EXAMINING THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED MENTORING ON

AT-RISK ADOLESCENT GIRLS

by

NINA L. PRICE

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

December 2016

Acknowledgments

This dissertation journey was deeply personal and based on my life's mission to help at- risk females, who like me, started with a dream, a dream too many times deferred. I would like to start by thanking my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Without Him, I am nothing and nothing is possible without Him. The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center, Dr. Lockhart, and all of the participants who, without their candid perspective and willingness to share their experiences, this research would not have been made possible.

I would like to thank my committee, Drs. Trache, Brown, and Allen. Without their knowledge, support, patience (and a lot of it), and expertise this work would have remained a dream deferred. Dr. Trache believed in me, even when I lacked the strength and courage to believe in myself. I am forever indebted to Drs. Casey Brown and Taryn Allen, who agreed to assist me with completion of this manuscript. Thank you for your guidance and support.

Each of these women, in some way, shape or fashion, represent a piece of me. I owe them a debt that I could never repay because they willingly gave unselfishly of their time, to assist me on my journey. Thank you. I plan to make you proud.

Dedication

      This dissertation is dedicated to my family and friends who have supported me through this tumultuous journey; a journey often referred to as simply "the paper," though it was so much more.

      I dedicate this work to my beautiful and super smart daughters, Kamryn and Camille, who inspired me to do great things for girls everywhere. I know you will do even greater works than this.

      I dedicate this dissertation to my strikingly handsome, very intelligent sons Collin and Neiman, who served as my motivation and support team. You will never know how much you challenged my thought process with this project. You inspired me to be more tenacious than ever.

      I dedicate this to my mom, the greatest cheerleader ever! She always knew I could do it. She never let me dwell on the negative and prayed for me every day.

      Thank you, Kenneth, for your part in this journey. Thank you to Cohort 7, Dr. Cron, and my friends (Lisa, Ellen, Stefnise, and Tiffany) and a host of others whose names are numerous to list. Thank you for your prayers, patience, love, support, and encouragement. I hope I made you proud.

Preface

A young girl was walking along a beach upon which thousands of starfish had been washed up during a terrible storm. When she came to each starfish, she would pick it up, and throw it back into the ocean. People watched her with amusement. She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and said, "Little girl, why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can't save all these starfish. You will never throw enough of these starfish back into the ocean to make a difference!"

The girl seemed crushed, suddenly deflated. But after a few moments, she bent down, picked up another starfish, and hurled it as far as she could into the ocean. Then she looked up at the man and replied, "Well, I made a difference to that one!"

The old man looked at the girl inquisitively and thought about what she had done and said. Inspired, he joined the little girl in throwing starfish back into the sea. Soon others joined, and all the starfish were saved.

— Adapted from The Star Thrower

by Loren C. Eiseley

Abstract

EXAMINING THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF COMMUNITY-BASED MENTORING ON AT-

RISK ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Nina L. Price, PhD

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2016

Supervising Professor: Maria Trache

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to examine which strategies of

mentoring, if any, have a positive impact on adolescent girls who engage in potentially at-

risk social behaviors, which may negatively affect their self-esteem and academic

performance. The female students who participated in this study attend a large high

school in Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, are between the ages of 15 and 18, and are

mentored by volunteers of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. The study is

informed by two theoretical frameworks which seek to guide a study of human

interactions: social learning

theory (Bandura, 1971) and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1980). Findings indicate the

benefits of the program model and confirm that mentor strategies have a positive impact

on student self-esteem and academic achievement, and thus contribute to diminish their

at-risk behaviors.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Various mentoring programs have flourished throughout time. Because there are always adolescents who continue to experience detrimental life-course changes, many consider school mentoring to be a beneficial intervention for their academic, social, and behavioral problems. School-based mentoring (SBM) is increasing in popularity, becoming a primary option for communities seeking to address the growing number of females who engage in behaviors that prevent academic progress, diminish social acceptance, and negatively impact self-esteem. Unfortunately, there is scant research on the beneficial effects of existing mentoring programs for adolescent females, although there is evidence that mentoring and education have always been connected. In particular, the tradition of women mentoring in the United States can be linked to their history of reaching educational equality.

Brigham Young, an American colonizer and missionary, was quoted as saying, "when you educate a man, you educate a man. When you educate a woman, you educate a generation" (cite). His quote emphasized he knew well the power women possessed within. What he could not have known was how generations would come to be affected by the lack of educational opportunities for females that would nearly debilitate a nation. At the time of his birth in 1801, women were only beginning to notice slight improvements in their civil liberties, including access to education. Education was often used as the primary mechanism to separate women from public life; thus, forcing them to solely pursue domestic interests, such as cooking and sewing (NWHM, 2007). As noted by Ornstein and Levine (1984), education was used for centuries to segregate people by race, gender and class. As early as the 1800s, women understood they had to fight for their right to education in societies largely dominated by males. The journey for

women to reach educational equality has been long and problematic, and appearing far from a resolution.

Even as late as the 19th century, girls were not allowed to attend formal educational institutions beyond *dame schools*. Dame schools were private, sometimes single-gendered institutions modeled after the English *finishing school*. These private institutions, mainly for upper-class girls, were specifically focused on teaching social manners and wealthy cultural rites as a preparation for entry into society. Though the idea appeared to be novel, dame schools were far from perfect, and did not contribute much to women's emancipation. Women had few, if any, role models that served as inspiration, beyond teachers. Dame school instruction, once touted as an integral part of high-society, allowed young girls to begin to form bonds with their female teachers. This type of bond could be viewed as an early manifestation of a mentoring relationship, as defined later in the research literature. Riordan (1990) recognized a "paradigm shift from the early 19th century male-dominated societies, to an era allowing women more autonomy to rear adolescent girls to become more independent" (p. 11). Dame schools, arguably, may well have represented the first school-based mentoring model. Although students did not meet in a one-on-one setting with their teachers, they formed bonds that perpetuated cyclical relationships. These bonds were expected to keep producing new 'cycles' of women helping young girls grow into empowered women sought to create better opportunities for women that would transcend generations.

Cowen (1994), a leading researcher on mentoring, took note of such relationships and suggested that when young girls have the opportunity to form meaningful bonds with adult women, they are more likely to extend those bonds to others as they grow older. These relationships were often not only positive, but lasting, proving beneficial for new generations of young women. According to Cowen (1994), who further

assessed these positive relationships, they often transcend time, lasting well into adult life and becoming cyclical. As such, the manifestation of these cyclical mentoring relationships began a new era in the lives of women seeking their independence through education and working closely with other women after whose lives they sought to pattern themselves.

As women entered into the 20th century, the demand for gender equality increased. Based on research by Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, and Foster (1998), gender-specific mentoring programs, especially those that catered to adolescent girls, began to develop nationwide. These programs sought to provide "opportunities and support to help adolescent girls gain the competencies and knowledge required to meet anticipated social and academic challenges as they matured into adult women" (p. 423). Even with the implementation of these programs, some young women continued to fail academically in school and often neglected to seek access of available educational opportunities. Most of these females were underserved by their communities, considered disenfranchised, exhibited antisocial behaviors, and could be characterized as at-risk youth.

Currently, often as a result of poverty, nearly 18 million female youth between the ages of 10 and 18 in the United States "live in situations that put them at-risk of not living up to their potential" (MENTOR, 2005). These situations may include lack of financial means, emotional and mental disturbances caused by family dysfunction, absentee parents, violent behavior inclusive of fighting, unrelenting anger, sexually promiscuous behavior, and poor school attendance, inclusive of not attending classes (MENTOR, 2005). As such, discussions surrounding the increasing number of adolescent girls labeled as being at-risk have sparked state and national debates, asking what can be

3

done to support schools address the issue, and how to engage members of the community in helping young women.

These debates included the need for mentoring programs, which were touted as beneficial interventions to not only change the life course of young women, but to also enrich the lives of the female clientele who sought services from the programs. SBM programs may represent a response to the seemingly rhetorical question of how to assist these adolescents and provide means to reduce the effects of at-risk behaviors. SBM programs have grown in popularity and serve larger numbers of female students; therefore, research is needed to determine their benefits. These programs have the potential to offer a low- cost intervention tools for schools who recognize the value in promoting positive changes through existing community members. Thompson and Kelly-Vance (2001) posited that mentoring programs have been publicized as "solutions to various problems affecting youth, such as increased drug and alcohol use, teenage pregnancy, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and increased in juvenile crime" (p. 227). In an effort to reduce and curtail the negative effects of poverty and lack of role models, many adolescent female youth are encouraged to seek counsel and support from a trained mentor (MENTOR, 2005). Similarly, Thompson and Kelly-Vance (2001) concluded that female youth who experience poor academic performance and exhibit low self-esteem may benefit from a mentor who may act as a role model for these young people.

The idea of mentoring helping youth overcome at-risk barriers and achieve their full potential is also supported by theoretical studies of educational behavior. In a prominent research study, through observation and direct interactions, Bandura (1971) showed how learning can occur in a social context. He demonstrated that at-risk youth need qualified, caring adults to serve as mentors who are willing to invest in their growth

potential (Bandura, 1971). The overall goal of a beneficial mentoring relationship is to assist the mentee in creating self-efficacy and determination through beneficial strategies. Without these skills, many females who engage in at-risk behaviors may continue in a downward spiral and cycle of self-destruction. This destruction is expected to not only increase over time, but also be transmitted to next generations, as research indicates generational trends occur when these females enter childbearing years (Hops, Davis, Leve, & Sheeber, 2003).

With the influx of at-risk female adolescents, there has been enormous interest in better understanding the role and benefits of youth mentoring programs (MENTOR, 2005). This interest is "fueled in part by the belief that positive relationships with extra-familial adults," which "promote resiliency among females from at-risk backgrounds" (DuBois, 2002, p. 158). To be considered resilient, the at-risk female must overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles. These obstacles often include poor family dynamics and poor social interactions, which negatively impact self-esteem. When viable options are sought to assist the female adolescent, two environments are typically available that provide support and build resiliency: home and school.

Most at-risk youth, such as those who participated in this study, cite home as a primary concern for their behavior. Unfortunately, parents are often unavailable, due to employment and other familial obligations, and may not be able to provide a suitable solution when their children manifest at-risk behaviors. The at-risk female is left to make adult decisions for herself and in some cases, for younger siblings. Continuing the cycle of disadvantages, a poor home life often translates into poor academic issues (Needham, Crosnoe, & Muller, 2004). Therefore, it is useful that the mentee-mentor relationship is built in an environment designed to address each concern regarding social, emotional, and academic deficits: the school.

The growth in school-based mentoring programs mirrors recent trends in the development of prevention programs for adolescent girls (LeCroy & Mann, 2008). Mentoring can be viewed as a means of both *pre- and intervention*. Typically, its focus in schools is aimed at providing *intervention* for youth who seek to overcome academic, social, and behavioral barriers triggered by their current circumstances. Prevention programs still remain an option, though limited, especially where budget concerns are an issue. As a result, school-based mentoring programs are becoming the most accepted form of intervention that connect students with a caring adult partner intended to alter social, emotional, and behavior outcomes. In the school-based mentoring model, caring adults are expected to meet at the school with assigned mentees during the school day, typically for one hour per week for a specified period, up to graduation. Referrals typically result from teacher recommendations to school counselors, who refer students to SBM programs. Because of the limited number of programs that may rely on parental initiative, SBM reaches groups of students who would not otherwise be served, especially within their communities (Herrera, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

Though mentoring programs exist nationwide, the credibility of SBM programs represents an unresolved issue. The lack of beneficial and available programs affects at-risk female youth who may desperately need the services these organizations can provide. In addition to mentoring services, these female youths need the consistent camaraderie of caring, female adults. Caffarella and Olson, (1993) have asserted that strong relationships between adolescent girls and adult women can promote healthy psychosocial development of young women. This is often accomplished by female mentors serving as sources of resistance against cultural forces associated with sexism and gender stereotypical beliefs (Brown & Gilligan 1992). Attempts to rectify the complex

6

issues thought to be associated with the absence of role models and/or parental guidance has taken its toll on at-risk female youth. The question concerns the extent to which organized school-based mentoring programs offer the appropriate environment to support adolescent girls. Equally important is what is happening with those who do not have access or do not utilize available mentoring services. We also should be concerned whether problems experienced by these youths may further cause negative, cyclical effects on the family structure of the at-risk female and communities. Community organizations that extend into schools seeking to support female youth development represent themselves as being a viable solution to mentoring young women who are potentially at-risk. Unfortunately, there is limited empirical research to examine the benefits of their mentoring programs (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). The lack of quality female mentors may continue to impact communities, schools, and society at-large which makes a study on mentoring adolescent girls highly significant for research, policy, and practice.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine which methods of mentoring, if any, have a positive effect on the social behavior of at-risk adolescent girls between the ages of 15 to 18 who attend a high school in a large metropolitan school district and receive mentoring at The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. Furthermore, this qualitative phenomenological study aims to identify ways in which the mentoring process positively affects the trajectory of these at-risk females. The research seeks to determine if the mentoring program provided by The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center is a beneficial remedy to social problems experienced by adolescent girls who may continue on an at-risk path, if a caring adult does not provide guidance and support, such as mentoring.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

1) How are the experiences of females who engage in at-risk behavior affected by the mentoring relationship?

