



Career benefits associated with mentoring for mentors: A meta-analysis



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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 November 2012

Available online 5 April 2013

Keywords:

Mentor's benefits
Career outcomes
Mentoring quality
Meta-analysis

ABSTRACT

Mentoring has been studied extensively as it is linked to protégé career development and growth. Recent mentoring research is beginning to acknowledge however that mentors also can accrue substantial benefits from mentoring. A meta-analysis was conducted where the provision of career, psychosocial and role modeling mentoring support were associated with five types of subjective career outcomes for mentors: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent, job performance, and career success. The findings indicated that mentors versus non-mentors were more satisfied with their jobs and committed to the organization. Providing career mentoring was most associated with career success, psychosocial mentoring with organizational commitment, and role modeling mentoring with job performance. Turnover intent was not linked significantly with any of the subjective career outcome variables. The findings support mentoring theory in that mentoring is reciprocal and collaborative and not simply beneficial for protégés. Longitudinal research is needed however to determine the degree to which providing mentoring impacts a mentor's career over time. By alerting prospective mentors to the possible personal benefits of providing career, psychosocial, and role modeling mentoring support for protégés, HRD professionals can improve recruitment efforts for mentoring programs.

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1. Introduction and purpose

Mentoring has long been acclaimed to be a career management and development tool in organizations (Baugh & Sullivan, 2005; O'Reilly, 2001). The list of career benefits accrued from mentoring includes job performance, early career socialization, career advancement, retention of high potential talent, and leader development to name a few (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura & Williams, 2004). However, most of extant research on mentoring benefits has focused on the protégés with the mentors' benefits receiving comparatively much less attention. Only recently, some studies have started exploring the benefits of being a mentor (Bozionelos, 2004; Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2006; Ghosh, Reio, & Haynes, 2012; Lentz & Allen, 2009; Wanberg, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Marchese, 2006). Although this recent shift in focus towards the mentor's perspective is commendable, the literature on mentor's benefits is currently scattered and needs to be systematically synthesized to derive a coherent understanding of how mentors are likely to gain from volunteering their time in supporting their junior colleagues.

This is even more important due to the widespread proliferation of formal mentoring programs in organizations and the difficulty that human resource development (HRD) professionals experience in recruiting motivated and committed mentors (Hegstad & Wentling, 2005; Weinberg & Lankau, 2011). While research to date has not determined the number of organizations using formal mentoring programs, the literature in recent years shows a pervasive and growing interest in mentoring programs in a wide array of organizations including educational institutions, several areas of the United States government, not-for-profit and professional associations, and numerous Fortune 500 companies such as IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Honeywell, AT&T, Sodexo, and Walmart to name a

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few (Hegstad & Wentling, 2004). Thus, it seems obvious that a quantitative summary of what we know to date about the benefits associated with being a mentor can be valuable. HRD professionals can use this information to better communicate the value of mentoring as a career development tool for not just protégés, but mentors as well and attract organizational leaders to benefit from imparting their knowledge and expertise to others as mentors.

Moreover, a quantitative review of mentor benefits can advance future theory-building and research on mentoring (Allen, 2007). As a mentoring relationship is inherently dyadic, the success of mentoring is contingent on the needs and perspectives of both mentors and protégés. Thus, overlooking the positive outcomes that mentors might experience leaves a critical gap in theoretical development of the mentoring field, specifically concerning the construct of motivation to mentor or willingness to mentor. While mentoring scholars have perceived mentoring to be an altruistic action and hence, mentors to be pro-social individuals (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1996), and age and stage based models of career development have shed some light on motivation to mentor (Dalton, Thompson, & Price, 1977; Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978), the literature is still lacking an adequate explanation of willingness to mentor others (Allen, 2003). A meta-analysis of the potential career benefits that mentors experience can inform this continuing dialogue on what might motivate individuals to engage in mentoring relationships as mentors. We address this gap by conducting a systematic and critical meta-analytic review of the studies exploring the benefits of mentoring for mentors.

2. Who are mentors and what are mentoring functions?

Mentors are typically defined as individuals with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing support for the purpose of increasing career advancement of junior organizational members or their protégés (Kram, 1983, 1985). Haggard, Dougherty, Turban, and Wilbanks (2011) noted that there are more than 40 different definitions used since 1980 to describe individuals who act as mentors. Most of these definitions share the view that mentors are more senior individuals who provide various kinds of personal and career assistance or as explained by the seminal qualitative study by Kram (1985), psychosocial and career support to less senior or experienced person in the role of a protégé or a mentee.

Psychosocial support functions are “those aspects of a relationship that enhance an individual's sense of competence, identity, and effectiveness in a professional role” (Kram, 1985, p. 32). These functions include acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship and role modeling (Kram, 1983). To accept and confirm the protégés, mentors are reported to convey feelings of respect, signal approval even in times of failure, convey unconditional positive regard, and accept their protégés as competent professionals (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Shen & Kram, 2011; Thomas, 1990). As counselors, mentors show empathy for protégés’ concerns, encourage protégés to talk openly about their anxiety, and act as sounding boards for the protégé to understand himself/herself (Levesque, O’Neill, Nelson, & Dumas, 2005; O’Neill, 2005; Scandura, 1992; Scandura & Viator, 1994; Shen & Kram, 2011). As friends, mentors are individuals with whom protégés can confide in, interact socially and spend leisure discussing a variety of non-work interests (Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Shen & Kram, 2011). Lastly, as role models, mentors represent someone who the protégé might want to emulate, display appropriate attitudes, values, skills, and behaviors, and demonstrate ethical integrity as strong professionals (Kram, 1983; Levesque et al., 2005; Olian, Carroll, Giannantonio, & Feren, 1988; Shen & Kram, 2011).

