another mentor in their second-year of mentoring shares,

> I [tell people], especially my students, is that the mentor they give you for your college is focused on your academics and we [LEAD] are focused on overall success. Success as a student, an individual, so I think that's what our main focus is to help you in every aspect that we can, that our job lets us. So, I feel like as a [LEAD] mentor, I've been growing and learning but this year I felt like I really got the hang of it and now it's easier for me.

All in all, it takes adapting and understanding to be a successful mentor. Even with a team of exemplary leaders and co-peer-mentors, there is still no one mold to mentoring, but significant adaptability development throughout the time as a mentor is evident.

Teamwork and Collaboration

A team is more than the sum of its parts, it is a collaborative space to discuss issues, problems, new ideas, and express valuable insight and resolutions (Kamin, 2013).

A team is more than the sum of its parts, it is a collaborative space to discuss issues, problems, new ideas, and express valuable insight and resolutions (Kamin, 2013). Healthy teams will leave teammates feeling productive, inspired, and confident; as trust builds, people want to work together more and gain respect for each other (Kamin, 2013, p. 112). Mentoring provides a fertile environment for continuous learning with others through the two major sides or functions of teamwork: the intellectual (thinking) and the people (feelings) side (Dempsey, 2013; Kamin, 2013). For the purpose of this study, teamwork and collaborating was coded as mentors began to express their personal experience through reflection, storytelling, and explicit recalling of moments when they recognized teamwork and collaboration. The codes most prevalently used were relationship building, teamwork, and networking, however, all were described differently.

Mentors in the study believe that being on a team is different than building relationships and a relationship is different than network with someone. While all were described differently, they are all intertwined through meeting and connection with others.

According to the data, community was formed on their mentor team through focusing on the meaningfulness of the relationships they had with their co-workers and mentees. It was increasingly important to them to build deep friendships with their fellow mentors in the program, while also building their relationships with the mentees they worked with so they were better able to connect with them on a meaningful level. The importance of creating meaningful bonds with the people around them and confiding in each other for support and care. Most often, "teamwork" and "collaboration" were coded as "relationship building" because of the way the participants described each code, most

valued trust and care as they worked to get to know each other. A first-year mentor shares,

> There are definitely times when you have to trust that you'll receive the right information so you kind of have to trust that. I don't know if that might be right, or if you're working with a co-mentor or a student and they say they're going to show up somewhere or do something, you kind of have to trust them to do that especially if it's not like a one-time thing, it goes deeper. I don't know… like for example, if a student is doing a project and they needed their part to be done for the rest of the project to go well, you kind of have to trust them to be able to do their part for things to go how it is supposed to.

The importance of trust in teamwork to most effectively support themselves as individuals and the people around them. Trust is needed to build relationships but most importantly, trust within self to know that participant has the knowledge to guide and mentor mentees. Trust is noted to contribute to effective teamwork when it encompasses care and community building is an effective mentor program model to support participants in their success as a mentor.

One of the mentors also tied ensuring everyone had a chance to speak was an important piece in aiding their development in teamwork and overall to their experience as a mentor. Making room for everyone to speak, share and listen was perceived as a daunting task, but one necessary to accomplish for this mentor. They vulnerably shared that a challenge for them was to find a balance between building their own confidence to share their ideas and bringing others in to share theirs, they say,

> I did not want it to seem like I wanted to be the center of attention, I want to make room for everyone. Whereas, when I first started out, I had the opposite [challenge], I was quitter, so I was cool, kind of, letting whoever my co-mentor was take the lead.

Creating space for others to share is useful, just as recognizing the challenge of sharing own's own voice without feeling like they are taking up room for others to speak

is as well. It can be speculated that, as self-efficacy grows in mentors, this challenge in finding the balance between creating and not taking away space for others to speak may appear less daunting, however, it varies on the time it takes to reach this point.

Verbal Communication

At an interpersonal level, effective verbal communication is developed through specific soft skills, such as listening actively and providing constructive feedback (Levasseur, 1991). For the purpose of this study, verbal communication was coded as mentors began to think about their personal experience through reflection, storytelling, and explicit recalling of moments when they recognized verbal communication. This was most often during instances between mentees, mentors, peers, family, and supervisors. This was coded differently than "non-verbal" communication, but both were coded. Explicit conversations between mentors and their peers about which role each has can help establish more effective partnerships than those continuing to partner without having said conversation (Orzulak, 2012). This was also tied with confidence in speaking with others, who they speak to, how they speak to others and what they speak about. According to Hecht (1978), one's satisfaction in their communication skills is a socio-emotional feeling that comes from having positive relationship interactions. It was common for mentors to adjust communication practices based on settings, newness, open-ended questions and increased public speaking opportunities.

Throughout the coding process, mentors related their verbal communication successes to listening. From their experience, being confident in verbal communication, and also needing to be able to listen effectively go hand-in-hand. When mentioning "verbal communication," listening was mentioned 3 times. However, listening was also

coded 24 other times by 8 of the mentors in the study. A third-year mentor tells a story about their takeaways from their mentorship experience,

> A take away, I would say, is listen to other people, like truly listening, be confident in myself, but also knowing I am human and I do need help. And there are people around me, to never be afraid to put yourself out there and ask for help even it it's a boss. And what was it… it's not speaking your truth, but speaking up for yourself. Being able to speak up for yourself, and you're never too old or young to learn from anyone older or younger than you.

The mentor recognizes, truly listening, being confident, and asking for help all took time to fully develop in their own life, but through their mentor experience, they were able to say that they gained these skills; overcoming the fear of it all.