2) Which strategies do mentors identify as most beneficial and which ones are least beneficial on shaping self-esteem, and in the development of strong parental and social relationships for female youth who engage in at-risk behaviors?

Background of the Sponsoring Organization

There are a number of organizations, such as school districts, churches and community centers, attempting to derail negative behaviors of potentially at-risk adolescent girls. One organization that seeks to affect these behaviors is The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center, which began its activity in the early 1990s. This organization was founded by Dr. Tony Evans, community philanthropist and founding pastor of the Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. His services were sought to meet the needs expressed by a local Dallas area high school principal who intended to curtail the ill effects of delinquent behavior, including gang activity, within his school. The request resulted in 12 men who policed the halls of the Dallas area school in an attempt to restore order and structure. From this request, original Project Turnaround organization was created and later renamed The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center in February of 2010. This SBM program quickly grew to serve several area schools, and meet the needs of both male and female students who struggled with various at-risk behaviors.

This comprehensive school-based mentoring program for public schools builds relationships among adults and students in the context of friendship, social development, and academic achievement (TurnAround Agenda, n.d.). School-based mentoring takes

place at the school during school hours. The purpose of the program is to target students at-risk of leaving school early, or who are socially isolated or failing to achieve their potential. The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center provides free services to urban youth and their families in 61 public schools in Dallas County through funding provided by Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. These faith-based inventions take place within the school setting, seeking to promote four messages:

     1. Stay in school

     2. No drugs or alcohol

     3. Sexual abstinence

     4. No violence

Mentoring is accomplished through one of two methods: group or team mentoring. The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center describes group mentoring as a relationship that involves one adult with a group of up to four youth who commit to meet regularly over the course of the school year. Team mentoring consists of several adults working with small groups of young people, where the adult to youth ratio is does not exceed one to four. The mentoring process follows several guiding principles:

1. Prospective adult desires to make a difference and attends a training class.
2. Upon completion of the training class, the mentor is assigned a student to support through graduation.
3. An in-school program coordinator is assigned to each school cluster (high, middle, and elementary schools) to manage the entire mentoring process and serve as a liaison between The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center and the school cluster.
4. 4. A mentor is assigned up to four students or mentees who meet as a group with their mentor one hour weekly. The emphasis of the mentoring process is primarily prevention, working with young people with moderate behavioral

problems, with the intent of preventing small problems from becoming big ones

(The TurnAround Agenda, n.d.).

Role and Background of the Researcher

As an African American woman who grew up without the expected and perceived normalcy thought to be held by my peers, it became increasingly apparent that I was neither isolated nor different from those who had been labeled at-risk. Retrospectively, my peers and I were all considered at-risk, as defined by Rak and Patterson (1996). Most of my peers were reared in single-parent households, were offspring of parents who did not pursue education beyond high school, and lived in poverty. Furthermore, we were all faced with the daily choice of whether to use drugs, which were very prevalent in our environment. Our cultural perspectives were limited to African American populations, because there were no other racial groups with whom we could interact or compare our lives. My peers and I often faced both internal and external obstacles that had the potential to limit our achievements, thus defining us as being at-risk. Our limitations were not unique for low socioeconomic neighborhoods. I grew up among young people exposed to multiple risk factors. However, I had the benefit of a strong discipline policy in my household, and intensive encouragement to attend college, without regard to financial limitations. Unfortunately, because no one had previously attended college in my immediate family, there was little guidance or assistance to navigate the path in pursuit of higher education.

While I did not struggle academically, there was always a social struggle in my life. I experienced a struggle to be perceived as what I felt was normal; a struggle to be accepted by my peers, who ironically lived a life very similar to my own; a struggle to fit in; and a struggle to avoid the pitfalls that befell many of the children in my neighborhood, who went on to become delinquents. I sought solace in my church, as well as with elder

family clients and friends. In essence, these sources served as my foundation. The adults who occupied these spaces could be easily considered my mentors. Retrospectively, these sources of inspiration were an essential part of my life and contributed to keeping me on a productive path.

Reflecting on this issue, I understand why Garmezy (1993) indicated, "a healthy and supportive family environment may be a particularly strong protective factor among high-risk girls who face multiple socio-environmental stressors and risk factors on a daily basis" (p. 8). My personal experience as a young woman supports these observations. I wanted desperately to overcome my past and offer my future children the life I never had, but always desired.

I had a child immediately after graduating from high school, as well as a brief brush with law enforcement, thus seemingly thwarting any plans of success my family had for me or that I had for myself. I quickly became a disappointment to my family. Though I did not recognize it then, I simply followed in the footsteps created by my mother and grandmother, who were both teenage mothers. Having encountered jail at an early age, I recognized that I needed to pursue a different life and surround myself with others who had a positive outlook on life.

I perceived certain people in my life as more influential than others. One such person of influence was my aunt; she was educated, gainfully employed, and independent. Since I was the first and only college graduate in my immediate family, I was around few people to whom I could look to for guidance, and no one who had achieved what I sought to accomplish. I perceived my aunt, the only college graduate I knew, as my mentor, though there was never a formal conversation that would make her aware of this. It was through her successful, independent lifestyle that I was inspired to excel beyond my circumstances.

I sought employment in a large school district that would provide room for career growth and increased professional opportunities. This district was comprised mostly of students who were from disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and low socioeconomic households, much like the one I experienced and greatly desired to leave behind. I noticed the parallel lifestyles and often shared with my students how to overcome adversity. I was no longer just a teacher to my students, but one who understood their lives and could relate to them. Many of my students shared with their peers how I was able to become successful despite my background. Connections were developed in the most unlikely situations, especially with those who had been unreachable through conventional methods by their teachers. My experiences gave them hope that they, too, could emerge successful. There was only one significant difference that emerged from my interactions with students as an at-risk female youth: I was fortunate enough to have a support group that encouraged me not only to set goals, but to stop at nothing to reach them. I believe that I am proof that mentoring works and helps at-risk female youth to overcome the negative circumstances. Thus, I have an intense desire to better understand the mentoring phenomenon and to bring this knowledge into my community. I believe caring adults who are willing to build strong and lasting mentee-mentor relationships are the key to beneficial mentoring programs.

It is my belief that I have excelled both in spite and because of my background, by attempting to mirror my own life after my aunt. Therefore, I believe that my adolescent and young adult experiences have positioned me to assist other females who share the same or similar limitations imposed by low socioeconomic limitations, including absentee parents, and other negative social factors. As a researcher, I am interested to study how mentoring contributes to changing the lives of adolescent girls who may potentially be

considered at-risk. As an educator, I would be interested to apply this knowledge to develop beneficial mentoring programs for at-risk female youth.

Significance of the Study

Mentoring resources are available through informal and formal programs fostered by church, school, community organizations and businesses. However, research shows that not all programs are created equally. In a study performed by Sipe and Roder (1999), mentoring programs were classified according to a number of different dimensions, including whether the mentoring occurs in a group or one-on-one basis, whether it is community or site-based, and the strategies utilized to make a positive impact on the participants. So far, the intervention strategies utilized have not displayed any consistency in relation to their impact on the female students who may be at-risk (Holcomb-McCoy, 2001). Therefore, by examining the benefits of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center and whether its mentoring services adequately support the overall wellness of the adolescent girls who are clients, this study will contribute to better understanding what constitutes a beneficial mentoring program, and thus recommend changes for existing and future programs. Since I intend to use findings to discuss which strategies were most and least beneficial in altering the trajectory of the participants, my research is particularly significant in informing SBM practice.

There is also the need for communities to better understand the resiliency of at-risk adolescent girls in general, especially those who are clients of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center mentoring program, and the role mentoring plays in helping them overcome barriers. Research findings will assist mentoring programs that cater to potentially at-risk females understand the importance of building youth self-esteem and resiliency. Through an enhanced model focused on these aspects, SBM programs will be able to offer better opportunities and improved support to help girls gain the

13

competencies and knowledge required to meet anticipated challenges as they mature into adult women. It is intended that the mentees who benefit from this program become not only successful, but also develop an inclination to make a positive impact in life of other younger females. Those female participants are in turn expected to continue the cycle of assisting with development of other at-risk female adolescents who may be inclined to pattern their lives after that of the former mentee.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions address common terms used throughout this study:

At-risk. For the purposes of this research, the *at-risk* notion is aligned with the definition proposed by Rak and Paterson (1996), who posited that children can be considered at-risk when their reading is below standard levels, they have been abused or suffered a traumatic experience, are somehow disabled or ill, or possess other behavior-related concerns that may prevent successful learning. Families can also be considered at-risk due to poverty, low parental education, single parenthood, welfare dependence, mental illness, substance abuse, not owning a home, or having many children (Rak & Patterson, 1996). The result of being at-risk is young people's inability to form and maintain positive relationships with peers, inability to graduate from high school, and possible negative interactions with law enforcement.

The state of Texas offers a separate description for at-risk students, which closely aligns with Rak and Patterson (1996). As recently as 2012, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) used statutory criteria to identify at-risk status (Texas Education Agency, 2012). The criteria included each student who was under 21 years of age and who:

1. has not advanced from one grade level to the next for one or more school years;

14

2. is in grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, or 12 and did not maintain an average equivalent to 70 on a scale of 100 in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum during a semester in the preceding or current school year or is not maintaining such an average in two or more subjects in the foundation curriculum in the current semester;

3. did not perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument administered to the student under TEC Subchapter B, Chapter 39, and who has not in the previous or current school year subsequently performed on that instrument or another appropriate instrument at a level equal to at least 110 percent of the level of satisfactory performance on that instrument;

4. is in prekindergarten, kindergarten or grades 1, 2, or 3 and did not perform satisfactorily on a readiness test or assessment instrument administered during the current school year;

5. is pregnant or is a parent;

6. has been placed in an alternative education program in accordance with §TEC 37.006 during the preceding or current school year;

7. has been expelled in accordance with §TEC 37.007 during the preceding or current school year;

8. is currently on parole, probation, deferred prosecution, or other conditional release;

9. was previously reported through the PEIMS to have dropped out of school;

10. is a student of limited English proficiency (LEP), as defined by §TEC 29.052;

11. is in the custody or care of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or has, during the current school year, been referred to the department by a school official, officer of the juvenile court, or law enforcement official;

12. is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302 and its subsequent

    amendments; or

13. resided in the preceding school year or resides in the current school year in a

    residential placement facility in the district, including a detention facility,

    substance abuse treatment facility, emergency shelter, psychiatric hospital,

    halfway house, or foster group home.

Mentor. The term mentor originates from Homer's epic poem "The Odyssey",
where Odysseus, king of Ithaca, who fights in the Trojan War, entrusts the care of his
household to Mentor, who serves as teacher and overseer of Odysseus' son,
Telemachus. The notion evolved over time, and a mentor has become recognized as a
trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person who assists in self-actualization and
realization of desired goals (Gordon, 1997).

Mentee. References contained within this study which refer to the mentee,
represent the person who receives the benefits provided by the mentor. This person is
the recipient of a series of complex interactions that are expected to result in personal
growth and progress (Holmes, David, Hodgson, Simari, & Nishimura, 2010).