Career support requires mentors to discuss protégés’ career options and dilemmas, and advance their careers in organizations through providing sponsorship, coaching, exposure and visibility, protection, and challenging work assignments (Kram, 1983). As sponsors, mentors actively nominate protégés for projects and promotions, publicly advocate for their protégés’ abilities and champion protégés’ behaviors (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Scandura & Viator, 1994; Thomas, 1990). As coaches, mentors provide access to information that is available only to higher-level members of the organization, share career histories, suggest specific strategies to achieve career goals, and provide assistance in job-related skills and knowledge (O’Neill, 2005; Scandura, 1992; Shen & Kram, 2011). For exposure and visibility, mentors create opportunities for their protégés to impress important people in the organization and introduce them to the “right” people (Olian et al., 1988; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Scandura & Viator, 1994). For protection, mentors reduce unnecessary risks that might threaten protégés’ reputation and shield them from controversial topics (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Levesque et al., 2005; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Finally, for challenging assignments, mentors push protégés into situations that are out of their comfort zones and assign work or tasks that help to learn and develop new skills (Kram, 1983; Levesque et al., 2005; Shen & Kram, 2011).

Follow-up work by many scholars have confirmed psychosocial and career support functions provided by mentors to include the aforementioned factors (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Noe, 1988; Tepper, Shaffer, & Tepper, 1996), thereby lending a coherent framework for understanding who mentors are and what they primarily do. However, some scholars have found role modeling to be a distinct function loading on a separate factor instead of being included in the psycho-social dimension of mentor roles (Scandura, 1992; Scandura & Viator, 1994). In accordance, our analyses of mentor benefits focused on three facets of mentor roles, i.e., we conducted meta-analyses of the studies examining the benefits associated with provision of career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling. In addition, resembling the meta-analysis conducted on protégé benefits by Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, and Lima (2004), we compared positive outcomes of mentoring across mentors and non-mentors (Eby et al., 2006; Lentz & Allen, 2009; Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

3. Outcomes associated with mentoring relationships for mentors

Various mentor outcomes have been explored through empirical studies done by the scholars focusing on the mentor’s perspective. These outcomes can be classified into two broad categories namely objective career outcomes and subjective career outcomes. Objective career outcomes include compensation and promotion (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006; Eby et al., 2006; Gentry & Sosik, 2010). Subjective career outcomes include less tangible and more affective indicators of career success such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, career satisfaction, turnover intent, and subjective ratings of job performance (Chun, Sosik, & Yun, 2012; Lentz & Allen, 2009; Pullins & Fine, 2002).

We found but few studies examining the association between objective career outcomes (e.g., salary, promotion) and mentoring experience or provision of different mentoring functions (e.g., career support, psychosocial support, role modeling). Allen et al. (2006) did find a significant association between mentoring experience and promotion and salary, while Bozionelos, Bozionelos, Kostopoulos, and Polychroniou (2011) discovered a significant link between provision of career and psychosocial mentoring and mentor's promotion rate and salary. Eby et al. (2006) collected data on mentor's promotion and salary as well where they reported correlations between promotion, salary, and current mentorship. Still, "current mentorship" is not comparable to mentor experience as measured by Allen et al. (2006). Further, although Gentry and Sosik (2010) reported significant correlations between promotability and provision of career mentoring, they collected supervisor and peer ratings of the likelihood of the mentor's promotion rather than objective data on the number of promotions received by the mentor. Because of the few studies linking objective career outcomes and mentoring experience, only subjective career outcomes for mentors were investigated in this study.

3.1. Literature support for mentor benefits

According to mutuality perspectives, mentoring relationships should bring about career growth and development for both parties involved, i.e., the protégés and the mentors (Ragins & Verbos, 2007). Several scholars have put forth arguments in support of career benefits that mentors can gain from mentoring relationships. For instance, Fletcher and Ragins (2007) proposed that mentoring can facilitate relational skills and competencies that lead to enhanced career outcomes, such as advancement and satisfaction for mentors.

Ramaswami and Dreher (2007) offered that mentoring others may enhance a mentor's performance as the protégé may "pay back" their mentors through providing feedback and supplying critical information, implying a social exchange relationship between the mentor and protégé. Following this line of argument, mentors can increase their career growth prospects by delegating to protégés (Nykodym, Freedman, Simonetti, & Nielsen, 1995), relying on protégés for information and support (Kram & Hall, 1996; Mullen, 1994), and increasing their reputations through their protégés' accomplishments (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Kram, 1985). In addition, mentors can also show gains in technical expertise, new information, managerial skills, and leadership capacity through mentoring others and performance gains from job-related support received from protégés (Bozionelos, 2004; Eby & Lockwood, 2005; Kram, 1985; Mullen, 1994; Mullen & Noe, 1999; Newby & Heide, 1992; Noe, 1988).