The fear and challenge of verbal communication was shared when discussing one-on-one conversations, classroom participation, and public speaking. However, this fear was better managed when mentors leaned into the challenge of, as one describes, "getting out of their comfort zone", in their mentor experience. A third-year mentor shares why they applied to be a mentor in the first place,

> I wanted to get out of my comfort zone because usually I am not the most… I am the type of person who, I'll find my niche and I'll just kind of stay there. So, [mentoring] will kind of force me to go out and meet people and gain new perspectives of things. So, I finally did it, and I just remember I was really *really* nervous about it because all of it was, I don't know, just all doing things that I didn't like doing, so I was like, being a mentor, I got required, not required, but I needed to actually talk to students and that required me to actually be the one to start the conversation.

This mentor also shared the need to "get out of their comfort zone" to share vulnerabilities with mentees for the sake of connecting, such as failed classes, struggling with school, work and life balance and vulnerabilities sharing in front of others. Sharing vulnerabilities was mentioned by two third-year mentors and one first-year mentor.

Despite the conceptualization of mentoring playing a critical role through communicative behaviors, limited prior research outside of Hecht (1978) has examined the association between mentoring and communication satisfaction. While mentors struggled to get out of their own comfort zone, by learning to share more about themselves, even when difficult, had experiences that challenged them to do what they were afraid to do prior to their time as a mentor.

Another sub-code within verbal communication was code switching. Code switching is defined by switching between two or more cultural or social "codes" in language between a conversation (Auer, 2016). In this scenario, mentors reference code switching by going back and forth between different cultural and social codes depending on their mentees, co-workers, employer and location. While in a meeting with a student, they may feel more comfortable using multiple codes in the conversation, but in the classroom or in staff meetings, they communicate in the code they feel is appropriate for the professional setting. A third-year, bilingual, mentor shares how mentoring helped show her,

> Just how to communicate within talking to a mentee versus talking to your employer or talking with your employer versus your co-worker and how to speak where and in the location that you're in.

Through mentoring, mentors are able to connect with mentees from diverse backgrounds through soft skills, verbal communication most considerably in this scenario. This additional support leads to greater meaningful relationships between mentees and mentors through communicating comfortably and great willingness to work up to the challenge of public speaking.

Lastly, when discussing verbal communication, mentors overwhelming share their challenges with public speaking. Some tenured mentors felt their comfort in speaking in front of others had grown, while first and second-year mentors were feeling as if it is a skill their still wanted to work at, even though they were hesitant to do so.

Participants felt that learning more about effective verbal communication and public speaking brought them further in their relationships with people, projects and jobs more than they would have prior to being put to practice. As confidence grows in public speaking and in oneself, the willingness of the participant to put themselves in uncomfortable situations that they perceive as leading them to further growth increases as well.

Overall, the soft skill development of self-awareness, adaptability, teamwork and collaboration, and verbal communication throughout the mentor experience is prominently expressed as a willingness to grow as not only mentors, but in their personhood. Once soft skills are developed, these skills have the ability to leave a lasting impression on the those working to learn and grow in them. While mentors exemplify varying levels of development, every participant expressed in their interviews their excitement to continue growing in their role, college, and after graduation.

FINDINGS

The final product of this thesis aimed to uncover the impact mentoring had on the soft skill development of peer-mentors in a formal mentoring program. This study sought to understand how mentors understood the development and importance of different soft skills. Overall, the findings suggest that peer-mentors in a formal mentoring program experience considerable growth in soft skills. In other words, such mentoring programs

provide important benefits to mentors and mentees alike, demonstrating the importance of implementing new and improving existing mentoring programs in higher education to encourage soft skill development among students. Moreover, while the inclusive design and practices of this mentoring program increased students' soft skill development, it is also likely to have improved their self-efficacy by growing acceptance to identity as a mentor, as well as their readiness and ability to ask others for help. The following section includes broader speculative findings to direct future research in the area of mentoring in higher education.

Self-Efficacy and "mentor identity"

Self-efficacy theory revolves around an individual's belief in their capacity to successfully carry out a given task or goal and the consequent impact that this self-belief has on their motivation and achievement (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy is enhanced through persisting in activities that may at times be trying or difficult but are in fact relatively safe. Engaging in these activities encourages personal growth through the experience of mastering the role, which further build's an individual's self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

The results of this study are consistent with Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy research showing that while less experienced mentors did not perceive themselves to be knowledgeable to the extent they believe a mentor "should" be, as experience grew, mentors began sharing they no longer carried the weight of trying to fit into a "mentor mold." Moreover, tenured mentors expressed they had moved away from the idea of there being only "one type of mentor." This shift in self-perception illuminates the relationship between persistence in activities (engaging in mentoring) and the

development of self-efficacy (identifying as an effective mentor). This is likely a reoccurring trend, given other research and was brought up throughout all levels of mentor experience.

When asking a sophomore level mentor, "what do you think you will take away from this mentor experience?", they share, "being able to help people and project a good image, of not a role model, but yeah, a good image and hopefully get the student or anyone who is listening to you, to get them in the same mindset." This insinuates that the student did not yet feel as though they embodied what a mentor should look like and instead felt the need to "project" a good image.

Yet, when asking a third-year mentor what their favorite part about mentoring has been they share,

> Seeing myself grow, as well. Yeah. I was thinking about it a few weeks ago and yeah, I've seen myself become a lot more open and confident in myself. Uhm, it really made me think about my future and how serious I am about it and like just myself and how serious I am about myself. Like loving myself, it was very eye opening. I didn't know I needed that in my life.

Through her experience in the program, this individual's identity as a successful mentor grew, which significantly impacted her sense of self, perspectives on her future, and broader worldview. Thus, as mentors persisted in the activity of mentoring over time, they experienced a growth in their own self-efficacy, namely, their ability to be a successful mentor. As a mentor's self-efficacy increased, their self-perception of being an effective mentor increased as well. Self-efficacy is speculated to also have influenced the interviewed peer-mentors willingness and ability to ask for help from peers and coaches as well.