Formal mentoring. Formal programs developed within organizations that are
delivered by mentors who are recruited and selected through formal procedures. These
programs typically ensure that employees or volunteers selected as formal mentors are
matched well with mentees to provide them beneficial levels of mentoring (Weinberg &
Lankau, 2011)*.*

Informal mentoring. Informal mentoring does not entail any method of recruitment
and tends to occur naturally, as organizational clients voluntarily form relationships
(Weinberg & Lankau, 2011)*.*

Resilience. Researchers Herrman*,* Stewart, Diaz-Granados, Berger, Jackson, and Yuen (2011) suggest that there is no single agreed operational definition of resilience. Different definitions vary from quite narrow conceptualizations that focus exclusively on recovery from trauma, to wider definitions that indicate one's ability to overcome challenges and move through difficulties. According to Youssef and Luthans (2007), "resilience is the developable capacity to rebound or bounce back from adversity, conflict, and failure or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility" (p. 702).

Overview of Chapters

Chapter 2 of this study includes a review of relevant literature about mentoring and SBM programs. Chapter 3 includes a discussion of methods used during the study to obtain participant perspectives, inclusive of research site and interview procedures, and detailed description of how the data were collected, stored, and finally transcribed. Chapter 4 includes an in-depth analysis of participant perspectives and experiences with the program. Chapter 5 concludes with a research summary and further interpretation of main findings in relation to the existing literature, including implications for future research and policy, and provides several recommendations for practice.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature serves the purpose of presenting significant and relevant

research studies regarding how mentoring is defined, the history of mentoring, evolution

of mentoring, and various types of mentoring practiced, including SBM programs as a

viable means of intervention to curtail at-risk behavior for female youth. This section also

focuses on reasons females are encouraged to seek the support of a mentor, and identify

the impact mentoring has on their education and lives, in hopes of determining how to

improve current programs. A few of those reasons include outward expressions of anger,

absentee parents, and social ineptness that are analyzed in more detail. Chapter 2 also

includes a presentation of the theoretical framework guiding the interpretation of study

findings.

Mentoring Defined

The concept of mentoring has been defined in various ways. Mentoring,

according to researchers Sharma and Freeman (2014), can be described as an

intentional, nurturing, insightful, supportive, and protective process that occurs between

two or more people where the wisdom of the mentor is instilled within the protégé, also

known as the mentee.

Jocobi (1991) endeavored to define mentoring utilizing the following attributes:

1) Mentoring relationships seeks to focus on achievement

2) Mentoring reflects any or all of three broad components:

a) Emotional and psychological support,

b) Direct assistance with career and professional development,

c) Role modeling,

18

3) Mentoring relationships are reciprocal. The mentor as well as the mentee derives benefits from the relationship, and these benefits are emotional or tangible,

4) Mentoring relationships are personal, they require direct interaction,

5) Relative to mentees, mentors have greater experience, influence, and achievement in a particular domain (p. 1)

Inzer and Crawford (2005) implied that because of the complex nature of mentoring and its variety of forms, a definition must be adopted upon the nature of the relationship, anticipated rules, selection process, and the intended outcome. Careful consideration is given to not over-generalize any type of relationship as mentoring, including whether it occurs in a formal or informal environment.

History of Mentoring

Historically, the mentoring practice has its roots in antiquity. Mentoring was the primary purpose for the relationship established by "Mentor who was described by Homer, as the wise and trusted counselor whom Odysseus left in charge of his household during his travels. Athena, in the guise of Mentor, became the guardian and teacher of Odysseus's son Telemachus" (Nunez, 2007, p. 1). This relationship, documented to have occurred over nearly three millennia ago, marks the first known synergistic relationship, later referred to as mentoring.

The mentor is considered a knowledgeable guide or established leader who may occupy a senior position, rank, or status, and who possesses expertise and power, as well as a proven record of accomplishment (Goran, 2001). When used effectively, mentoring can empower both parties. It can be used to instill the desire to reach certain aspirations, balance emotional stability, and provide meaningful relationships. Mentoring is not a new concept. In fact, adolescent girls have been encouraged by older female

19

counterparts for centuries, in an attempt to prepare them to become women, and assist with homemaking and other domestic tasks. On this topic, Madigan (2009) indicated "historically, girls have been raised to assume specific and limited roles in society such as secretarial, nursing or teaching school" (p. 11). They were not allowed to choose professions typically assumed by men. To overcome such limited choices and prolonged situations perceived as disenfranchisement, an empowerment movement began to take shape, allowing women to take control of their own destiny, and therefore make unprecedented choices by following female role models.

Evolution of Mentoring

U.S. Congress passed the Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) Act in 1974, which was amended in 1992 (Pub. L. 93-415 U.S.C. 5667e et seq.) (Mentoring.org, n.d.). This act supported by Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter, Ford, and General Colin Powell, called for two million children to have mentors, safe places, health care, job skills, and opportunities for community service. In an effort to increase mentoring, Congress authorized the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency (OJJDP) to provide grant awards to support mentoring programs directed toward youth who were at-risk of delinquency, low academic achievement, dropping out of school, gang involvement, and overall educational failure (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1998). As noted by Rhodes (2002):

> No one institution - whether families, schools, church, or other school programs, can completely compensate for the social isolation that many children and adolescents experience, and each institution is stretched by the limitations of others. Different youth derive benefits from different resources, and mentoring and other youth programs can protect them against negative choices and support their healthy development. (p. 123)

Therefore, from ancient times to the present day, mentoring was perceived as a way to educate and support young people to make decisions, avoid situations leading to negative consequences, overcome difficulties, and thus live happy and accomplished lives.

Informal versus Formal Mentoring

Approximately five million youth are involved in school and community-based mentoring programs nationwide (McLearn, Colasanto, Schoen, & Shapiro, 1999). Those mentoring programs are categorized as either formal or informal. It is important to understand the nature of the two overarching types of mentoring and the role each can play within the mentee-mentor relationship.

Informal Mentoring

Informal mentoring occurs most often because of availability and need. One who has advice to share or is more experienced, and is also available and willing to provide advice, becomes a mentor to someone who may be considered to have less experience, but has an established need. Informal relationships tend to form based on chance. There is no program, no model, and the process is often non-structured. The informal mentoring paradigm has more relaxed rules (Wilson & Elman, 1990). A typical example of this mentoring type would be that of friends who seek to motivate and support one another.

Formal Mentoring

Formal mentoring programs, such as the model offered by The Turn Around Agenda, are those that give structure to the process of mentoring by overseeing the matching or assignment of mentors and mentees and by providing rules and procedures to guide the relationship (Givens-Skeaton, Baetz, & D'Abate, 2003). One primary criticism of formal mentoring relationships is that they are more superficial than naturally occurring (informal) relationships (Murray, 2001). Klauss (1981) and Kram (1985) both emphasized

that this may lead to less positive outcomes in formally established mentoring

relationships, as compared to those that are informally established. The critical

component of a formal mentoring relationship is to strengthen and maintain the

relationship between the mentee and the mentor over time (Rhodes, 2005). My research

is based on formal mentoring models which typically assume a relationship where a

caring adult consistently spends time with an adolescent who exhibits at-risk behavior,

and the intended goal is to form a mutually trusting relationship that positively impacts

youth behaviors.

Types of Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring has been discussed as a strategy for positive youth development and

as a deterrent of risky youth behavior (DuBois & Karcher, 2005). To combat female youth

from engaging in risky behaviors, a mentoring relationship with a caring adult is believed

to be one of the best strategies to refocus the female's goals. Mentoring is a complex,

synergistic relationship between at least two people. The dynamics of the relationship

can have a variety of meanings to each person (Freeman & Sharman, 2014, p. 1964),

who adopts different behaviors throughout the relationship. For instance, Phillips-Jones

(1982) described six types of mentors:

1. *Traditional mentors* are those whose informal knowledge and wisdom assist a
   usually younger protégé with life goals.
2. *Supportive bosses* are those mentors who possess a supervisory relationship
   with the mentee.
3. *Professional mentors* are those who assume the role of career-oriented
   counseling and whose services are fee-based.
4. *Patrons* are those mentors who are well-connected clients of society and able to
   use influence and financial means to prepare the mentee for a chosen career.

5. *Organizational sponsors* tend to be colleagues of the mentee and help ensure promotional opportunities within an organization.

6. *Invisible godparents* silently assist the mentee reach predetermined goals, such as those related to a career. Influence is usually endeavored through recommendations to those in positions of authority (p. 26-27).

For this study, I considered the traditional mentoring model, offered through an assignment process fostered by the mentoring organization, The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. The Turn Around Agenda offers both male and female students, who attend school in underserved communities, an opportunity to excel in areas where there are known deficits. Through this program, traditional mentoring is extended to assist with improvement of problem-solving skills to increase the self-esteem of the mentee. This is accomplished by pairing gender-specific adults with a student who is at-risk based on several factors, which may or may include academic concerns. These adults are trained by their host organization, and are usually older and considered more knowledgeable. These adult volunteers are willing to offer time and support to individual students who may benefit from informal counseling, support, and advice that would help the mentee achieve the desired outcome.

The Scope of Mentoring Relationships

The scope of mentoring relationships is to respond to the needs of mentees and to help them be successful and happy in life. Literature review identifies several goals of mentoring relationships (e.g., empowerment, resilience) that are long-term benefits for mentees.

Mentoring for Empowerment

The essence of empowerment is rooted in a definition derived from Zimmerman (2000) that associates empowerment to "the psychological aspects of processes by which people gain greater control over their lives, participate in democratic decision-making, and develop critical awareness of their sociopolitical environments" (p. 114). Freeman and Sharman (2014) postulated the goal of mentoring should be based on "strategies that are known to facilitate relationship building and personal empowerment and which draw on the richness of individuals working collaboratively" (p. 2). Mentoring for empowerment is relevant to this research, which is focused on the perspectives of young women and the relationships they experience. These relationships should seek to empower them in school, later in the workforce, family, and community. According to Takei (1995), empowerment must be based on an "understanding and orientation toward internal consciousness" of self-actualization (p. 117). Liberation movements and self-actualization occurs when young girls mature into women. Over time, these mature women form new bonds with younger girls and begin to share lessons learned through various problem-solving strategies. The younger generations work closely with the mature women to begin creating opportunities for change, and the mentoring cycle continues. The mentoring relationship is the foundation of empowerment for many of the young women whose experiences are the essence of this research.

Unfortunately, research to support the notion of women empowerment through mentoring is limited. Empowering young women is a critical element of the mentoring relationship, because it is a required feature of resiliency that supports the female adolescent to overcome barriers and successfully enter adulthood. Mentors act as change agents who help young women identify tools and strategies leading to empowerment, resiliency, and ultimately, self-actualization.

Mentoring for Resilience

Much like mentoring, resilience can be difficult to define, due to the varying

degrees and concepts (Luthar, Cicchetti & Becker, 2000). The term often refers to

overcoming difficulties associated with risk factors that lead to a diminished quality of life.

Many risk factors are associated with poverty. Some risk factors may be mental and

include depression, mental illness; while other factors may be physical and include

overall poor health. Other risk factors include abuse of varying types, single-parent

households, and unemployment, as well as lack of educational opportunities. Garmezy

(1991) described these deficits as "multiple adverse conditions such as socioeconomic

disadvantage and associated risks" (pp. 459-460). The inability to exert control over

these factors may cause the at-risk female to become angry and act in a manner not

typically perceived as positive and productive.

It is important to "distinguish between overt competence and internal emotional

functioning to describe resilience, since children can appear to be normal while enduring

internal distress" (Luthar & Ziglar, 1991, p. 6). Even at-risk girls who appear to display

overt competence may indeed be distressed internally, and are in dire need of a support

system. Appleyard, Egeland, Dulmen and Sroufe (2005) asserted, "the greater the risk

gradient, the greater the likelihood of a poor outcome" (p. 5). When at-risk adolescents

endure situations caused by increased risk factors for a substantial amount of time, the

likelihood that emotional distress will occur is higher, thus resulting in diminished

relationships and overall quality of life.

Researchers Coleman and Haggar (2007) alleged that the earlier the

disadvantages occur and the longer the disadvantage has persisted, the lower the

likelihood that protective factors are able to contribute to resiliency. For this study, the

following definition presented by Rutter (1990) will be used to describe resilience as "the

phenomenon of maintaining adaptive functioning despite serious risk hazards" (p. 209). It should be noted that not all at-risk females succumb to negative behavior caused by the presence of risk factors. Resiliency is not developed because of a single event, but rather through a series of events involving the student who receives support and succeed in various contexts (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1997). In fact, many at-risk girls are able to grow into mature, competent adult women despite their adverse childhood circumstances. Research posited that urban students will reach greater levels of success, and thus reduce the achievement gap if the students' interactions with family, peers, community and the schools produce protective factors for the ever-existing barriers (Baker, 1997; Bernard, 1991; Johnson, 1997; Wasonga, Christman & Kilmer, 2003).