Recently, Chun et al. (2012) noted that self-perception theory can explain why mentoring others can increase mentor's sense of belonging and attachment to their organizations. As per self-perception theory, mentors providing "greater mentoring support as a form of role-prescribed, organizational pro-social behavior" (Chun et al., 2012, p.1077) contribute to organizational goals. Thus, they are more likely to be committed to their own organizations. Lending support to this argument, McGuire and Gamble (2006) found that being teenage mentors in a community service resulted in increased sense of community belonging.

Further, mentors may gain satisfaction, meaning and purpose in their lives, and a sense of accomplishment in finding an outlet for passing their accumulated knowledge and wisdom (Kram, 1983, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978; Ragins & Scandura, 1999). In Kram's (1985) seminal study, mentors reported confirmation, support, and intrinsic satisfaction from helping someone develop. Other studies discussing benefits for mentors concur that mentoring others can include personal satisfaction and exhilaration from the fresh energy and perspectives provided by protégés, and a deeper sense of purpose and belonging to their organizations (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Eby et al., 2006; Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Zey, 1984).

Given that extant literature supports the possibility of career benefits for mentors, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1. Individuals who have mentored will report greater subjective career outcomes than will individuals who have not mentored.

Hypothesis 2. Provision of career mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.

Hypothesis 3. Provision of psychosocial mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.

Hypothesis 4. Provision of role modeling mentoring support will be positively related to subjective career outcomes.

Given that the three facets of mentor roles, i.e., career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling require the mentor to carry out different behaviors as described in the previous section, it can be argued that provision of these diverse mentoring supports will be differentially related to the subjective career outcomes. For instance, unlike career mentoring support which is mostly focused on helping the protégé discuss their career options and advance in their careers in organizations, psychosocial mentoring and role modeling require the mentor to focus on increasing the protégé's self-esteem and confidence building through showing respect, empathy and modeling the appropriate attitudes and behaviors (Kram, 1985; Noe, 1988). In doing so, they are likely to develop emotional bonds and become confidants to their protégés which might consequently help them derive a deeper sense of purpose and belonging to their organizations. Thus, similar to how Allen et al. (2004) argued that protégés' subjective career outcomes are more likely to be associated with receipt of psychosocial mentoring, it can be argued that provision of psychosocial mentoring and role modeling support may relate more highly to subjective career outcomes for mentors. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 5. Provision of psychosocial and role modeling mentoring support will have a stronger relationship with subjective career outcomes for mentors than provision of career support mentoring.

In addition, the quality of mentoring relationships as perceived by the mentors can affect their career outcomes. As scholars have argued that quality of mentoring relationships can vary on a continuum ranging from dysfunctional, to average, and to high-quality

(Ragins, 2011; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000), it is possible that the extent to which the mentors perceive their relationships with protégés to be of high-quality will have implications for their job or career satisfaction which are indicators of subjective career outcomes. Thus, we hypothesize,

Hypothesis 6. Mentor's perceptions of quality of mentoring relationship will be positively related to mentor's subjective career outcomes.

4. Method

4.1. Literature search

We used several methods to identify studies examining benefits for mentors. First, we conducted a computerized bibliographic search of PsycINFO, ABI/INFORM, and ProQuest Dissertations and Theses by using keywords such as mentor, mentoring benefits, mentor's subjective career success, mentor's job performance, mentor's job satisfaction, mentor's organizational commitment, and mentor's objective career success. We reviewed the reference lists of each article and dissertation we identified through these keywords to find articles that were not revealed by our computerized search. We also reviewed the conference proceedings of Academy of Management (AOM) and Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) from the last 5 years to identify unpublished articles. Finally, we emailed prominent scholars in the mentoring field asking them if they were aware of any unpublished or in-press manuscripts on studies examining mentor benefits. In total, 13 published studies, 4 dissertations, and 1 unpublished study were obtained and reviewed for this meta-analysis.

4.2. Criteria for inclusion

For being included in the meta-analysis, the study had to meet the following criteria: (1) the sample size must be reported; and (2) a Pearson correlation or some other type of statistic that can be converted into a correlation between participation in informal/formal mentoring relationships as mentors or provision of either of the three mentor supports (e.g., career support, psychosocial support, role modeling) in formal or informal mentoring and subjective career outcome variable needs to be reported. When needed, an attempt was made to secure usable statistics from study authors. Five studies that used an overall measure of mentoring functions (i.e., a composite that combined career and psychosocial functions together) were excluded (e.g., Bolino & Feldman, 2000; Bozionelos, 2004; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Liu, Liu, Kwan, & Mao, 2009; Salami, 2010), and two studies examining mentor outcomes were excluded for not providing any information on effect size for associations between provision or quality of mentoring and mentor's career outcome variables (e.g., Collins, 1994; Parise & Forret, 2008). In addition, the study by Eby et al. (2006) was excluded as they reported correlations between "current mentorship" and mentor career outcomes as opposed to overall mentoring experience and its outcomes for mentor's career. Using the criteria listed, a total of 18 individual studies were included.

4.3. Coding of studies

Statistics coded from each individual study included sample size, correlations, significance levels, and reliability of the measures. To ensure accuracy, each study was coded independently by both study authors. The authors showed high agreement (higher than 90%) in coding the statistics outlined above. Divergent recordings were discussed until agreement was reached.