Asking for Help

Additionally, this research found that many of the benefits attached to participating in a mentorship program arose from mentors feeling more comfortable asking for help and recognizing the value in seeking support.

As trust in themselves and their supervisors was built over time, the mentors displayed an increased comfortability in asking for help as well as a recognition of the benefits associated with it. This is especially important when working with diverse students, as research shows that mentors coming from backgrounds and cultures that interpret asking for help as “exposing one’s inadequacies” often feel less comfortable seeking support which in turn causes them to blame themselves for their lack of understanding (va de Rijit et al., 2012). As one third-year level mentor shares why asking for help had been such a challenge for them to learn to overcome,

> I don’t know, it was, sometimes, I think it was the whole “I don’t want to burden other people”… [because] I know other people are dealing with things and I don’t want to add onto that and then, it was like, “maybe I can use my resources to try and figure it out”, like Google has answers or like, “I’ll try to figure it out”, but sometimes you just need to ask for help; and it doesn’t make you, like being vulnerable isn’t bad and it doesn’t make you, not like a loser, but it doesn’t make you any less than the person you are.

This mentor clearly asserted that through mentoring, she became more comfortable exposing her vulnerabilities and recognized that her lack of understanding was not tied to her self-worth, which in turn encouraged her to continue to seek support when needed.

Through mentoring, other students expressed that they came to a newfound understanding of the importance of being able to ask for help. One first-year mentor shares their experience asking their supervisor for help and feedback,

> I've always been the type where I don't really want to ask for help because I think I've got it all, but it's okay to not have it all. It's okay if you don't understand, to ask for help, instead of draining and beating yourself up about something that could've been solved with one like question of, "hey, can you help me with this?".

This student expressed that although they did not previously recognize that he may have needed help, he began to realize the value in seeking support from others. The ability to ask for help and seek support is a crucial skill for all college students. Scholarship demonstrate the relationship between asking for help and mentoring increased student outcomes, feeling connected on campus (va de Rijit et al., 2012; Booker & Brevard, 2017). Given the value of being able to ask for help and the ways in which mentoring programs facilitate this skill, higher education institutions should increase access to mentoring opportunities. These results and speculated findings surrounding peer-mentorship came organically from interview responses, however, this study was not without limitations.

Limitations

There were multiple limitations to this study. First, only the LEAD mentoring program in the University College at ASU was used; therefore, the results may not be generalizable in other higher education or formal mentoring settings. Second, of the small sample size, there were 6 females and only 3 male participants that completed the interviews; therefore, the data that may not accurately represent findings that can be applicable to a larger population of peer-mentors. Third, my own interpretation biases of what the participants shared in their interviews may have led to data that did not represent the intentional meaning of what the interviewees shared. Fourth, because the participants were all in the program together, there is a possibility they may have shared interview

questions with each other, therefore misconstruing the data. Fifth, I believe that the largest limitation to this study was the power dynamic between myself and the participants. When beginning this study, I intended to be an outside researcher, but when the interview were taking place, I had taken on the role as a supervisor in the program. Moreover, power dynamics were inevitably at play in the research process, given my positionality as a white woman working with research participants who were largely people of color. Considering these limitations, future research should be keenly aware of these potential limitations when replicating this study.

DISCUSSION

Lastly, this research adds to recent calls for higher educational institutions to continue reforming and expanding access by incorporating formal mentoring programs based in soft skill development (Zapp & Lerch, 2020). This will in turn build students' self-efficacy and contribute to improved student outcomes beyond the admissions and hiring offices. Transforming higher education institutions into spaces in which students are fully supported is imperative in advancing the mission of "inclusion" across campuses. This transformation is essential to actualizing inclusivity and it demands reimagining programs, policies, and practices across the entire institution; in this way it means reinventing everything (Scharmer, 2009). The following discussion is to deepen the conversations surrounding access, reform, and inclusivity across higher education through mentor programming. In doing this, it is possible to meet the goal of humanizing higher education for students, staff, and faculty within the walls of an institution.

Access and Reform

While higher education recognizes the importance of facilitating mentoring opportunities for college students, these experiences typically reflect informal mentoring relationships (Nottingham & Barret, 2017). The findings of this research suggest that mentoring programs produce significant benefits not only to mentees, but to peer-mentors themselves. The opportunity to serve as a peer-mentor builds students' self-efficacy and soft skill development, which in turn further supports their success as a student. Moreover, these findings suggest that peer-mentoring opportunities facilitate interpersonal relationship building and encourage students' to be able to seek support and ask for help. All of this contributes to improved student outcomes and enables students to experience greater success in higher education (Sorcinelli et al., 2007). For these reasons, it is imperative that higher education institutions reform existing mentoring programs to increase access to formal mentoring opportunities for peer-mentors.

Inclusivity

Over time, the relationship of higher education to the future of democracy has emerged as an essential context for diversity and can nourish culture and society with the potential to rectify barriers to inclusion of talented and diverse individuals (Smith, 2009). In efforts to increase access to opportunities, reform to the current mentoring model is necessary to actualize accessible and inclusive environments in higher education. As institutions strive for inclusivity in their charters, this practice will only be as effective as the relational support within the structure available to those within it. In the study, "Why Mentoring Matters: African-American Students and the Transition to college", they found that mentoring programs, with an emphasis on interpersonal reinforcement, can be

a buffer to the effects of low belongingness and disconnect from the campus community (Booker & Brevard, 2017). My studies results shared similar findings, a three-year mentor shares,

> I want people to see this as more than a job, I want it to be like a family… You do for family and I want to do for everyone that I work with because, I don't know, I like everyone I work with. I don't know. That's it… So, I'm just trying to be there for them. I know there's been times the LEAD family, they genuinely are my family, because there's been times where I've screwed up and it was a LEAD person or [supervisor] that like got me past it. Uhm… And I knew I couldn't like… do it by myself.