Additional research shows that resilient behavior may not always include a cyclical process of oppression. Research by Garmezy (1991) details the lives of children living in poverty. Fortunately, these adolescents did not show signs of repeating what was once believed to be a cyclical process of perpetuating similar patterns of behavior experienced by their adult caregivers. Through the trials engendered by impoverished circumstances, many adolescent females appear to live normal, high functioning lives *despite adversity*, because they demonstrate resiliency. When a successful mentoring relationship is established, the goal is to develop resiliency in these young people and to assist the at-risk females with a support system to navigate situations dominated by poverty. Despite evidence of dysfunction within the family unit, studies performed by researcher Werner and Smith (2001) on the effects of childhood resilience have found that at least two factors may have a significant outcome on the individual, including family and community, and are associated with positive outcomes despite significant risk.

Mentoring for Academic Success

While research supports the positive effect of mentoring in general, more specific definitions inform our understanding of the process. For example, mentoring for academic purposes is also known as tutoring. This relationship is usually informal and is typically short-term. Its intended effects are to increase the academic achievement of the student who receives the service. Although this form of mentoring does not seek to form a long-term relationship, a connection can often be found when the same classroom teacher who provides daily instruction or a high-performing peer performs the tutoring. When a peer meets academic needs, this process is known as peer tutoring. Peer tutoring refers to an instructional method that uses pairings of high performing students to tutor lower performing students in a class-wide setting or in a common venue outside of school under the supervision of a teacher, and it can be viewed like a form of mentoring helping to achieve short-term goals.

Several agencies provide this fee-based service, but when offered in an in-school setting, the program is usually free to students, and is believed to be a beneficial means to assist students who struggle with academic concepts. In a study conducted by researchers Kamps, Barbetta, Leonard, and Delquadri (1994), an analysis of participants who asked to read with peers concluded a beneficial method of assisting student learning included peer tutoring. This study further established how peer tutoring can be a beneficial strategy for educators to facilitate differentiated learning without stigmatizing and alienating students. When peer tutoring is implemented in a class-wide setting, students can approach the curriculum at their individual learning level, using strategies tailored to individual mentees.

Reasons At-Risk Females Seek Mentors

Another focus of this literature review is to explore the reasons (e.g., possible unfavorable circumstances) revealed during mentorship relationships that would explain why at-risk females seek the support of a mentor. Most relevant literature involving at-risk youth focus on socio-emotional and behavioral aspects as reasons to seek the support of a mentor and argue that most mentoring programs have, at the very least, a minute effect on improving students' academic achievement, social behavior, and self-esteem.

However, expectations also include development and implementation of programs to be grounded in research that guides practitioners on how to make mentoring programs more beneficial and maximize the positive outcomes for mentees because at-risk females encounter socio-emotional concerns not often addressed by the school curriculum, counselor, or parents. Such concerns include anger, absentee parents, social inadequacies and sexual promiscuity.

Anger

Adolescence represents a vulnerable developmental period when young people are susceptible to establishing lifelong behavior patterns associated with poor life, health, and educational outcomes (McGee & Williams, 2000). In an attempt to support the lived experiences of the mentees depicted in this research, it important to understand the emotions that speak to the at-risk behavior of these young women. Literature supports that females who engage in at-risk behaviors do so in an attempt to suppress emotions unable to be articulated in a socially acceptable manner. In a study regarding anger, women described "storing" their suppressed anger until "it just rolls up into a big ball and you're not even sure what it's about" (Thomas, Groer, Davis, Droppleman, Mozingo & Pierce, 1998, p. 316).

Absentee Parents

Many studies have identified the absence of the biological father from the home as a major factor leading to at-risk behavior. One such study conducted by Thomas (2005) focused on adolescent females who experienced early or late absence of the biological father. In his study, the mothers were encouraged to complete questionnaires, and the females interviewed were selected from girls ages 6-13. The study conducted by Thomas (2005) attempted to show how an absentee father can either positively affect or negatively impact the life of the female child. Research conducted by Thomas (2005) revealed that anger is often "inextricable from hurt, sadness, disillusionment, disappointment, and other painful feelings," and produces greater deficits in the at-risk female (p. 508), such as those emotions caused by the absentee father.

Social Inadequacies and Sexual Promiscuity

"During adolescence, females experience tremendous changes: social, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual" (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [NCDPI], 2004, p. 6), and their future identity depends on their adolescence experiences. If not properly nurtured, the at-risk female can develop a negative sense of self and begin to participate in activities that could bring negative experiences during life course, unless an intervention occurs. That intervention could involve parents, social organizations, or a mentor (or a combination of sources). While these events are a natural part of life, many of these experiences introduce the adolescent female to adult behaviors that may create feelings of social inadequacies (NCDPI, 2004). Sigfusdottir and Silver (2009) postulate that negative life experiences are a precursor to risky adolescent behavior, including decreased academic readiness (De Anda, Bradley, Collada, Dunn, Kubota, Hollister, & Wadsworth, 1997).

As adolescent females enter adulthood, the intent is to ensure exposure to positive aspects of life, thus minimizing the effects of risk factors. The intent is for these adolescent females to be empowered to make sound decisions that will positively impact their lives.

Theoretical Framework

The mentoring relationship is complex, and the roles of mentors are diverse. Theorists such as Zey (1984) described a mentor using terms such as "adviser, sponsor or teacher" (p. 27). Conversely, because of the complex nature of the relationship, researchers such as Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson and McKee (1978) agreed that attempting to define the mentoring process using single terms often leads to inaccuracies or limitations that do not allow to fully encompass the true nature of the relationship. Instead, mentoring theorists have attempted to define the relationship that exists between the two human beings, rather than focusing on defining the roles of those involved. To provide a theoretical framework for this study, I adopt elements from the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1980) that developed the notion of strong and lasting relationships. A wide range of research has shown that the support found in close relationships continues to be important into adolescence (Kenny, 1987).

Another useful framework for the study is social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) that explains how learning and cognition occur in a social context through observation and direct interactions. Additionally, social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) promotes self-efficacy as an important determinant of motivation and performance. The formation of self-efficacy is subject to social influence (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Gist & Mitchell, 1992). These features are sought after and desired either to be acquired or strengthened through the mentoring process.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory was originally conceptualized in relation to ethological, biological, and behaviorally observable phenomena (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1980) further developed his theory to state that children are "biologically pre-programmed to form attachments with others" (p. 60). These attachments can be also the result of relationships formed with a mentor. As such, when at-risk females have early access to a mentor, the presumption is of some need for immediate assistance for the mentee. This bond, often involving a caregiver, parent or mentor is one of significant importance in the life of an adolescent child. The theory describes that human beings' innate behavior patterns seek to promote and maintain relationships with others; and it suggests that children develop strong bonds with others, particularly with adults, and therefore become *attached*. Such an attachment, as provided by a consistent and stable caregiver, and described by Bowlby's theory, creates a safe environment for the young person. According to Lewis (2001), "Bowlby's theory postulates that the first and primary attachment figure can be any caregiver, but is most often the mother, a model which serves as a prototype for all other social relationships" (p. 8). As noted by Nunez (2007):

> an investigation of attachment representations and previous mentor-like
> experiences at home and in school would shed light to some of the reasons why
> many students chose to join mentoring programs and others declined, even
> though mentoring has been linked to positive outcomes and is offered for free as
> part of their academic experience. (p. 10)

Conclusively, as children or youth become attached, they begin to observe and develop behavior patterns like those being observed, as supported by the social learning theory.

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory, first presented by Albert Bandura (1971), is based on the premise that people learn by observing the behavioral patterns of others, whether positive or negative. Therefore, through the lens of social learning theory, mentoring "seeks to provide and enhance the bond created between the caregiver and individual, but also to provide a positive role model" (Nunez, 2007, p. 2), after which a young adolescent girl can pattern her behavior. When at-risk girls are provided with a positive role model by being exposed at an early age to a mentoring relationship, the premise is that girls become better equipped to manage the complexities and adversities of daily life, and therefore perform better in school and grow into more productive citizens.

Chapter Summary

In summary, attempts to identify the bond shared between the mentor and the mentee using single descriptors are rarely able to encompass the scope of the mentoring relationship. The common theme noted between the studies presented above is the shared nurturing relationship that provides the mentee a source of support through a transitional phase or helps the mentee become better integrated into society. As Tinto (1993) asserted that social integration is imperative for academic success, helping youth establish meaningful social relationships could positively affect their academic and career development. Research shows that without the positive integration provided by a mentor, the mentee is left to a life of chance, and perhaps diminished opportunities. This is especially true for those who are impoverished and lack a source of support.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

In this chapter, I present the methods utilized to complete this qualitative

research study. I first present the research questions intended to be addressed, as well

as the data sources that were used to examine the mentoring experience. I then discuss

the data collection procedures, including the timeline, the program and site selected, and

the demographics of the school served by the SBM program. I also include details on

how the study participants were selected, as well as provide details of the steps in the

data collection process. Regarding the study design, I elaborate on two

phenomenological approaches that have shaped mentoring and have been combined to

guide data analysis. In this chapter, I also address issues of confidentiality and

trustworthiness during the study.

Research Questions

I restate the two research questions, and briefly summarize the specific methodologies

for data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

1) How are the experiences of females who engage in at-risk behavior affected

by the mentoring relationship?

The study included separate interviews with two of the mentees through a

campus-based mentoring program referred to as The TurnAround Agenda Outreach

Center. The program site director was also interviewed to determine his perspective on

the program benefits, perceived benefits, and his experience with the mentors. Mentees

were initially identified by the site director based on predetermined parameters. These

parameters were that female students should be between the ages of 15-18, attend a

large high school in Dallas/Fort Worth area, and are currently being mentored by an adult

through The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center program. To be a mentee, the female

33

adolescents must have, at some point, been considered to exhibit at-risk based on behavior, academics, or family dynamics. Each female participant was asked to seek parental consent before participating in at least one interview and observation of an on-campus session to gain knowledge of her experiences with the program and her mentor. Interviews included a series of common questions and additional questions based on responses to determine the impact of the program and its strategies as provided by the mentor. Each interview was recorded using a digital recorder, transcribed, and later coded. Subsequently, transcriptions were analyzed for common themes. Each mentee and mentor had the opportunity to participate in an observation of a typical session in which researcher participation was excluded. All mentee interviews took place on the campus of a large high school in Dallas/Fort Worth area with the consent of the parent and the mentor. The data gathered from these interviews were important to determine overall program benefits from the perspective of the female adolescent considered to be at-risk.

2) Which strategies do mentors identify as most beneficial and which ones are least beneficial on shaping self-esteem, and in the development of strong parental and social relationships for female youth who engage in at-risk behaviors?

The two volunteer mentors of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center who mentored the two student participants were included in the study. Interviews of these mentors included a series of common questions about mentoring strategies and subsequent questions based on responses to determine their role as mentors and how mentorship likely impacts the lives of the female adolescents. Each interview was recorded using a digital recorder, transcribed and later coded. Each transcription was analyzed for common themes. In addition, each mentee and mentor participated in an

observation of a typical session, in which researcher had a passive participation and observed some of the strategies identified during the interviews.

Mentor interviews took place at locations chosen by the adult mentor which included a private residence and a local coffee shop. Mentors were asked to provide details of conversations and personality traits of their mentees to determine if their role as the mentor could be used as a determining factor in the positive changes identified during the life course of females considered to be at-risk. Mentors were asked to describe their strategies for building and maintaining relationships. Mentors were also asked which of those strategies were most and least beneficial on making an impact on the three areas of focus for the female considered to be at-risk, which include self-esteem, social, and parental relationships. This data were used to determine overall program benefits as it pertains to the mentors' perceptions of the impact on the mentees. Table 3.1 summarizes the research design for this study by indicating for each research question from whom and how will be the data collected, and how the data will be analyzed.