4.4. Statistical procedures

For conducting the meta-analysis, we used Hunter and Schmidt's (2004) "bare-bones" meta-analysis method. Following the practice of using at least two studies providing data for meta-analysis (e.g., Underhill, 2006), results of our meta-analysis are tabled for all variables in which we had at least two studies providing effect sizes. We chose the correlation coefficient as our indicator of effect size. All reported study statistics were converted to correlation coefficients following coding by the raters. Care was taken to code effect sizes from independent samples, i.e., we checked if multiple papers reported results from the same study. In addition, for a single study reporting multiple effect sizes for data collected at different time points from the same group of respondents, an average effect size was calculated for each study to avoid the problem of inflated *N*s (Bangert-Drowns, 1986). For each independent and dependent variable combination, statistics calculated included the mean unweighted observed correlation, the mean correlation weighted by sample size and corrected for measurement error, the statistical significance of the mean by identifying the 95% confidence interval, and the *Q* statistic to examine the variability in the distribution of effect size estimates (Ellis, 2010). We also conducted a file drawer analysis using the formula provided by Hunter and Schmidt (1990, p. 513). The value of "Fail-safe *k*" gives the number of missing studies averaging null results that are required for reducing the effect size to a specified level. In the present study we used an absolute critical value of .01 in accordance with the critical value of effect size chosen in the meta-analysis conducted by Allen et al. (2004) on protégé benefits.

4.5. Variables included in analysis

4.5.1. Mentoring

We included studies that compared career outcomes across the groups of mentors and non-mentors and also the studies that reported correlations between provision of different kinds of mentoring supports (e.g., career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling) in formal and informal mentoring and career outcomes for mentors. Studies measuring different kinds of mentoring supports used multi-item self-report scales (e.g., Noe, 1988; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Scandura & Ragins, 1993). Only the studies using composite measures of career, psychosocial support and role modeling functions (e.g., Bolino & Feldman, 2000; Bozionelos, 2004; Dreher & Ash, 1990; Liu et al., 2009; Salami, 2010) were excluded from our analyses. In studies that compared mentors versus non-mentors positive correlations indicated that being a mentor was associated with a higher level of the outcome variable (e.g., higher job performance, higher job satisfaction etc.). Further, given the recent interest in assessing perceptions of quality or satisfaction of the mentorship, we included studies examining the association between quality of mentoring from the mentor's perspective and mentor's career outcomes. Studies measuring mentoring quality used the Allen and Eby (2003) self-report scale.

4.5.2. Subjective career outcomes

We examined job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent, subjective ratings of job performance, and career success as indicators of subjective career outcomes. Studies measuring job satisfaction as the outcome variable used multi-item self-report measures of how satisfied one is with his/her job. Mostly the 3 item Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh (1979) job satisfaction scale was used with the exception of a dissertation that used the 36 item Spector's (1997) job satisfaction scale. Studies measuring organizational commitment as the outcome variable used multi-item self report measures (e.g., 8 item measure by Allen & Meyer (1990), 6 item measure by Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993)) of how strongly one feels an emotional attachment with the organization. Studies measuring turnover intent as the outcome variable used multi-item self report measures (e.g., 3 item Cammann et al. (1979) scale, 4 item scale developed by Lentz & Allen (2009)) of one's thoughts of quitting his/her current job and the self-reported likelihood of searching for a job within the next year. Studies measuring job performance as the outcome variable used multi-item self and other report measures (e.g., 3 item Ragins & Scandura (1999) improved job performance scale, 3 item Gentry, Weber, & Sadri (2008) scale) of how one thinks his/her performance at work has improved for being a mentor and how one's supervisor thinks he/she is performing at work. Lastly, studies measuring career success as the outcome variable used multi-item self-report measures (e.g., 4-item Turban and Dougherty (1994) scale, 7-item Gattiker and Larwood (1986) scale) of how successful an individual believes he or she has been in his or her career to date.

5. Results

We stated in Hypothesis 1 that individuals who have mentored will report greater subjective career outcomes than those who have not mentored. Table 1 shows the results for studies comparing three career outcomes (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent) for mentors versus non-mentors. The results indicated that mentors were more satisfied with their job (weighted mean $r = .123$) and more committed to their organization (weighted mean $r = .12$). For turnover intent, the findings also suggested that mentors were less likely to turnover (weighted mean $r = -.035$), yet the 95% confidence interval associated with the mean included zero ($-.09$ to $.02$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 received partial support.

We predicted in Hypothesis 2 that provision of career-related mentoring would positively relate to mentor's subjective career outcomes. Table 2 summarizes the results for studies examining the relationship between provision of career mentoring and five career outcomes for mentors (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent, job performance, and career success). The results indicated that providing career mentoring support is related to higher performance at work (weighted mean $r = .269$) and higher perceived career success (weighted mean $r = .44$) for mentors. Moreover, the results suggested that mentors were more satisfied (weighted mean $r = .149$), committed to the organization (weighted mean $r = .145$), and less likely intending to turnover (weighted mean $r = -.02$); however, the 95% confidence interval associated with the mean for job satisfaction (95% CI $-.002$ to $.30$), organizational commitment (95% CI $-.002$ to $.29$), and turnover intent (95% CI $-.20$ to $.16$) included zero. Thus, Hypothesis 2 received partial support.