The results of this study are also consistent with previous research showing that interpersonal relationship building opportunities are necessary for students to feel connected to campus, especially students of color (Booker & Brevard, 2017). Within the walls of higher education, institutional hierarchies replicate and intensify the effects of social hierarchies structured around race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality (Feagin, 2006; Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2008). Institutions of higher education need to develop diversity strategies that communicate their commitment to long-term change that will benefit society (Aguirre & Martinez, 2002). These diversity strategies have the potential to lead to a campus that feels more inclusive to all students.

Transforming the system for diversity means reinventing everything: new mind-sets, new infrastructures, new frames, and new business models (Scharmer, 2009). Transformational leadership for diversity needs to be focused on changing the organizational culture and enhancing the campus's ability to adapt (Aguirre & Martinez, 2002). This will take time, more time with the scarce resources many higher educational programs have, but the outcome of this effort will be worth the investment. Inclusivity may have begun at the admittance office, but that is not where it stops.

Humanizing Education

Higher education institutions have the potential to be spaces that "address regressive social forces, build support for the new American majority, and create an inclusive learning experience that prepares students for participation in a global, knowledge-based society" (Chun, et al., 2010). Despite this, universities and their institutional hierarchies currently operate under a "socially conservative" regime that sustains and exacerbates existing inequalities across the lines of race, class, sexual orientation, gender, nationality, etc. (Chun et al., 2010). As such, they are often positioned as "late adapters" in the quest for social change (p.24). Despite this, a number of practices and programs within higher education settings offer promising potential to transform university spaces, enabling them to move towards a more radical agenda. Mentoring programs provide one way to build real human connections on campus, increase actualized inclusivity, and grow students' self-efficacy to advance social change. Mentorship can be imagined as one brick in a large bridge to building inclusive and accessible universities and in turn, to building a better, more just society. Thus, there is a direct connection between mentoring and social change. Increasing access to mentoring opportunities will enable more students to transform their realities both within and outside of institutions, and as a result of this, higher education institutions can bring to fruition their potential to advance justice and social transformation.

REFERENCES

Aguirre, Adalberto & Martinez, Ruben. (2002). Leadership Practices and Diversity in Higher Education: Transitional and Transformational Frameworks. Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies. 8. 10.1177/107179190200800305.

Ahmad Nurulazam Md. Zain, & Ng, M. (2016). Towards sustainable and inclusive higher education : challenges and strategies . Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Are Today's College Students Ready for the Next Step? (2018, September 5). Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.mheducation.com/ideas/are-todays-college-students-ready-for-careers.html

Arizona State University. (2015, March 1). New american university 2015 and beyond. Retrieved from https://president.asu.edu/sites/default/files/ASU_NewAmericanUniversity_Charter_030115.pdf

Astin, Alexander. (1984). Student Involvement: A Development Theory for Higher Education. Journal of College Student Development. 40. 518-529.

Atkins, A. (2019). Faculty Mentoring in an Academic Success Program. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Auer, P. (2016). *Code-switching in conversation: Language, interaction and identity*. London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Azim S, Gale A, Lawlor-Wright T, Kirkham R, Khan A, Alam M (2010) The importance of soft skills in complex projects. Internat. J. Managing Projects Bus. 3(3):387–401

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review, 84*(2), 191-215. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191

Bandura, A. (1989). Social cognitive theory. In R. Vasta (Ed.), Annals of child development. Vol.6. Six theories of child development (pp. 1-60). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Bates, C., & Morgan, D. (2018). Literacy Leadership: The Importance of Soft Skills. Reading Teacher, 72(3), 412-415.

Bayer, A., Grossman, J. B., & DuBois, D. L. (2015). Using volunteer mentors to improve the academic outcomes of underserved students: The role of

relationships. *Journal of Community Psychology, 43*(4), 408-429. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/10.1002/jcop.21693

Blad, E. (2019, February 20). To Fill a 'Mentoring Gap,' Schools Get Creative. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/10/18/to-fill-a-mentoring-gap-schools-get.html

Booker, K.C., & Brevard, E. (2017). Why Mentoring Matters: African-American Students and the Transition to College.

Bowl, M. (2001). Experiencing the barriers: non-traditional students entering higher education. Research Papers in Education, 16(2), 141–160. https://doi.org/10.1080/02671520122054

Brustein, W. I. (2007). The Global Campus: Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education in North America. Journal of Studies in International Education, 11(3–4), 382–391. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315307303918

Buber, M. (1923). *Ich und du.* Leipzig: Insel-Verlag.

Caruana, V. (2011). The challenges and opportunities of diversity in university settings. The Assessment, Learning and Teaching Journal, 11 (Summer). ISSN 1756-8781

Chambliss, D. F., & Takacs, C. G. (2018). *How college works*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Chapman, D., Cavanagh, Tom, Ionas, Ioan, & Lane, Randy. (2013). An Exploration of Relationship Building in the Peer Mentor Program, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: Methods for the 21st century*. UK: SAGE.

Caldwell, C., & Hayes, L. (2016). Self-efficacy and self-awareness: moral insights to increased leader effectiveness. Journal of Management Development, 35(9), 1163–1173. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-01-2016-0011

Chapman, D. W. (2013). *An exploration of relationship building in the peer mentor program* (Order No. 3591803). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (1435634193). Retrieved from http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1435634193?accountid=4485

Chun, E., Evans, A., & Gmelch, W. (2015). The department chair as transformative diversity leader : building inclusive learning environments in higher education (First edition.). Stylus.