Table 3.1: Research Design

Research questions	Participants	Methods of Data Collection	Data analysis
1) How are the experiences of females who engage in at-risk behavior affected by the mentoring relationship?	Mentors Mentees	Interviews Observations	Audio recording, Transcribing, Coding and Analyzing textual data

2) Which strategies do mentors identify as most beneficial and which ones are least beneficial on shaping self-esteem, and in the development of strong parental and social relationships for female youth who engage in at-risk behaviors?	Mentors Site Director Mentees	Interviews Observations	Audio recording, Transcribing, Coding and Analyzing textual data

Study Design

Phenomenological Approach

According to Giorgi and Giorgi (2003), "phenomenological qualitative research exists to address experiences that seek "to capture as closely as possible the way in which the phenomenon is experienced within the context in which the experience takes place" (p. 27). Through rich narratives, I seek to depict participant responses that attempt to highlight their lived experiences. This research relies upon the belief presented by Huesserl (1982) which defies to allow "preconceived theories form our experience but rather let our experience determine our theories" (p. 320). Additionally, Husserl "intended to study consciousness and how phenomena in the world are constituted by the human consciousness" (p. 320).

In examining the human experience, another leading researcher, van Manen (1990), details six research activities comprising the methodological structure of how this research will be conducted:

1) Turning to the nature of lived experience

2) Investigating experience as we live it

3) Reflecting on essential themes

4) The art of writing and re-writing

5) Maintaining a strong and oriented relation to lived experience

6) Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection process occurred in a series of six critical phases and took approximately six to eight months. The first phase included preparing to receive consent from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). This process took approximately two months and required obtaining consent from the interim superintendent of the district where high school and SBM program were located, and the site director for The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center.

Upon receipt of approval from the IRB, I began the second phase of the research process, which included establishing a meeting with the site director to determine who met the desired criteria for participation in the study. This process took approximately one month. The site director was provided with an overview of participant requirements. The site director consulted with available female mentors and provided the names of six potential mentee-mentor pairs. After review of six mentee-mentor pairs, I invited them to participate, and two mentor-mentee pairs responded. I contacted the two mentors and two mentees for a group interest meeting. The third phase of the data collection process included a scheduled meeting with the two mentees and their mentors, to explain the purpose of the study and provide consent forms for participation (Appendices A, B, and C) prior to commencement of the interview process. The fourth phase of the research process included separate interviews first with the mentees and then the mentors, and finally the site director using pre-established protocols (Appendices D, E, and F). This process took approximately one month. The fifth phase included subsequent meetings

37

with each pair of mentees and mentors to observe their interactions during a typical mentoring session. During this phase, mentees and mentors were also provided with transcripts to review for accuracy of interviews' information.

After conclusion of all interviews and observation sessions, the six phase was implemented and included transcriptions and analyses of relevant themes. The interview, transcription, and data analysis process took approximately three months. In an effort to triangulate the information, I collected data from mentees, as well as their mentors, and the site director through a combination of interviews and observations.

Research Site

The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center, which is sponsored by Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church in Oak Cliff, Texas, exists to pair both male and female adolescent students, who exhibit certain at-risk behaviors, with a community mentor. Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church is a large non-denominational church pastored by Dr. Tony Evans, author, philanthropist, and community leader, who has a passion and a heart for servant leadership. His membership is stated to have over 10,000 members who regularly attend services offered at the church. His outreach programs extend far beyond church services, and into areas such as college-readiness programs, food pantry services, homeless support, and missionary work.

The mentoring activities provided by TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center are the area of focus for this study. Many students from area schools participate in The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center mentoring program. The students interviewed in this study were selected from a large high school in Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex that served in the academic year 2015/2016 approximately 3,986 students in grades 9-12. It is the only traditional high school in the city, which does not include the credit recovery

campus designated for high school students who require additional time to complete their education.

It is important to mention that TurnAround program is facilitated in predominately urban areas occupied mostly by African American and Hispanic residents. These areas are typically represented by students who are underserved by their communities. The mentoring program is divided into five clusters, overseen by five area coordinators, between four school districts located in the cities of Cedar Hill, Duncanville, Dallas, and Lancaster.

Although no demographic and academic data exist for students attending The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center, the data for the high school where the mentoring takes place provide a descriptive overview of the student population potentially serviced by the program. This large high school in Dallas/Fort Worth area has a current graduation rate of 62%, which is lower than the state average in Texas of 83%. The high school has a below average attendance rate of 94.5% (2013-2014) compared to the state average of 95.9%. The campus has 68% economically disadvantaged students, which is higher than the state average of 58%, and has a very large minority student population (Table 3-2).

Table 3-2: Race/Ethnicity Composition: Campus, District and State

Race/Ethnicity	Campus	District	State
African American	45.0%	40.7%	12.6%
Hispanic	46.8%	50.8%	52.0%
White	5.3%	5.0%	28.9%
American Indian	0.3%	0.8%	0.4%
Asian	1.8%	1.7%	3.9%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Two or More Races	0.7%	0.9%	2.0%

Texas Education Agency 2015

Research Sample

I used purposeful sampling to identify the research participants. The sample units according to Bryman (2012) are "chosen because they have particular features or characteristics which enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and questions which are sought by the researcher" (p. 113). To address the two research questions of the study, I relied upon five individuals: two mentees and their two mentors. In addition, relevant responses were also collected from the site director, who also provided general information about the program. The research sample includes N=5 participants.

Mentors, mentees, and the site director were asked to consent to interviews and observations. Each female participant also had to provide parental consent to participate in the interview and observation sessions. Participation was limited, due to the sparse acceptance rate of potential participants prior to the deadline. Although there were two other females who wanted to participate, they were unable to obtain consent prior to the deadline. However, I am confident that data saturation was achieved with the two pairs of mentees and mentors who submitted consent prior to the proposed deadline.

Prior to selection of participants, each mentor was consulted to ensure interest, prior to meeting with mentees to explain the study. Students were selected based on mentor pairing and participation interest in the study. Adolescent girls are expected, to be at least 15, but not older than 18 years old, and current clients of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. During the interviews, mentees were asked to share the experiences related to their behavior, which may have been affected by the mentoring relationship. The female mentees were at-risk, whether through academic or behavior history. At-risk behaviors may include, but are not limited to, anger/aggression, fighting, sexual promiscuity, poor academic performance, diminished school attendance, and being victims of abuse or neglect.

The mentors are volunteers who are members of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, and who have completed training, background verifications, and been provided with mentees to monitor until graduation. Mentors were asked to provide details of feedback on strategies used with females who had been identified as engaging in at-risk behaviors identify as most beneficial and which ones are least beneficial on their self-esteem, and the development of strong parental and social relationships.

The site director was asked to provide clarity of program guidelines, inclusive of mentor selection and recruitment, training, and retention of mentors. The program at the high school had only one site director who managed program guidelines and served as the gatekeeper. Hatch (2002) suggested to assist participants with developing and maintaining trust throughout the interview and observation process, a gatekeeper is essential due to their ability to serve as an intermediary between the participants and researcher, and assists by identifying potential participants to be included in the study. The site director provided details on the program and its intended outcome as it relates to the mentees and mentors at the high school, and helped select the mentee-mentor pairs.

Table 3-3 presents some characteristics of the female mentees in the sample and the names of respective mentors. Pseudonyms have been used to protect the privacy and identity of each participant.

Table 3-3: Research Sample

Mentee	Mentor	Grade	Age	Ethnic decent	Length of time in program	Father at home-location	Consistent mentor contact	Believes mentor is beneficial
Loretta	Ms. Sampson	11	16	Black	1 year	No (in prison)	Yes	Yes
Sally	Ms. Phillips	10	15	Black	2 years	No (in another state)	Yes	Yes

Interviews

To triangulate the information, I collected data from mentees, as well as their mentors, and the site director. The interview process was adapted from Spencer and Liang (2009). Interviews and observations were conducted in an effort to gain in-depth perspectives from each participant as well as their interactions (Spencer & Liang, 2009). Semi-structured interviews (Seidman, 1991) were conducted with the site director, adolescent female mentees, and mentors. Additionally, the concept of "truth space" was adapted to this study (Onwuegbuzie, 2003, p. 400). As Onwuegbuzie suggested, the qualitative researcher should be able to use the sample of words and observations that comprise the data, to recreate a "truth space" that accurately portrays the experience of the individual in a particular context. Every attempt was made to ensure that each participant's voice was truthfully represented. No participant responses were amended during data analysis.

Interviews took place at a location deemed appropriate by the participants, with the high school serving as the primary meeting, and were expected to last approximately 30-45 minutes. Each participant had the opportunity to be invited for one follow-up interview, if necessary, to clarify any misconceptions or ambiguity related to the initial interview. All program participants, who included both mentees and mentors, were interviewed in private settings, and were asked a series of questions based on their relationship with the mentor/mentee, personal experiences with the program, program benefits, and mentor benefits, including strategies if any.

Interview Protocols

Three semi-structured interview protocols were developed: the primary interview protocol, which was used specifically for the mentee, included questions about the individual experiences of the student (see Appendix D). In a semi-structured interview, according to Brinkman (2014), the researcher is expected to provide some structure, based on her research interests and interview guide, but works flexibly with the guide and allows room for the respondent's more spontaneous descriptions and narratives (p. 1008). The semi-structured interview protocols allowed for common and probing questions to be asked, based on participant responses. The second interview protocol was specifically for the mentor, and used to address the behavior of the mentee during mentoring sessions (see Appendix E) and the strategies used to build the relationship. The final interview protocol was prepared for the site director and was used to address the benefits of the selection procedure performed by the organization (see Appendix F). The interview protocols allowed for a series of common questions and two to three probing questions based on participant responses. Follow-up interviews were not required. At the conclusion of the study, each participant received lunch with a value not to exceed $10.

Observations

The goal of observing the mentor and mentee meeting was to gain perspectives on their interactions in a given setting, such as that provided by The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. Each observation took place at the high school during agreed upon session times, and lasted for the duration of the mentee-mentor session (approximately 45 minutes). The researcher had a passive participation during these sessions, but observations were used to validate some of the findings identified during the interviews. Using data from different sources allows one to gain a more comprehensive picture of the

phenomenon being studied, as well as facilitating data triangulation, which improves the reliability of findings (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005).

Data Storage

All original documents, such as the interview protocol questions, were requested, collected, photocopied, reviewed for accuracy by the participant, and returned to secured storage, kept in the possession of the researcher. All documents, received and created, were stored in a digital file on the password-protected electronic device of the researcher.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality was strictly maintained both throughout the study and in the future use of results for presentation or publication. Only the primary investigator had knowledge of which data pertain to individual participants. Transfer of documents between researcher and participants (for example, consent forms, transcribed interview data) was done as to ensure confidentiality by providing participants with envelopes to seal and conceal all returned documents. All data obtained from transcribed interviews and observations was maintained within a password-protected file in the possession of the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedures

Onwuegbuzie (2002) stated, "Validity is a verification process built into the research study with continual checks for credibility, defensibility and plausibility" (p. 61). The process of transcribing the interviews allowed for data acquaintance (Riessman, 1993). All audio data were reviewed and transcribed by the researcher. Subsequent to transcription, the data were then analyzed for themes consistent with the research questions. After careful review and analysis, I was able to conclude that saturation of

data was reached due to recurring comments and themes consistent with at-risk

behaviors. If data saturation had not been reached with the existing participants, I was

prepared to interview a new set of participants who expressed interest after the original

deadline expired. Researchers Bowen (2008), Kerr, Nixon & Wild (2010) determined that

failure to reach data saturation has an impact on the quality of the research conducted

and hampers content validity, therefore ensuring data saturation was considered a critical

phase of the data analysis process.

After interview transcription, data were coded using highlighters to determine

common descriptors. When categories became apparent, I was able to chart recurring

themes based on similarities. The next phase of data analysis included axial coding.

During this process, I created a conceptual model by identifying discrete categories that

are repeatedly compared and combined until a coherent picture is formed (Strauss &

Corbin, 1990). Final themes were categorized by overall descriptors related to participant

perspectives and included in a chart for visual reference.

Trustworthiness

This study uses a two-step approach to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative

research. The first step of the approach was originally proposed by Carmichael (2007):

"1) triangulation of data collected from interviews, observations, and document analysis

using 2) articulation of the assumptions and biases of the researcher" (pp. 75-76). In the

first step, triangulation was achieved by collection of data from multiple sources: female

adolescents, mentors, and the site director. The combined use of these elements

assisted in diminishing inevitable internal and external bias, and provided in-depth

perspectives from all stakeholders (mentor, parent, and mentee).