We predicted in Hypothesis 3 that provision of psychosocial mentoring would positively relate to mentor's subjective career outcomes. Table 3 summarizes the results for studies examining the relationship between provision of career mentoring and five career outcomes for mentors (i.e., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent, job performance, and career success).

Table 1

Meta-Analysis of the relationship between career outcomes for mentors and non-mentors.

Dependent variable	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mr</i>	<i>Mwr</i>	<i>Vr</i>	<i>SEr</i>	95% CI	Fail-safe <i>k</i>	Q statistic
Job satisfaction	4	1617	.11	.123	.002	.02	.08, .16	45	2.6525
Organizational commitment	4	1736	.11	.12	.002	.02	.08, .16	44	2.83
Turnover intent	3	1460	-.047	-.035	.002	.028	-.09, .02	8	3.29

Note. *k* = number of correlations; *N* = total sample size for studies combined; *Mr* = mean unweighted correlations; *Mwr* = sample-weighted mean correlations corrected for measurement error; *Vr* = variance of sample correlations; *SEr* = standard error; CI = confidence interval; Fail-safe *k* = the number of studies averaging null results that would be needed to reduce the sample-weighted mean *r* to .01.

Table 2
Meta-analysis of the relationship between career outcomes and provision of career mentoring.

Dependent variable	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mr</i>	<i>Mwr</i>	<i>Vr</i>	<i>SEr</i>	95% CI	Fail-safe <i>k</i>	<i>Q</i> statistic
Job satisfaction	8	797	.152	.149	.041	.077	-.002, .30	111	34.44
Organizational commitment	7	861	.135	.145	.034	.075	-.002, .29	95	28.89
Turnover intent	4	464	-.03	-.02	.025	.092	-.20, .16	4	11.56
Job performance	5	30,737	.22	.269	.0002	.0063	.26, .28	130	6.4
Career success	2	287	.47	.44	.0065	.057	.33, .55	86	1.85

Note. *k* = number of correlations; *N* = total sample size for studies combined; *Mr* = mean unweighted correlations; *Mwr* = sample-weighted mean correlations corrected for measurement error; *Vr* = variance of sample correlations; *SEr* = standard error; CI = confidence interval; Fail-safe *k* = the number of studies averaging null results that would be needed to reduce the sample-weighted mean *r* to .01.

The results indicated that providing psychosocial mentoring support is related to higher job satisfaction (weighted mean $r = .154$), higher organizational commitment (weighted mean $r = .216$), and higher perceived career success (weighted mean $r = .177$) for mentors. The results also suggested providing psychosocial support was associated with greater job performance (weighted mean $r = .133$) and less turnover intent (weighted mean $r = -.125$), yet the 95% confidence interval associated with the means for job performance ($-.02$ to $.22$) and turnover intent ($-.07$ to $.32$) included zero. Thus, **Hypothesis 3** received partial support.

We predicted in **Hypothesis 4** that provision of role modeling would positively relate to mentor's subjective career outcomes. **Table 4** summarizes the results for studies examining the relationship between provision of career mentoring and two career outcomes for mentors (i.e., job satisfaction and job performance). The results indicated that providing role modeling mentoring support is related to higher job satisfaction (weighted mean $r = .085$) and higher performance at work (weighted mean $r = .249$) for mentors. Thus, **Hypothesis 4** received full support.

In **Hypothesis 5**, we predicted that provision of psychosocial and role modeling mentoring support will have a stronger relationship with subjective career outcomes for mentors than provision of career support mentoring. As shown in **Tables 2 and 3**, for job satisfaction, the effect sizes associated with provision of psychosocial and career mentoring were almost the same, for organizational commitment, the effect sizes associated with provision of psychosocial mentoring support was higher than that associated with provision of career mentoring support. Additionally, from comparing **Tables 2 and 4**, we see that provision of role modeling support showed a significant, but lower effect size for job satisfaction when compared to provision of career mentoring support. For turnover intent, the effect size was higher for that of psychosocial support, although for both career and psychosocial support, the 95% confidence interval included zero.

For job performance, provision of career support showed a greater effect size than either psychosocial mentoring or role modeling. It should be noted that the estimate for association between provision of career mentoring and mentor's job performance was heavily influenced by one large sample study (e.g., Gentry et al., 2008). After removing the Gentry et al. (2008) study, the weighted mean r for the relationship between provision of career mentoring and job performance was .22. While this was still a higher effect size than the one between provision of psychosocial mentoring and job performance, it was lower than the effect size for the association between provision of role modeling and job performance. Lastly, for career success, although both provision of career and psychosocial support showed significant effect sizes, the effect size for provision of career mentoring support was larger than that of psychosocial support. Thus, **Hypothesis 5** received partial support.

We predicted in **Hypothesis 6** that mentor's perceived quality of mentoring relationship would positively relate to mentor's subjective career outcomes. **Table 5** summarizes the results for studies examining the relationship between mentor's perceived quality of mentoring and two career outcomes for mentors (e.g., job satisfaction and career success). The results indicated that mentor's perceived quality of mentoring is related to their higher job satisfaction (weighted mean $r = .167$) and career success (weighted mean $r = .233$). Thus, **Hypothesis 6** received full support.