Chun Tie, Y., Birks, M., & Francis, K. (2019). Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers. *SAGE open medicine*, *7*, 2050312118822927. https://doi.org/10.1177/2050312118822927

Constructing Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis Kathy Charmaz Constructing Grounded Theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis Sage 224 £19.99 0761973532 0761973532 [Formula: see text]. (2006). *Nurse researcher*, *13*(4), 84. https://doi.org/10.7748/nr.13.4.84.s4

College, U. (2020). The LEAD Program. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from https://universitycollege.asu.edu/lead-program/mentoring

Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (1999). *Doing Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2015). A concise introduction to mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Crisp, G., Taggart, A., & Nora, A. (2015). Undergraduate Latina/o students: A systematic review of research identifying factors contributing to academic success outcomes. *Review of Educational Research, 85*(2), 249-274. Retrieved from http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/1697761579?accountid=4485

Darwin, Ann & Palmer, Edward. (2009). Mentoring circles in higher education. Higher Education Research & Development - HIGH EDUC RES DEV. 28. 125-136. 10.1080/07294360902725017.

Dempsey, J. (2013). Mentoring through teamwork: Lessons learned. The Physiologist, 56(4), 89.

DuBois, D. L., Portillo, N., Rhodes, J. E., Silverthorn, N., & Valentine, J. C. (2011). How effective are mentoring programs for youth? A systematic assessment of the evidence. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest, 12*(2), 57-91. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/10.1177/1529100611414806

Effectiveness of Teamwork Training on Teamwork Behaviors and Team Performance: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Controlled Interventions. *PLoS ONE*, *12*(1), e0169604. https://link-gale-

com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/apps/doc/A477413750/OVIC?u=asuniv&sid=OVIC&xid=b5e1291f

Dunkel, N., Schuh, J., & Chrystal-Green, N. (2015). Advising student groups and organizations (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Ehrich, L. C., Hansford, B., & Tennent, L. (2004). Formal mentoring programs in education and other professions: A review of the literature. Educational Administration Quarterly, 40(4), 518-540. doi:10.1177/0013161X04267118

Ernesto López Gómez. (2014). Roles, Risks, and Benefits of Peer Mentoring Relationships in Higher Education, Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 18:2 [Review of Roles, Risks, and Benefits of Peer Mentoring Relationships in Higher Education, Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning, 18:2]. 72(258), 380–381. INSTITUTO EUROPEO DE INICIATIVAS EDUCATIVAS.

Evans, T. W. (1992). *Mentors: Making a difference in our public schools*.

FACT SHEET: Investing $90 Million through ApprenticeshipUSA to Expand Proven Pathways into the Middle Class. (2016, April 16). Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/04/21/fact-sheet-investing-90-million-through-apprenticeshipusa-expand-proven

Fain, P. (2017, June 14). White House apprenticeship push will include funding and focus on alternative providers. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/06/14/white-house-apprenticeship-push-will-include-funding-and-focus-alternative-providers

Feeler, W. (2012). Being there: A grounded-theory study of student perceptions of instructor presence in online classes. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Feagin, J. R. (2006). *Systemic racism: A theory of oppression*. New York: Routledge.

Freitas, S., & Routledge, H. (2013). Designing leadership and soft skills in educational games: The e-leadership and soft skills educational games design model (ELESS. British Journal of Educational Technology, 44(6), 951-968.

Garringer, M., MacRae, P. (2008). Building Effective Peer Mentoring Programs in Schools: An Introductory Guide.

Geber, H. 2009. Research success and structured support: developing early career academics in higher education. South African journal of higher education, 23(4):674-689

Glesne, C., & Peshkin. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction.* White Plains, NY: Longman.

Gibb, S. (2014). Soft skills assessment: Theory development and the research agenda. International Journal of Lifelong Education, 33(4), 455-471.

Goleman, D. (1998). *Working with emotional intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books.

Hecht, M. L. (1978). *Human communication research*. New Brunswick, NJ: International Communication Association.

Inzer, Lonnie & Crawford, Chris. (2005). A Review of Formal and Informal Mentoring. Journal of Leadership Education. 4. 31-50. 10.12806/V4/I1/TF2.

Jessie L. Moore & Peter Felten (2018) Academic development in support of mentored undergraduate research and inquiry, International Journal for Academic Development, 23:1, 1-5, DOI: 10.1080/1360144X.2018.1415020

Job Outlook 2020, National Association of Colleges and Employers

Kamin, M. (2013). Soft skills revolution a guide to connecting with compassion for trainers, teams, and leaders. San Francisco, Calif.: John Wiley & Sons.

Karcher, M. J., & Berger, J. R. (2017, September). One-to-one Cross-Age Peer Mentoring. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/what-works-in-mentoring/model-and-population-reviews.html?layout=edit

Key Topics in Mentoring. (n.d.). Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/index.php/what-works-in-mentoring/key-topics.html?layout=edit

Kosmützky, A., & Putty, R. (2016). Transcending Borders and Traversing Boundaries: A Systematic Review of the Literature on Transnational, Offshore, Cross-Border, and Borderless Higher Education. Journal of Studies in International Education, 20(1), 8–33. https://doi.org/10.1177/1028315315604719

Kramer, K., & Gawlick, M. (2003). Martin Buber's I and thou : practicing living dialogue . Paulist Press.

Levasseur, R. (2013). People Skills: Developing Soft Skills-A Change Management Perspective. Interfaces, 43(6), 566-571.

Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Lloyd, R. (2013). Mentoring Matters: Mentoring in Community. English Journal, 102(4), 103-106.

Lunsford, L. G. (2011). Psychology of Mentoring: The Case of Talented College Students. Journal of Advanced Academics, 22(3), 474–498. https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X1102200305

Madlock, P., Kennedy-Lightsey, C., & Myers, S. (2007). Employees' Communication Attitudes and Dislike for Working in a Group. Psychological Reports, 101(3_suppl), 1037–1040. https://doi.org/10.2466/pr0.101.4.1037-1040

Mahboobeh Yaghobyan, Fatemeh Salmeh, & Tahereh Yaghobi. (2008). Effect of mentorship program on the stressors in the nursing students during their clinical practice. Journal of Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, 18(66), 42–50. https://doaj.org/article/4e59cbf95651415da61d78c1575cd417

Martin, A., & Dowson, M. (2009). Interpersonal Relationships, Motivation, Engagement, and Achievement: Yields for Theory, Current Issues, and Educational Practice. Review of Educational Research, 79(1), 327-365.