I further attempted to establish trustworthiness in the second step of the study

using a process referred to as member checking (Van Maanen, 1983) to articulate

assumptions. During this process, attempts were made to compare responses to common questions with the responses of the other participants, to further sustain credibility. Corroboration of participant experiences and perspectives was instituted by comparing the needs and information-seeking action described by one individual with those of others in a comparable position (Shenton, 2004).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical consideration is important in qualitative research to ensure participants receive complete information about the study and its implications, and are fully aware of their right to withdraw from the study. Alderson and Morrow (2004) emphasized one purpose of ethical reflection is to balance the potential risks of research against the likely benefits. Individual participant names were neither made public nor used in written documents, except to allow maintenance of accurate records by researcher during interview transcription. Individual consent forms were hand-delivered to all participants at The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. Verification of receipt was required to proceeding with research or data collection (see Appendix A, Invitation to Participate and Parent Consent and Appendix B, Child Assent).

Institution Review Board Approval

Institution Review Board (IRB) must approve the proposed non-exempt research with involvement of human subjects. Following the acceptance of the proposal by the dissertation advisory committee, an IRB protocol was prepared and submitted to the University of Texas at Arlington Institutional Review Board to obtain approval to conduct the study ensuring the protection of Human Subjects in Research. In addition, an approval to conduct research was obtained from the Interim District Superintendent to conduct research in the high school hosting The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center.

Limitations of the Research Design

Limitations of this study included the following: sample bias, lack of definitive causal correlations, use of a homogenous population, reliance on self-reporting. As indicated by Carmichael (2007), "in qualitative research, the primary instrument is human" (p. 76). The primary instruments used in this research were semi-structured interview protocols for each group of participants (that is, mentee, mentor, and site director). There is always the chance that dishonesty, even human error may occur. I fully expect participants were honest about experiences although in a study performed by Barber (1976), the author concluded, "the researcher is naïve to believe that dishonesty is unique and aberrant" (p. 38). Thus, the study is dependent on subjects' honesty, so accurate findings may be limited by participants' dishonesty. To overcome some of these limitations, I included observations in the study to validate some findings.

Interaction between participants and researcher during the interview may also create bias. I was able to overcome bias by recognizing and acknowledging a personal predisposition to mentoring, as well as possessing a fundamental belief in the basic elements of mentoring and the profound impact its premise can have on intended participants. I was also able to overcome bias by collecting and using triangulated data involving the mentor and mentee. Further attempts to overcome bias were utilized by allowing another independent researcher (i.e., a colleague in my doctoral program, and two postgraduate professionals who hold doctorate degrees) to review the protocols prior to interviewing all participants.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to examine whether the school-based mentoring program was beneficial from the perspectives of mentees and mentors involved in the process. The overarching question relates to which methods of mentoring, if any, have a positive effect on the social behaviors of girls who exhibit at-risk behaviors that may otherwise have an adverse effect on their life course. Previous research supports the assumption that female students who are empowered by female mentors are more likely to experience positive changes in social interactions, academics, and emotional efficacy. For data analysis, I referred to Bogdan and Biklen's (1982) work that defines qualitative data analysis as "working with data, organizing it, breaking it into manageable units, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others" (1982, p. 145).

Interviews were conducted, and data were analyzed, synthesized and categorized by common themes. The themes were derived from participant responses based on life experiences, social, and emotional behaviors. Findings were organized by common themes associated with the corresponding research question (See Table 3-1). In analyzing the data, I adapted a procedure known as *bracketing*. In this procedure, as presented by Keen (1975) states:

> The phenomenological reduction is a conscious, effortful, opening of ourselves to the phenomenon *as a phenomenon*. We want not to see this event as an example of this or that theory that we have we want to see it as a phenomenon in its own right, with its own meaning and structure. Anybody can hear words that were spoken; to listen for the meaning as they eventually emerged from the event is to have adopted an attitude of openness to the phenomenon in its

48

inherent meaningfulness. It is to have 'bracketed' our response to separate parts of the conversation and to have let the event emerge as a meaningful whole. (p. 38)

The first research question focuses on the experiences of the mentee. Data analysis reveals some of the common themes that included: anger, family issues, social inadequacies, sexual promiscuity, academic deficits, and spirituality. The presentation of each theme includes synthesized notes from each mentee-mentor pair, based on how that theme occurred, if at all, and delves into the complexity of the mentee-mentor relationship. The information was collected from each mentee and their mentor during interviews, as well as observation sessions involving both mentees and their mentors.

The second research question was based on the mentor's perspective and the strategies each used to build relationships with their female mentees. This question sought to gain a deeper perspective on the mentee-mentor relationship from the perspective of the mentor. The second question was also used to help determine overall program benefits from the perspective of the site director. Themes which emerged from this question included spirituality, depression, positive self-image, and social acceptance. The information was collected from each mentor during interviews and conversations shared during observation sessions involving both mentees and their mentors. Data were also collected from interviews with the site director.

While in this chapter I present the findings by following the main themes identified in the data, in Chapter 5, I attempt to synthesize how the main findings are related to the literature and the social theories introduced in Chapter 2.

Research Question #1

How are the experiences of females who engage in at-risk behavior affected by

the mentoring relationship?

Anger

The female participants in this study were basically strangers to each other but shared uniquely similar experiences. Both female adolescents expressed anger brought about from various experiences. One of the students was very withdrawn and soft spoken, while the other was outspoken and boisterous; yet, both struggled to manage anger. Although they had different mentors, they shared similar experiences that helped them to not only target the source of their anger, but to also find ways to manage their feelings in a positive and productive way.

Sally alleged that her anger has calmed down significantly. She stated that she "is not nearly as angry as she once was." After being referred to the program during her ninth grade year, Sally alleged that she "was pretty bad, and felt that she needed a mentor" to help her overcome her anger. During her interview session, Sally shared, "I was just angry, and I didn't know why." She praised her mentor, Ms. Phillips, for empowering her with tools that helped to manage her feelings through of a series of actions. These actions included journal writing and talking about how she was feeling, rather than internalizing her thoughts. Unfortunately, this often resulted in negative actions, including frequent physical altercations, sexual promiscuity, and inappropriate comments to figures of authority, mainly teachers. Sally further elaborated:

It wasn't just my mentor. It was also me, my decisions, my desire to change. I knew I couldn't continue doing the stuff I was doing and make it. I knew I was doing wrong, but I just mad, mad all the time. I decided to start making changes at school and do better because I was tired of getting into trouble.

Loretta, the oldest of the mentees, shared a similar experience. Loretta was initially unable to express the source of her anger. After an expression that her anger was the reason she was part of the mentor program, she believed that her school counselor was the initial reason for the referral. She believed that her anger "often leads her to more trouble" and she often "struggles to control it." When she was asked about other sources of anger, she mentioned her father, and tears began to well in her eyes. At-risk females often fall victims to emotions that are beyond their control. Anger is the most common emotion among females. Female emotion, as it pertains to anger, is largely recognized as a *taboo topic* where there is little research to support this phenomenon, (Lerner, 1977). In fact, as expressed by Thomas (1993, p. 506), "family members were the most frequently cited triggers of women's anger, although women reported unwillingness to discuss their anger with these same family members." In studies that sought to determine the sources and manifestation of anger in women, research falls short to establish causal effects and only suggest correlations among factors. Such studies "do not permit examination of causal sequences" (Widom & Kuhns, 1996, p. 1607). As the interviews progressed, more experiences were disclosed that revealed the source of the deepest anger: absentee fathers and unaffectionate mothers.

Ms. Sampson, Loretta's mentor, noted throughout our conversation that "her girls are very angry and are willing to fight at the drop of a hat, whether because of looking at someone wrong or something like that. My God! It's just amazing!" She declared that she spends a lot of time discussing anger with her girls, but not as much time as she would like.

When Ms. Sampson was asked if the girls were aware of why they had a mentor she stated:

Although I know why the girls may have been referred, I consider that information confidential and I try to allow the girls to tell me why they believed they were referred. I think this helps build trust and more effective communication my girls. Because Ms. Phillips only has one mentee, and it was previously mentioned that her mentee was aware of why she had a mentor, this question was not asked.

Ms. Sampson recalled an incident where she believed her mentoring efforts were beneficial to a mentee:

One of my girls recently got a new job. She felt that she was disrespected by her employer who she felt called her a name. The young lady was ready to quit. She called him several names and was very angry. I helped her process through the incident by helping her to see the bigger picture. I'm not saying that she stayed because of me, but I am saying that I helped her to process through her anger. She is still at that job.

Ms. Sampson would like to believe that her mentee "feels that she is invested and that she cares about her [well-being] as a person. It's not just that she is doing something [to past time], but that her role is meaningful." Ms. Sampson still appeared somewhat plagued by the events of her past mentoring experiences, but has been able to ease her hurt seemingly by helping her "girls" who share similar experiences. Perhaps the girls whom she mentors helped her in similar ways that she has managed to help them.

Ms. Phillips recalled a time where she believed her strategies as a mentor were beneficial:

I remember I had to set a goal for Loretta's behavior. She seemed to be in little minor trouble for skipping class, showing up late, that kind of stuff. I think she had even been suspended. When she gets suspended we don't get to spend time

together because my schedule does not allow me to go over there [to the Summit

Alternative Center]. I decided to help her to set a goal where she would follow all

the rules for 30 days and I would bring her something special. At the end of 30

days, she got a little small gift because she showed me that she could do it

[follow the rules].

While most of the issues experienced by the mentees were related to anger, the

interviews revealed that the source of that anger was linked to family structure, in the

form of absentee fathers and disconnected mothers.

Family Issues: Absentee Fathers and Unaffectionate Mothers

Both mentees and one mentor shared feelings of animosity towards their fathers

who left for the following reasons:

Mentee 1) imprisonment

Mentee 2) relocation to another state after a divorce

Mentor 1) father moved away to a new home down the street from the childhood

home, yet refused to see his daughter.

Only one of the girls maintained a desire to have a relationship with her father.

The other mentee decided it was best to have limited conversations with her imprisoned

father for her own personal emotional health. Unfortunately, this was the same young

lady who expressed to her intentions to limit interaction with her mother, thus limiting her

connection with both parents.

Loretta, a self-proclaimed workaholic, is proud of her newly found independence

through employment at a local restaurant. She prides herself on limited requests for

necessities, and instead uses her earnings to provide as much as she can for herself.

Loretta stated that she became very sad when she was forced to move back to Texas

from New Orleans at an early age. She stated that upon her return to Texas, she felt her

presence was undesired by her mother. Recalling the day her father left, she spoke of a conversation she had with her mother. Loretta recalled the close relationship she shared with her father that is virtually nonexistent with her mother. During our conversation Loretta declared, "my mother just doesn't get me, like my dad does." Although Loretta acknowledges that her dad "left" at a time when she "needed him the most," she held deep resentment for his actions that resulted in his imprisonment. Loretta stated that he was aware that actions would lead him back to prison, and she felt that he chose a life of crime rather than a relationship with her. When asked how her mentor, Ms. Sampson, helped her to manage her feelings about the situation, she expressed that her mentor had "done a lot to help" her. Ms. Sampson encouraged her to be more affectionate towards her mother and to try talking to her to rebuild their relationship. Loretta indicated that since trying the tips provided Ms. Sampson, their relationship has somewhat improved, but is still a work in progress.

During the observation session, Loretta greeted her mentor, Ms. Sampson, with a hug and concluded with the same. Based on her interactions, it was apparent that she not only felt empowered to greet her mentor this way, but probably was missing this type of interaction with her mother, and struggled to replicate those emotions she did not have with her mother, who was said to be unaffectionate towards Loretta. Ms. Sampson provided more details on this matter during her interview.

Similarly, Sally shared that her parents divorced at an early age. She struggled with the thought of whether her current actions were the result of her experiences with her parents. As our conversation progressed, Sally acknowledged that her anger could have been due in part to her father moving away to another state. She admitted that she rarely saw him, but recently spent time with him when he came for a visit to Texas. She expressed her resentment in his treatment of her, especially since he had not seen her in

a long while. Sally alluded her anger was due in part to his absence and believed that was why she may have experienced sexual promiscuity at an early age.

Ms. Sampson, the mentor for Loretta, indicated how she could relate to the experiences shared by the girls because of her youth, and the lack of affection she experienced from a "domineering mother and absentee father." By sharing personal experiences, Ms. Sampson could not only facilitate trust with her mentees, but also to speak to them from a place of personal experience. These experiences were beneficial in her attempts to strengthen the bond shared between her and each of her mentees who shared similar life experiences.