The results of the file drawer analyses yielded values of fail-safe *k* ranging from a low of 4 to a high of 165. For example, it would take 45 studies averaging null results to reduce the effect size between mentoring experience and job satisfaction from .123 to .01 (see **Table 1**). The values calculated by the Hunter and Schmidt (1990) formula used in this meta-analysis are usually much smaller than the number of studies needed to reduce the combined probability value to $p = .05$, as per Rosenthal (1991) procedures.

The results of *Q* statistics analysis examining the variability in the distribution of effect size estimates indicated that the population effect sizes were heterogeneous (i.e., the *Q* statistic exceeded 5.991, which is the critical value that intersects the upper tail or alpha of

Table 3
Meta-analysis of the relationship between career outcomes and provision of psychosocial mentoring.

Dependent variable	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mr</i>	<i>Mwr</i>	<i>Vr</i>	<i>SEr</i>	95% CI	Fail-safe <i>k</i>	<i>Q</i> statistic
Job satisfaction	9	1063	.148	.154	.031	.062	.03, .28	130	32.55
Organizational commitment	8	1079	.244	.216	.034	.07	.08, .35	165	36.73
Turnover intent	4	464	-.154	-.125	.029	.098	-.07, .32	46	13.19
Job performance	4	371	.106	.133	.016	.063	-.02, .22	50	5.86
Career success	2	287	.212	.177	.009	.066	.05, .31	33	2.48

Note. *k* = number of correlations; *N* = total sample size for studies combined; *Mr* = mean unweighted correlations; *Mwr* = sample-weighted mean correlations corrected for measurement error; *Vr* = variance of sample correlations; *SEr* = standard error; CI = confidence interval; Fail-safe *k* = the number of studies averaging null results that would be needed to reduce the sample-weighted mean *r* to .01.

Table 4

Meta-analysis of the relationship between career outcomes and provision of role modeling mentoring.

Dependent variable	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mr</i>	<i>Mwr</i>	<i>Vr</i>	<i>SEr</i>	95% CI	Fail-safe <i>k</i>	<i>Q</i> statistic
Job satisfaction	3	305	.103	.085	.002	.03	.03, .14	23	.82
Job performance	2	195	.282	.249	.005	.05	.15, .35	48	.98

Note. *k* = number of correlations; *N* = total sample size for studies combined; *Mr* = mean unweighted correlations; *Mwr* = sample-weighted mean correlations corrected for measurement error; *Vr* = variance of sample correlations; *SEr* = standard error; CI = confidence interval; Fail-safe *k* = the number of studies averaging null results that would be needed to reduce the sample-weighted mean *r* to .01.

.05 and two degrees of freedom indicating different effect sizes for different groups) for: (1) associations between provision of career mentoring and four outcome variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and turnover intent; and (2) associations between provision of psychosocial mentoring and three outcome variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intent. Consequently, these associations should be further examined through moderator analysis as type of mentoring (e.g., formal, informal), mentor gender, ethnicity, and age could be potential moderators accounting for the heterogeneity.

6. Discussion

The purpose of this meta-analytic study was to test the possible associations between provision of mentoring functions (psychosocial, career, role modeling) and subjective career outcomes for mentors, that is, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intent, job performance, and career success. The results of the study add to the emerging literature on mentoring benefits in that it strongly supported the notion that there are career outcome benefits related to being a mentor. First, individuals who provided mentoring tended to be more satisfied and committed than those who had not been a mentor. Second, providing career mentoring was associated with better job performance and career success. Third, providing psychosocial mentoring was associated with better job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career success. Fourth, providing role modeling was linked with better job satisfaction and job performance. Last, perceived quality of providing mentoring was positively linked to job satisfaction, but more so with career success. Overall, providing career mentoring demonstrated the strongest association with career success; providing psychosocial mentoring was most associated with organizational commitment; and, providing role modeling was most associated with job performance. These findings demonstrate the utility of investigating the three different types of mentoring functions as they relate to subjective career outcomes for mentors.

Specifically, it makes sense for provision of career mentoring to be most strongly associated with the subjective outcome of mentor's career success. Given that for career-related mentoring, mentors are expected to provide informational and instrumental social support (McManus & Russell, 1997), it is possible that for providing such support, they need to constantly update their subject-matter knowledge which in turn helps them to continue succeeding in their own careers. For psychosocial mentoring, because the sub-factors (e.g., acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship etc.) represent a deeper, and more intense aspect of mentoring relationships (Kram, 1985), it is not surprising that provision of psychosocial mentoring is most strongly associated with mentor's affective commitment to their organizations where they are developing these emotionally intense mentoring relationships. And, for role modeling, it is possible that in the act of displaying appropriate behaviors, attitudes, skills, and values to the protégés, the mentor may be motivated to enhance their own performance as a way to demonstrate how appropriate attitudes and values can contribute towards higher performance. Unless mentors themselves strive to be high performers, their efforts of modeling appropriate behaviors and skills might not be well received by protégés. However, whether individuals who choose to be mentors might be already more satisfied, committed, better performers, or more successful in careers than the non-mentors is a possibility that cannot be discounted. A meta-analysis only helps to summarize correlational associations between being a mentor and different subjective career outcomes and hence any kind of causal link should be made with a caution.