Mathews, P. (2003). Academic Mentoring: Enhancing the Use of Scarce Resources. Educational Management & Administration, 31(3), 313–334. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263211X03031003007

Mayer, A. P., Blair, J. E., Ko, M. G., Patel, S. I., & Files, J. A. (2014). Long-term follow-up of a facilitated peer mentoring program. *Medical Teacher, 36*(3), 260-266. doi:http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/10.3109/0142159X.2013.858111

Mayer, J. D., & Salovey, P. (1993). The intelligence of emotional intelligence. *Intelligence, 17*(4), 433–442. https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-2896(93)90010-3

McEwan, D., Ruissen, G., Eys, M., Zumbo, B., & Beauchamp, M. (2017). The Effectiveness of Teamwork Training on Teamwork Behaviors and Team Performance: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Controlled Interventions. PloS One, 12(1), e0169604–e0169604. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0169604

McFarland, J., Hussar, B., Zhang, J., Wang, X., Wang, K., Hein, S., Diliberti, M., Forrest Cataldi, E., Bullock Mann, F., and Barmer, A. (2019). The Condition of Education 2019 (NCES 2019-144). U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved [date] from https://nces.ed.gov/ pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2019144.

Meeks, G. (2017). Critical Soft Skills to Achieve Success in the Workplace. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing.

Metros, S. E., & Yang, C. (2006). Chapter 5: The Importance of Mentors. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.educause.edu/research-and-publications/books/cultivating-careers-professional-development-campus-it/chapter-5-importance-mentors

Michael M. Crow, & William B. Dabars. (2015). Designing the New American University.

Guilherme, A., Morgan, W.J. and Freire, I. (2012), Interculturalism and Non-formal Education in Brazil: A Buberian Perspective. Educational Philosophy and Theory, 44: 1024-1039. doi:10.1111/j.1469-5812.2011.00821.x

Mota, D. (2015). Developing Soft Skills Helps Businesses Grow. Business Credit, 117(2), 34-36.

Murti, A. (2014). Why Soft Skills Matter. IUP Journal of Soft Skills, 8(3), 32-36.

New American University (n.d.). Retrieved from https://newamericanuniversity.asu.edu/about/asu-charter-and-goals

Nottingham, S., Mazerolle, S., & Barrett, J. (2017). Effective Characteristics of Formal Mentoring Relationships: The National Athletic Trainers' Association Foundation Research Mentor Program. Athletic Training Education Journal (Allen Press Publishing Services Inc.), 12(4), 244–256.

Odell, S. J. (1990b). Mentoring teachers. Washington, DC: National Education Association.

Orzulak, M. (2012). Mentoring Matters. English Journal, 102(1), 84-87.

Patton, M. (1990). Qualitative evaluation and research methods (pp. 169-186). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Robles, M. M. (2012). Executive Perceptions of the Top 10 Soft Skills Needed in Today's Workplace. Business Communication Quarterly, 75(4), 453–465. https://doi.org/10.1177/1080569912460400

Rockquemore, K., & Laszloffy, T. A. (2008). *The black academic's guide to winning tenure--without losing your soul*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Rowe, S. (2017). Liberal Education: Cornerstone of Democracy. In American Journal of Economics & Sociology (Vol. 76, Issue 3, pp. 579–618).

Scharmer, C. O. (2012). *Theory u*. Readhowyouwant.com.

Schofer, E., & Meyer, J. W. (2005). The Worldwide Expansion of Higher Education in the Twentieth Century. American Sociological Review, 70(6), 898–920. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240507000602

Schwoerer, C.E., May, D.R., Hellensbe, E.C. & Mencl, J. 2005. General and specific self-efficacy in the context of a training intervention to enhance performance expectancy. Human resource development quarterly, 16(1):111-129.

Schulze, S. (2010). Mentoring to develop research self-efficacy, with particular reference to previously disadvantaged individuals. Koers : Bulletin for Christian Scholarship, 75(2), 429-451.

Scott, J. C. 2006. "The Mission of the University: Medieval to Postmodern Transformations."Journal of Higher Education 77(1):1–39.

Smith, G. (2009). *Democratic innovations: Designing institutions for citizen participation*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Sorcinelli, M. D., & Yun, J. (2007). From Mentor To Mentoring Networks: Mentoring in the New Academic. *Change, 39*(6), 58-61. Retrieved from http://login.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy1.lib.asu.edu/docview/208077437?accountid=4485

Spradley J. Asking Descriptive Questions, The Ethnographic Interview. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group; 1979. pp. 78–91.

Stephens, Michael. (2013). Essential soft skills. Library Journal, 138(3), N/a.

Steinmann, N. 2006. Fundamentals for effective mentoring: raising giant killers. Randburg: Knowes.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Inc.

Sudzina, M., & Coolican, M. (1994). Mentor or Tormentor The Role of the Cooperating Teacher in Student Teacher Success. Education and Human Resources: Putting the Pieces Together . Distributed by ERIC Clearinghouse.

United States. Office of Disability Employment Policy. (2011). Soft skills the competitive edge. Washington, D.C.]: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

van der Rijt, J., van der Rijt, J., Van den Bossche, P., Van den Bossche, P., van de Wiel, M., van de Wiel, M., De Maeyer, S., De Maeyer, S., Gijselaers, W., Gijselaers, W., Segers, M., & Segers, M. (2013). Asking for Help: A Relational Perspective on Help Seeking in the Workplace. Vocations and Learning, 6(2), 259–279. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12186-012-9095-8

Vance, M. C. (2016, October 27). The Importance of Mentoring for Higher Ed Leadership. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.higheredjobs.com/Articles/articleDisplay.cfm?ID=1077

Vawter, K. (2018). The power of instructor-student and peer rapport in post-secondary student achievement. Arizona State University.