Sexual Promiscuity and Social Inadequacies

Sally lost her virginity during her sixth-grade year. This led to a downward spiral of continued sexual relationships with guys. Sally declared that she sought "all the wrong kinds of attention" from guys, and accepted that her behavior may have been the result of a disconnect from the loss of her father from the family unit. With the help of her mentor, Ms. Phillips, Sally was encouraged to make better choices, and understood how her father leaving the household may have played a significant role in her actions. She was once referred to as "the girl who could be counted on for sex." Sally stated that she "felt good about what she was doing" until she began to seek solace through her spirituality. Through teachings at the church, and conversations with Ms. Sampson, Sally stated that she "slowly began to change her ways." With a slight grin, Sally said, "I will probably always be a work in progress."

Loretta did not express any acts of sexual promiscuity. Instead she acknowledged that she had few friends, if any at all. Unlike Sally, who appeared to be a social butterfly, Loretta stayed mostly to herself. She believed that her school counselor observed her limited social interactions, as well as her anger, and referred her to the

program because of it. Loretta is aware of her character flaws, which include a "short temper" and a "smart mouth," but believes she "has gotten better as she has gotten older." With the help of Ms. Sampson, Loretta is learning to manage her anger, and increase her social interactions, noting, "If it weren't for my mentor, I don't know what I would do. I really like her, and wish we could spend more time together."

Sally, on the other hand, appeared constantly eager to meet new people. Although her anger sometimes caused her to become involved in physical altercations, she was nonetheless the friendly sort. She loved to laugh and have a good time with almost anyone. She confessed that she "did not to feel disrespected, and felt the need to defend herself if that kinda situation came up." Her social inadequacies have been known to cause negative consequences that included extended time away in alternative school. This time away from school prevented her encounters with Ms. Phillips, thus potentially limiting progress. Because of her time away and hindered progress, Ms. Phillips decided it was time to set goals that would hold her accountable for her behavior. Those goals included not getting into extensive trouble that would cause her to miss their time together for a period of at least 30 days. The plan appeared to be working until a "dare" caused Sally to lose sight of her goal and become involved in a fight that ensured she would not return until the end of the school year. It was during this time that Sally encountered a host of family issues that threatened to hinder the tremendous social, emotional, and academic progress made this year.

When Loretta's mentor was asked about her perspective on sexual promiscuity of her mentees, she stated:

> I want my girls to know that they have the power to break the cycle of self-
> destructive behaviors, allowing men [young men] to do anything to you just

because of an unfulfilled need. They can gain maturity by looking at their situations through a different lens.

Academic Deficits

Researchers from nearly every discipline understand how social, emotional, and academic deficits can hinder student progress. "When schools can provide protective factors by offering a positive and safe learning environment, setting high yet achievable academic and social expectations, and facilitating academic and social success" (Furlong & Morrison, 2000, p. 70), students are able to accomplish great things. When schools are unable to meet all the needs of struggling students, mentors are called upon to fill the non-academic gaps. Loretta admitted that she "got behind" in her work and was "trying to keep up." Because of the encouraging words of her mentor, she was motivated to "work harder" and "complete the missing work." Loretta stated that Ms. Sampson "kept asking" her about her work until it was "finished and turned in." Although Ms. Sampson was quick to acknowledge her supportiveness, she also conceded she was no tutor. Ms. Sampson saw [her] "role as one to encourage and motivate her girls to do and be their best."

Both young ladies appear to be intelligent and driven towards success. Sally, a sophomore who was enrolled in nearly all advanced courses, though involved in activity that could easily deter her, was still managing to make good grades. Loretta, a, junior, had high ambitions for herself and a plan to accomplish her goals. Despite the obstacles, neither young lady failed to acknowledge belief in a power higher than themselves.

Spirituality

Psychologists and psychiatrists from Freud to Ellis have viewed religious orientation as "irrational" and as a "crutch for people who can't handle life" (Clay, 1996, p. 1). Other researchers express a completely opposite perspective. For instance, Werner (1984) posits that spirituality can promote a belief in at-risk adolescents that their lives

have meaning and they have some control over their fate. Spirituality has been shown to be associated with several positive psychological outcomes including subjective well-being (Witter, Stock, Okun, & Haring, 1985), and may be a contributing factor to the positive outcomes experienced by the females of this study who are considered at-risk.

Both Loretta and Sally expressed their reliance upon prayer as a means to cope with difficult situations. Although this program is sponsored by Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church, participants are not encouraged or required to use prayer, faith, or a belief in any deity to receive services or resolve problems. Both young ladies were asked if they prayed with their perspective mentors, and each declared they did when the needs arise; however, this was not observed during any of the time I spent with the research participants. However, it should be noted that they were not forced or encouraged to do so.

Research Question #2:

Which strategies do mentors identify as most beneficial and which ones are least beneficial on shaping self-esteem, and in the development of strong parental and social relationships for female youth who engage in at-risk behaviors?

When analyzing data to answer the second research question, I sought to identify which protocols and strategies were thought to be the most beneficial for the mentee students. The emerging themes included: consistent access on designated meeting days, parallels to mentee experiences, program structure, training, and spirituality.

Consistent Access on Designated Meeting Days

Based on the interview with site director, I learned that each mentor can determine the time and day that works best with their personal schedules to ensure continuity of mentoring sessions with their mentees. Once training and background verifications have been completed, mentors are expected to meet with their mentees at

least once per week, during school hours, on school grounds. Any other meeting place is strictly prohibited by the rules and regulations of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center program. Each mentor takes pride in the time they share with their "girls," and believes that consistency is the "key to success." Mentees are able to look forward to designated sessions during non-core content classes on days where their academics are not as strenuous.

The primary complaint among both mentees and mentors is the lack of access each has to the other and limited meeting times. For example, if a mentor had the desire to take her mentee out for lunch or meet at a local coffee shop, the program does not allow such interactions away from campus, due to liability this would place on the church and the program.

During an interview, it was mentioned that a mentee requested her mentor, Ms. Samples, to attend a track meet at the local stadium. This was considered permissible due to the location of the stadium, which was considered part of the school grounds. Ms. Phillips expressed her perspective on the limited interactions and had this to say, "I understand why the restrictions exist, but I do feel that those barriers present a unique of challenges which limit my influence with my mentee." Ms. Phillips previously mentioned that she was only allowed to attend sessions on campus, but later added that she is allowed limited flexibility to engage with her mentee in a public place away from campus, but has elected not to do so, to minimize the liability for the church.

She questioned the impact a mentor can truly have on a person with the aforementioned issues in the time frame of 45 minutes to one hour each week. As she continued to explain her perspective, Ms. Phillips noted, "I understand that current time frame is a lot for most people to commit to and keep, I struggled to accept that amount of time as enough." Further elaboration included mitigating factors, such as Spring Break,

school holidays, and summer vacation when she did not have contact with her mentee at all, because school is closed. Although she plans to remain with her current mentee when school resumes in the fall of 2016-2017 school year, and perhaps even beginning mentoring relationships with new program participants, she mentioned that she may not get back to see her mentee until as late as October. Ms. Phillips is careful to remain professional, and has had to make numerous adjustments to ensure that her association with her mentee does not cross boundaries that could compromise their relationship. As a result, her mentee does not have her phone number, and she does not have the contact information for her mentee, in a very deliberate effort to maintain professionalism and privacy. Ms. Phillips is very clear on boundaries and desired for her mentee to understand why those boundaries exist.

I asked Ms. Phillips about her overall program expectations. Her response was simple "I want to see her [mentee] succeed." She is hopeful that through the program she can see the "fruit of her labor," although she recognizes that the work she does is not about her as a mentor, but more about the work her mentee is willing to put into herself to become successful. She acknowledges that her investment in mentoring is not just for the mentee. Ms. Phillips is keenly aware of her [mentee's] personal growth but also how gaining the perspectives from mentees assists with her own daughter, and the challenges that teen girls face. Ms. Phillips stressed that high school is a short, temporary phase of life, and that the experiences should help her mentee grow into a positive productive citizen. She wanted her mentee to know "she has a bright future and that in ten years most of the encounters she has now will no longer exist." She began to describe a personal experience that involved her high school reunion, to get her to see how insignificant her high school friends may become to her as she grows older. She recalled how she had to look at the nametags of her classmates to determine who they were,

because she had forgotten most of their names. Ms. Phillips, who also had a mentor during her high school years, shared how she attempted to bridge the gap between her own ability to make good choices and accepting her mentor as a positive influence in her life. Ms. Phillips shared how her mentor's attempts to empower her, made her realize that she always had power over her own choices that would affect her life course.

Program Structure

When asked what she thought of the current process for pairing mentees with mentors, Ms. Sampson stated:

I believe that the current structure of the program is unequivocally the best method for mentees and mentors because it allows for participants to be true to the process. We are placed together and allowed to develop a relationship and establish trust from the beginning without any preconceived notions based on looks, status, or other factors. It's a system where you can get a true representation of two people coming together at a particular time, it's cold, it's authentic, it's objective.

Ms. Sampson takes great pride in her mentees, and spends as much time as she can with them in hopes that something is said or done during her interactions that will leave an indelible mark on them. She mentors quite a few young ladies, all of whom adore her and wish they could spend more than one day per week with her.

When asked how she develops a relationship with her mentee, Ms. Sampson shared the following:

The first order of business is building rapport through open conversation. Each mentor is different. In training, they tell how to start building those relationships, but I asked [the site director] if I could give my girls journals. I wanted to encourage them to write their goals, thoughts, and feelings in an attempt to

process their situation. I wanted to encourage open and honest dialogue with my

girls. I never wanted to be the person to tell them what to do, but instead allow for

open-ended questions that encourage critical thinking and [thinking of the right

word to say] self-actualization. I encourage them to set S.M.A.R.T. goals.

S.M.A.R.T. goals are those which are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and

timely. Each mentee was not only encouraged to set goals, but was held accountable to

attain them.

Ms. Samples was also transparent with her mentees. Not only did she share her

personal experiences, she also shared strategies she used to overcome her

circumstances and become a more positive, productive person. She encouraged the girls

to "talk about whatever they choose and provides suggestions on ways to improve

academics," but insists she is not a tutor.

Ms. Phillips shared nearly the same response. She also provided her mentee

with a journal, and encouraged her to write down her goals and feelings and be prepared

to share at the following sessions. Ms. Phillips admits they rarely discussed anything that

may have been written in the journal other than the goals.

Ms. Phillips was asked to provide details of a typical session with her mentee.

She expressed how the initial session began with introductions and getting to know one

another, such as interests, family status, and any related concerns. The next session

typically involved S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting and attempts to meet the girls where they are at

that point in time. Questions such as "why are you consistently fighting, wanting to fight,

or someone wanting to fight you?" Her mentee was encouraged to participate in an

activity that asked to reflect on how the mentee sees herself and how others see her;

subsequently, she tried to connect those perceptions to her actions and attitude. An

example was used that included perspectives of a teacher when there is "a disconnect" in

the way in which the mentee saw herself and how she may be perceived by her teacher. The mentee was then given not only an opportunity to respond to scenarios, but also provided with positive tools to alter negative perceptions and change how she may be perceived by those with whom she interacts. The goal was to provide tools to assist in showing others that she (the mentee) is not the person she appears to be, but rather someone who has made a poor choice, and intends to begin making more positive choices in the future. Although this type of session had happened in the past, Ms. Phillips acknowledged that most of the sessions were used to "catch up" and "see where the mentee is academically, socially, and behaviorally."

In the first year of her mentorship, Ms. Phillips would attempt to plan the sessions based on things she as the mentor felt were important. Often times, those sessions did not go as planned or as well as she expected. As time passed, she began to allow her mentee to guide the sessions to share those things that were important to her. It was then that Ms. Phillips began to feel that her sessions were more rewarding for both her and her mentee.

Parallels to Mentee Experiences

Ms. Sampson, a mentor since November of 2015, candidly described how "her life is full of parallels with those whom she mentors" because of her own arguably "troubled past," and being judged by others who decreed that she would "never amount to anything." When asked how she could help bridge the gap through her own experiences she stated:

> I remember when my parents got divorced. I ran away to my father's house who lived four blocks away. I wanted to see him and never understood why my mother kept me away from him, or him from me, as I was not really sure until later. It wasn't until later after I got there that I realized that the man I had always

idolized, as a young girl growing up, never wanted me or my brother. I was

crushed and experienced a depression. So, I understand and can relate to the

girls who don't have their fathers as active participants in their lives. This causes

self-destructive behavior, clinging to people, oftentimes the wrong people. I firmly

believe that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. And I pride myself on the

ability to share the gift of hope with my girls. I believe that no matter what

happens to you, you have to find a way to move past that and move forward.