As for mentor's turnover intent, surprisingly for either of the mentoring functions (e.g., career mentoring, psychosocial mentoring), we did not find a significant association. It is important to note that among the studies that reported associations between mentoring provided and turnover intent, only Lentz and Allen (2009) found a significant link between being a mentor and turnover intent. However, when examining the association between specific kinds of mentoring functions provided and mentor's turnover intent, their study found no link for provision of psychosocial mentoring, and a link in the opposite direction for career mentoring, i.e., greater provision of career mentoring was associated with higher chances of the mentor leaving the organization. Although the finding about an opposite relationship between provision of career mentoring and turnover intent might be unique to the nature of their sample (e.g., government employees), the lack of significant association between being a mentor and turnover intent begs exploration. For

Table 5

Meta-analysis of the relationship between career outcomes and mentor's perceived mentoring quality.

Dependent variable	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mr</i>	<i>Mwr</i>	<i>Vr</i>	<i>SEr</i>	95% CI	Fail-safe <i>k</i>	<i>Q</i> statistic
Job satisfaction	2	519	.176	.167	.0001	.007	.15, .18	31	.05
Career success	2	532	.275	.233	.002	.035	.16, .30	45	1.29

Note. *k* = number of correlations; *N* = total sample size for studies combined; *Mr* = mean unweighted correlations; *Mwr* = sample-weighted mean correlations corrected for measurement error; *Vr* = variance of sample correlations; *SEr* = standard error; CI = confidence interval; Fail-safe *k* = the number of studies averaging null results that would be needed to reduce the sample-weighted mean *r* to .01.

instance, current economic conditions may have had an impact on mentors' turnover intent. While almost all of the studies included in this meta-analytic study were from 2000 and beyond, it may be that those studies conducted during the dire economic times worldwide (2008–2010) were systematically different somehow from previous mentor intent to turnover research. Further, the association between mentor's turnover intent and provision of role modeling was not examined due to lack of studies examining this association. It is possible that being a role model to others can increase a mentor's inclination to stay in the organization due to the recognition and prestige that comes from others emulating him/her. Lastly, it might be also that compared to other subjective career outcomes, reduced turnover intent is a longer term benefit which should be examined through longitudinal research designs rather than the cross-sectional ones most commonly found and included in this meta-analysis. This further connects to *Kram's (1985)* theory on stages of mentoring relationships which implies that we need to consider appropriate time lags for capturing mentoring outcomes, especially outcomes such as turnover intent that are terminal in nature.

7. Implications of findings

7.1. Research implications

While our study provides a quantitative summary of the associations between provision of different kinds of mentoring functions and mentor's subjective career outcomes, a causal link can only be claimed through studies that use longitudinal experimental designs to examine if being a mentor impacts mentor's career over a certain period. The most important challenge would be to control for mentors being already high performers or having higher commitment towards their organizations and greater satisfaction at work. Perhaps future researchers can measure the level of mentor's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, career success, and turnover intent prior to the commencement of a mentoring relationship and then track subsequent increase or decrease in those variables after the mentor has provided career, psychosocial, and role modeling supports. Of course, many other factors that could possibly impact those outcomes need to be controlled in the study design to be able to definitively claim that the increase or decrease in those career outcomes are mostly attributable to the provision of mentoring. Another possibility can be to ask about past experiences of providing mentoring and measuring current levels of mentor's subjective career outcomes like *Allen et al. (2006)* did to eliminate the likelihood of higher career outcomes driving provision of mentoring.

The results also indicate much scope for moderator analyses. Although we did not examine moderators given the small number of associations for many of the studied mentor outcomes, future researchers need to consider the fine-grained distinctions regarding the conditions under which mentors benefit from providing different mentoring functions (*Allen et al., 2004*). Specifically, type of mentoring (e.g., formal, informal), mentor gender, ethnicity, and age could be potential moderators explaining the conditions necessary for mentors to benefit from the acts of career support, psychosocial support, or role modeling. Not all studies included in our meta-analytic review provided associations between mentoring type, mentor demographics (e.g., gender), provision of mentoring, and mentor's subjective career outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, career success, and turnover intent and hence future studies need to explore if and when these associations differ under certain conditions as determined by mentoring type or mentor demographics.

Furthermore, the dyadic composition of the mentoring relationship in terms of gender, ethnicity, and age may also have implications for mentor benefits. Most importantly, these factors may directly impact mentor's perception of quality and consequently the benefits mentors derive from participating in mentoring relationships. Our meta-analysis provides evidence for mentor's perceived quality of mentoring to be associated with mentor's job satisfaction and career success. Although we cannot draw similar conclusions for other mentor outcomes (e.g., organizational commitment, turnover intent, job performance) due to lack of sufficient studies reporting correlations between mentor's perceived quality of mentoring relationship and these outcomes, we contend that different moderators (e.g., type of mentoring, dyadic composition in terms of mentor and protégé demographics etc.) are likely to impact mentoring quality which in turn is likely to have an effect on the benefits that mentors may derive from mentoring.