Wigfield, Allan & Guthrie, John & Tonks, Stephen & Perencevich, Kathleen. (2004). Children's Motivation for Reading: Domain Specificity and Instructional Influences. Journal of Educational Research - J EDUC RES. 97. 299-310. 10.3200/JOER.97.6.299-310.

Wyman, N. (2018, August 05). 'Hiring Is On The Rise, But Are College Grads Prepared For The World Of Work?' – Forbes, Online. Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://www.iwsiamerica.org/hiring-is-on-the-rise-but-are-college-grads-prepared-for-the-world-of-work/

Zaccaro, S.J., Blair, V., Peterson, C. & Zazanis, M. 1995. Collective efficacy. (In Maddux, J.E., ed. Self-efficacy, adaptation, and adjustment: theory, research, and application. New York: Plenum. p. 305-385.)

Zapp, M., & Lerch, J. (2020). Imagining the World: Conceptions and Determinants of Internationalization in Higher Education Curricula Worldwide. Sociology of Education, 93(4), 372–393.

APPENDIX A:

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Participant Information

Participant Letter	Year	Role	Sex, Gender identity	Race/Ethnicity
P - A	3 (4.5 sem)	Sr. Mentor	Male, man	White, Non-POC
P - B	2 (2.5 sem)	Sr. Mentor	Female, woman	Black, POC
P - C	1 (1 sem)	Mentor	Male, man	White, Non-POC
P - D	3 (4.5 sem)	Sr. Mentor	Female, woman	POC/Latinx
P - E	2 (2.5 sem)	Mentor	Female, woman	POC/Middle-Eastern
P - F	1 (1 sem)	Mentor	Female, woman	Black, POC
P - G	2 (2.5 sem)	Sr. Mentor	Female, woman	POC/Latinx
P - H	3 (4.5 sem)	Sr. Mentor	Female, woman	Black, POC
P - I	1 (1 sem)	Mentor	Male, man	Black, POC

APPENDIX B:

RECRUITMENT MATERIAL

Dear Participant,

As a master's learner in the School of Social Transformation (SST) at Arizona State University, I am interested in providing more insight to the influences of mentorship opportunities for undergraduate university learners. I am conducting a study to examine the effectiveness of mentoring programs on campus.

I am asking for your help, which will involve your participation in an in-person semi-structured interview about your experience, knowledge, and beliefs about your time in your mentoring program. I anticipate this semi-structured interview will take about 30 to 45 minutes for you to complete in one occasion, for a total time of no more than 45 minutes.

Please, respond to this email if you would like to participate and I will be reach out to you to plan a time for us to meet up that works for your schedule.

Thank you for your time, I hope to hear from you!

Warmly,

Marleigh Hurlburt

APPENDIX C:

CONSENT FORM

Dear Participants:

As a master's learner in the School of Social Transformation (SST) at Arizona State University, I am interested in providing more insight to the influences of mentorship opportunities for undergraduate university learners. I am conducting a study to examine the effectiveness of mentoring programs on campus.

I am asking for your help, which will involve your participation in an in-person semi-structured interview about your experience, knowledge, and beliefs about your time in your mentoring program. I anticipate this semi-structured interview will take about 30 to 45 minutes for you to complete in one occasion, for a total time of no more than 45 minutes.

Your participation in this semi-structured interview is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty whatsoever.

Your responses will be confidential. Results of this study may be used in reports, presentations, or further research but your name will not be known.

Please read the following consent statement and if you agree, please verbally say "I accept" to give consent to proceed to the semi-structured interview.

Consent Statement: I agree to participate in the semi-structured interview being conducted. I understand the semi-structured interview will take between 30 to 45 minutes to complete. I understand that my evaluation in this program nor my relationship with the LEAD program will be affected if I opt out of participating in the semi-structured interview. I am at least 18 years of age.

If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact— Marleigh Hurlburt at Marleigh.hurlburt@asu.edu or (480) 727-6492 or Dr. Nathan Martin at ndm@asu.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance at (480) 965-6788.

Thank you,

Marleigh Hurlburt

Name: ______________________________

Date: ______________________________

APPENDIX D:

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Interview Items:

Participants: Nine (9) student mentors who are either in their first (3 participants), second (3 participants), or third (3 participants) year of mentoring in the LEAD program.

1. Tell me about yourself and your background as a learner.
2. Tell me about your experience in your mentorship.
3. What have been your favorite parts?
    a. Why were these your favorite parts?
4. What challenges have you faced?
    a. Why were these challenging for you?
    b. How might you alter these challenges?
    c. How might the program alter these challenges?
5. What are you learning the most about?
    a. How have you been learning about it through your role?
6. What do you think you will take away from this mentor experience?
    a. What do you think you will take away with your post-graduation?
7. Is there anything else about your experience you would like to include or expand upon?
8. What questions do you have for me?

Interview Items

Constructs: knowledge of mentor experience, role of student mentorship.

APPENDIX E:

SOFT SKILL CODE BOOK

Soft Skill Code Book

National Association of Collegiate Employers
Autonomy
Collaboration
Communication skills - Nonverbal
Communication skills - Verbal
Conflict Management
Constructive Communication
Cooperation
Creativity
Critical thinking
Cultural Diversity
Delegation
Detail-Oriented
Empathy - Sensitivity & Understanding
Enthusiasm
Establishing trust
Ethics and Social responsibility
Flexibility and Adaptability
Approachability
Additional Soft Skills
Innovation
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)
Leadership
Lifelong learning and self-direction
Listening
Networking
Organizational skills
Ownership
Personal motivation
Problem Solving
Professionalism
Responsibility
Risk Taking
Self-Awareness
Sense of achievement
Strategic planning skills
Tactfulness
Teamwork
Time management
Transparency
Work ethic

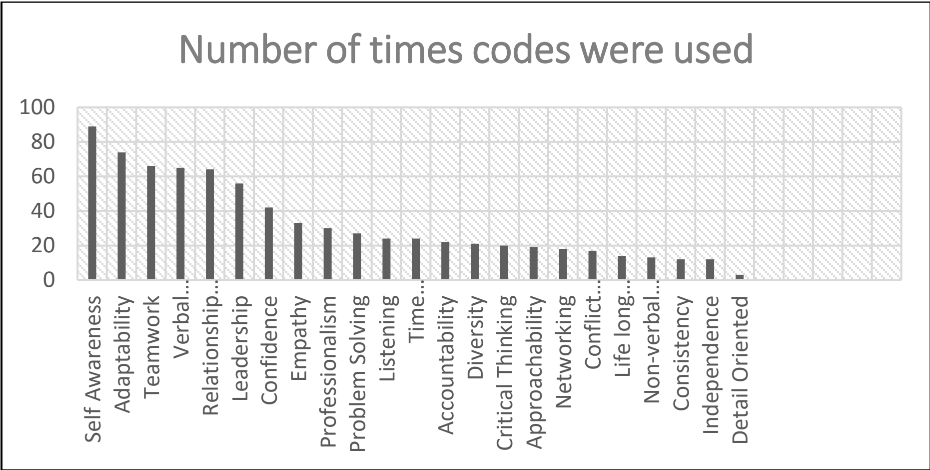
APPENDIX F:

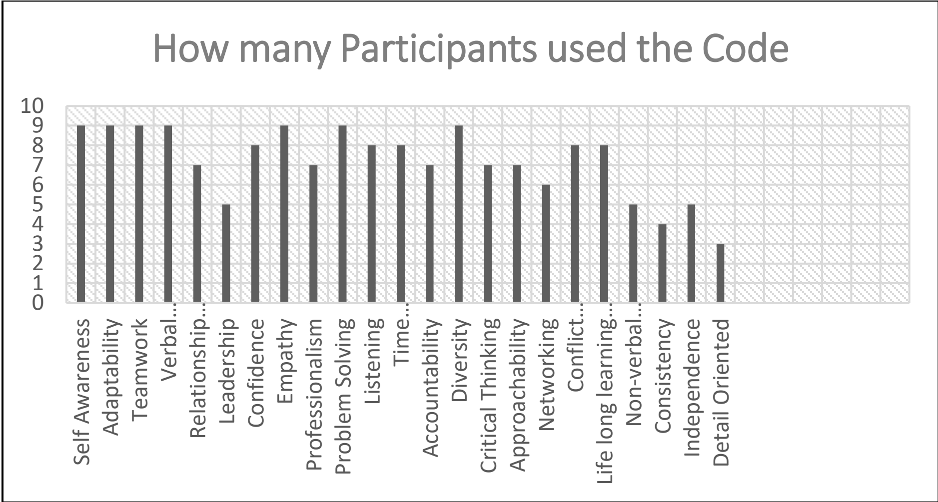
CODE USAGE FIGURE

	Codes	Number of times codes were used	How many participants used code
Areas of Recognition	Self-Awareness	89	9
	Adaptability	74	9
	Teamwork	66	9
	Verbal Communication	65	9
	Relationship Building	64	7
	Leadership	56	5
	Confidence	42	8
	Empathy	33	9
	Professionalism	30	7
	Problem Solving	27	9
	Listening	24	8
	Time Management	24	8
	Accountability	22	7
	Diversity	21	9
	Critical Thinking	20	7
	Approachability	19	7
	Networking	18	6
	Conflict Management	17	8
	Lifelong learning & self-direction	14	8
	Non-verbal Communication	13	5
Areas of Improvement	Consistency	12	4
	Independence	12	5
	Detail Oriented	3	3

APPENDIX G:

CODE USAGE TABLES


Number of times codes were used
100
80
60
40
20
0
Self Awareness
Adaptability
Teamwork
Verbal…
Relationship…
Leadership
Confidence
Empathy
Professionalism
Problem Solving
Listening
Time…
Accountability
Diversity
Critical Thinking
Approachability
Networking
Conflict…
Life long…
Non-verbal…
Consistency
Independence
Detail Oriented


How many Participants used the Code
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Self Awareness
Adaptability
Teamwork
Verbal…
Relationship…
Leadership
Confidence
Empathy
Professionalism
Problem Solving
Listening
Time…
Accountability
Diversity
Critical Thinking
Approachability
Networking
Conflict…
Life long learning…
Non-verbal…
Consistency
Independence
Detail Oriented

APPENDIX H:

UNIVERSITY EXEMPTION FOR HUMAN SUBJECT TESTING

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Nathan Martin
CLAS-SS: Social Transformation, School of (SST)
480/727-9970
ndm@asu.edu

Dear Nathan Martin:
On 12/2/2019 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:
Type of Review: Initial Study
Title: The Mentor Experience: The Role of Peer-Mentoring in Higher Education
Investigator: Nathan Martin
IRB ID: STUDY00011096
Funding: None
Grant Title: None
Grant ID: None
D
ocuments Reviewed: • Consent Form Social Behavioral Protocol, Category: Consent Form;
• Interview Questions Social Behavioral Protocol, Category: Other;
• IRB Social Behavioral Protocol, Category: IRB Protocol;
• Recruitment Material Social Behavioral Protocol, Category: Recruitment Materials;

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 on 12/2/2019.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

Sincerely,
IRB Administrator
cc: Margret Hurlburt
Margret Hurlburt