Moreover, during the course of our review we came across many promising career outcomes for mentors which could not be included in this meta-analysis as those outcomes have not been examined by more than one study. For instance, only *Chun et al. (2012)* examined transformational leadership and affective well-being as mentor outcomes and found provision of career, psychosocial and role modeling support to be significantly associated with those outcomes; and *Liu et al. (2009)* examined mentor's social status at work and personal learning as possible outcomes and found significant associations between these outcomes and mentoring provision. Additionally, although few scholars (e.g., *Parise & Forret, 2008; Ragins & Scandura, 1999*) have explored generativity as one of the mentor outcomes and mentoring scholars have long regarded mentoring to be a generative experience (e.g., *Kram, 1983; Levinson et al., 1978*), no study to date has examined if provision of different mentoring functions is associated with this particular outcome. Similarly, some of the other mentor benefits identified by *Ragins and Scandura (1999)* such as loyal base of support, rewarding experience, and recognition by others need to be further explored in this regards.

Finally, findings of this meta-analytic review have significant implications for mentoring theory. Because mentoring is increasingly being understood as a reciprocal and collaborative relationship instead of a one-way hierarchical one as per mutuality and social-exchange theories (*Allen & Eby, 2003; Fletcher & Ragins, 2007; Ramaswami & Dreher, 2007*), a quantitative review of mentor outcomes is timely. This review expands our understanding of what might prompt individuals to volunteer their time for mentoring. In addition to mentor's prosocial nature being one of the factors explaining one's willingness to mentor, our review implies that awareness of benefits such as improved job performance or higher job satisfaction and career success may encourage individuals to mentor others. It is possible too that one may engage in mentoring primarily to groom fast-track, high promise employees to benefit the organization as a whole, rather than for more immediate personal gain per se. Providing mentoring to develop highly promising talent benefits the

organization by creating a pool of talented employees for succession purposes who are less likely to turnover. Still, there may be objective benefit to the mentor in the sense that he/she might be more likely to be promoted for identifying a capable successor thus accruing more long-term career success.

Of course, we are making the assumption here that individuals may mentor others to receive benefits (i.e., subjective and objective career outcomes), but as we did not include the construct of “motivation to mentor” in our meta-analysis, we cannot make this claim definitively. Future researchers need to explore the extent to which awareness of mentoring benefits may motivate mentors beyond the prosocial nature of their personality. Further, given that some support was found about differential relationships between career, psychosocial, and role modeling mentoring functions and mentor's career outcomes, additional theoretical work is required to identify behavioral and psychological processes that may explain these effects (Allen et al., 2004). Lastly, given the evidence for association between mentor's perceptions of mentoring quality and their career outcomes, future researchers need to explore if the emerging theory on relational high-quality mentoring (Ragins, 2009, 2011) can help to understand the conditions necessary for mentors to benefit from participating in mentoring relationships.

7.2. Practice implications

In terms of mentoring practice, our findings have important implications for formal mentoring programs in organizations. First and foremost, HRD professionals can recruit mentors for such programs by sharing the possible benefits of volunteering time in providing career, psychosocial, and role modeling mentoring support. Knowing that provision of mentoring is associated with higher career outcomes can be a motivation for some to add mentoring others to their task list. Specifically knowing how providing different kinds of mentoring support associates with different career outcomes, mentors might choose to provide only a certain kind of mentoring to maximize the benefit they seek. This recognition challenges the traditional mentoring paradigm where the mentor is a passive receiver of some benefits that may accrue from their act of mentoring others. Instead, the possibility of mentors deciding the kind of mentoring support they want to provide so as to benefit most from the act repositions them as active participants who seek tangible benefits for joining formal mentoring programs.

Second, protégés also need to be aware of the possible benefits for mentors. If protégés know from the outset of a mentoring program that they are joining a partnership where both parties (i.e., mentor and protégé) are likely to accrue certain benefits, they will be more inclined to develop a reciprocal relationship than a hierarchical one-way connection that is primarily geared towards their career needs without any consideration of that of the mentor's. Of course, such reciprocal associations are contingent upon how conducive the organization is towards building less hierarchical developmental relationships. However, it is evident that encouraging mentors and protégés to benefit each other's careers can increase the likelihood of formal mentoring programs being more successful, especially when it comes to attending to the career needs of a larger population than just the protégés.

Third, our findings can have implications for the training provided and even to some extent the matching of mentors and protégés in formal mentoring programs. Most organizations offering such programs arrange for generic training on mentor's and protégé's expected roles in the program. Identification of which kinds of mentoring support are associated with the career benefits most desired by the potential mentors can guide HRD professionals to specifically train mentors in providing those kinds of support functions. For instance, our meta-analysis findings indicate that giving career mentoring support is most associated with career success. Thus, if a potential mentor identifies “increase in career success” to be the most desirable benefit, he/she can be specifically groomed to know how to best deliver career support to their protégés. Further, he/she can be paired with the protégé who prefers receiving career support over and above psychosocial or role modeling support functions. Doing so will enhance the planning of the program and enable both the mentor and protégés to maximize possible benefits from the mentoring partnership.

8. Conclusion

In sum, the results of our meta-analysis provide substantial evidence for mentor benefits associated with mentoring. Further, we found interesting differences in associations between the different kinds of mentoring functions and mentor outcomes. Still, given the smaller number of correlations for many of the outcome variables studied, much research needs to be conducted to extend our findings for enhancing both theoretical and practical understanding of the mentor's perspective and needs in mentoring. The research and practice implications outlined from our findings above are important steps forward in that direction.

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