Ms. Phillips was asked the same question and she replied:

After reading an article that described how young girls are being sent to prison at

a rate faster than boys. The article captured my heart because I have a passion

for girls, because of my own teenage daughter. I thought about reestablishing a

non-profit that I used to have, where we were mentoring high-risk girls. I shared

this business with about eleven other women and thought that maybe I should

reignite the flame that got that business started. I am reminded of my own

daughter. There are some things that I unable to let slide and that is when I have

to put on my 'mama' hat to redirect the behavior. I know I am not 'mama' but I will

always be the adult in this here relationship. She is very intelligent and knows

what she shouldn't do but she has a lot going on, a lot of things going on in her

life. She will do really, really good, then all of sudden she will veer off. And I'm

like…sigh…What happened? I'm just trying to keep her focused! I want it [the

session] to be structured. I don't want her to feel like she is coming to another

class. I want her to be free enough to tell me what I want to know (to help her). I

want her to know that I want to be there for her.

Ms. Phillips explained she faced the same challenge that nearly all programs such as this face: the lack of suitable and consistently available adults who can commit to the mentoring schedule and program requirements.

She stated she began to "search her mind and heart" for ways that she could get involved and help change the lives of young girls through her own service and support. Ms. Phillips highlighted another concern that plagues most programs of this nature: the high mobility rate of students who are participants in school-based mentoring programs. Students transfer for various reasons. In the cases of the two mentees that were once mentored by Ms. Phillips, Child Protective Services was involved, and the other withdrew due to constant bullying.

Ms. Phillips concluded our interview with a short story of a person who mentored her, by chance rather than by choice, when she was an adolescent. She credited her mentor as being a major influential presence in her life, and attributed the changes she made because of her guidance, that propelled her to become the person she is today. She explained how she had to overcome the negative stereotypes, based on things that were said about her, as a young black girl growing up in an inner-city environment. Many of those characteristics included typical stereotypes afforded to African-American girls who are often perceived as being angry and combative. Instead of allowing those stereotypes to define and mold her future, she decided to work to change the negative perception that her mentor once had about her, and use those experiences as a catalyst to become a better person. She is still in contact with her former mentor today, and credits her success in part to the relationship they built several years ago, when she was in high school.

Training

Ms. Phillips recalled the moment when she decided to attend the training program to become a mentor. She expressed, "I decided to attend a one-day training to become a mentor in 2014." She recalled that soul-searching, self-reflective moment was on a Saturday. On the following Sunday, she attended church and noticed that the training program was listed in the bulletin, and asked herself:

> Why try to reinvent the wheel when it has already been done for me? So I thought I would just plug myself in. God was speaking to my heart and said I needed to be involved in some way, in some young girl's life and hopefully shaping her future, for a positive, you know, impact.

When I asked Ms. Samples how she was prepared for her role as mentor, she provided the following information:

> I attended an all-day training course provided by the Urban Alternative through Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship Church. This was a one-day course that I took to have my own mentoring program. Once I was done I was like, what do I do now? I started talking to Allen Lockhart, program director for The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center and he encouraged me to become part of the school outreach because they were getting so many girls, and the rest, as they say, was history. At the time, the program only included the high school. Later, I was asked to take on Hardin Intermediate because of the mentor shortage. So, I just jumped right in.

The site director was also interviewed for this study. His perspective was important because he was able to provide in-depth knowledge of the program, including the program guidelines, selection process, training, retention, and mentee-mentor pairing assignments. The site director was aware of the issues plaguing the youth who

participate in this program, and cite the lack of available mentors for the students who desperately need this service. Although the training is not as extensive as what may be necessary for some, there is a strong support system available for those who express an interest.

Spirituality

Ms. Sampson believes that the role of mentoring was ordained for her and is "one of her ministries through the church." She explained how she will pray with and for the girls if they ask, but she does not require that they do so. Ms. Phillips explained that she will pray with and for her mentee if she is asked, but does offer, although she is aware of her mentee's quest to become more spiritual.

Spirituality played a role in the progress of the mentee in this study, however minor considering that the program has a religious background. It was no less a viable strategy utilized by the mentors to encourage the young ladies to seek godly intervention when problems were faced. Each of the mentees were accustomed to prayer and claimed to attend church regularly. Findings in this study align with researchers who allege spirituality could be a contributing factor to the positive outcomes experienced by at-risk adolescent females. Werner (1984) asserts that adolescents who rely on spirituality may be able to exert control over situations and circumstances due to their belief in a higher power. Findings in the current study show that each of the participants including each mentor and mentee relied on prayer as a means of support through difficult circumstances, but spirituality was not identified as a major mentoring strategy. Conclusively, the infusion of spirituality and prayer to change undesirable behavior ultimately focuses on choice and personal preference.

Summary of Study Findings

Organized themes revealed the positive program aspects, as well as areas of refinement. After a thorough analysis of the data, participant responses were categorized according to relevant and recurring themes. The findings of this study show that experiences of the adolescent female youth are incrementally positive overall, but results are achieved with difficult-to-overcome limitations.

Research question #1 was clarified by collecting data from each female adolescent participant and by triangulating with comments provided by mentors. Each mentee was provided an interview protocol that included guiding and follow-up questions to arrive at a global perspective of what the mentoring program does for them, and how it serves to improve their life course. Mentees were encouraged to share experiences from their lives, leading to discussions that involved anger, absentee fathers and unaffectionate mothers, sexual promiscuity and social inadequacies, academic deficits, and spirituality. These experiences also served as primary themes for the research. Anger seemed to be the primary cause for behaviors considered to be at-risk, with the absence of fathers as the secondary cause.

Regarding the program, the experiences revealed only a few areas of refinement: time, location, and schedule flexibility. Both mentees expressed the need for more time with their mentor, the desire to attend outside events, or increased schedule flexibility, especially in times of need. While each understood the purpose for the limitations, the need was not diminished.

Although each mentee acknowledged a religious belief system, it appeared their beliefs were mostly unbeneficial at promoting positive behavior changes. In a study conducted by Smith and Denton (2005), it was found that while most teens were affiliated with congregations, most of the youth were quite inarticulate about what the specifics of

68

their beliefs were, or how faith impacted their lives. Each mentee seemed to express their faith, but struggled to apply their religious teaching to their own lives, thus calling into question the how beneficial their religious instruction was and its daily application.

Since both mentees struggled with the absence of their fathers, which created emotions fueled by anger, it is important to note research findings regarding the effect of absentee father on at-risk female youth. During a study conducted by Li and Seltzer (2005), findings support that poor relations between fathers and daughters negatively impacts the self-esteem of female offspring. This was significant because it not only speaks to how each young lady interacted with men, it also pertains to how they perceive themselves, due to the void left behind from an absent father. Researchers Dunlop, Burns and Bermingham (2001) concluded that every father has a power in his daughter's life that a mother just does not have: the father was responsible for boosting up or lower level of her self-esteem and self-confidence. An additional researcher posited that children reared under involved fathers are more likely to get higher levels of financial, educational, and occupational achievement as they get better educational outcomes; they usually have higher educational expectations and attainment (Amato, 1994).

Research question #2 focused on mentor strategies, as defined by the mentors, and program protocols, as defined by the site director. The themes that emerged from this question included consistent access on designated meeting days, program structure, training, and spirituality. The goal was to establish if any protocols and strategies proved to be beneficial in assisting the at-risk female with a plan to curtail negative behaviors. While both mentors encouraged journaling thoughts and emotions as a beneficial strategy, this was the least beneficial method of curtailing undesirable behavior. Time, location, and schedule flexibility were presented as barriers to success in maintaining the mentoring relationship. These abstract concepts provide their own unique set of

challenges for the adult participants who are not employees of the school. Each mentor

unanimously agreed that they could accomplish more with their mentees if those barriers

were removed, or at least made less rigid. However, it was understood that the program

had an obligation to maintain fidelity to be successful, even if that success is

incrementally achieved. Several studies conducted by various researchers also identified

time as a major inhibitor of meeting mentee needs. Some of those researchers include

Myall et al. (2008), who found that more than half of the mentors who took part in their

study reported constraints on their role, which included an increased workload and lack of

time.

Participating mentors were asked about which mentoring strategies they believe

female adolescents find as most beneficial in reducing their at-risk behaviors. The most

beneficial strategy appears to be one-on-one interaction during a designated mentoring

session. The mentor subsequently clarified the desire to help the mentees believe they

are fully supported in a safe, non-judgmental way, but understand the mentor would not

hesitate to act as a mother guiding her daughter, as suggested by Bowlby's attachment

theory (1980). In this theory, Bowlby asserts adolescents seek to promote and maintain

relationships with adults, and thus form a bond similar to the mentee-mentor relationship.

The mentoring sessions I observed represented a space of trust in which mentor and

mentees exchanged dialogue and learned together through shared experiences.

Social learning theory (Bandura, 1971) also promotes self-efficacy through direct

interaction and observation as an important determinant of motivation and performance,

as observed in each mentee as they made advances to improve their behaviors. Each

mentor felt strongly that by creating a haven of support and healthy dialogue, the girls

could communicate in ways rarely, if ever, experienced at home. The mentors each

attributed their work with each mentee in part to setting S.M.A.R.T. goals, consistently

wholesome conversations, reasonable expectations, and weekly accountability. Mentees

were asked to regularly set goals and were held accountable for achieving those goals.

They were encouraged to seek ways to rebound from mistakes that derailed their overall

efforts and thus hindered success. All girls were provided with journals to assist in

developing healthy habits of problem solving and creating a positive outlet for healthy

thoughts, even if the journals were not utilized.

Each mentor disclosed how their mentees suffered in some way from low self-

esteem, as evidence by the sexually promiscuous behaviors, low tone of voice, inability

to maintain direct eye contact, and failure to follow through on predetermined, self-

imposed goals. Lack of self-esteem can be attributed to the absence of each of their

fathers. Each mentee struggled, at some point to maintain a solid academic standing,

and often lacked timely completion of course work, resulting in occasional poor grades.

But through motivational strategies employed during the program, (e.g. setting

S.M.A.R.T. goals), the mentees could recover successfully.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This study sought to examine the social and academic effects of school -based

mentoring (SBM) provided by The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. Through a

thorough review of findings and synthesis of previous studies, this research addressed

the benefits of the program as it relates to themes and relevant literature. The findings of

this study sought to determine whether the mentoring program provided by The

TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center was a beneficial remedy to social-emotional

problems experienced by adolescent girls who have engaged in and are said to be at-

risk. The findings of this study support the overall purpose of The TurnAround Agenda

Outreach Center, which focuses on whole-child development through mentoring practices

which are believed to be beneficial to the life of young girls. Throughout Chapter 5, I

synthesize and discuss some of these findings in relation to current literature, discuss

implications of the study findings, make recommendations for practice, and conclude with

a critique of the findings and suggestions for change and future inquiry.

Reasons for Developing Mentoring Programs

My qualitative research relied upon studies that employ a phenomenological

approach to explore participant experiences as described by Husserl (1982). His

approach was based on the belief that "it is not possible to separate the experiencing

subject from what is experienced in the world" (p. 320). The lived experiences of

adolescent girls were represented through the most common recurring themes derived

from participant responses: anger, absentee fathers, social inadequacies, sexual

promiscuity, academic deficits, and spirituality. These socio-emotional aspects that mark

their experiences constitute important reasons for schools and communities to develop mentoring programs in which girls find a space to address their issues.

Anger

There is limited literature that identifies with females and anger, especially as an essential factor for at-risk adolescent behavior. Available studies indicate females tend to become angry when they feel powerless toward expected outcomes, such as that presented by Thomas (2005). My study findings show that each mentee described situations that involved a desire for something not received, whether related to emotions, social or behavioral outcomes.

Garmezy (1991) described these deficits as "multiple adverse conditions such as socioeconomic disadvantage and associated risks" (pp. 459-460). The at-risk female often does not possess the ability to exert control over factors such as finances, location of residence, house or apartment dwelling, or family structure. These multiple adverse conditions that are beyond the control of the at-risk female may cause her to become angry and act in a manner not typically perceived as positive and productive.

The findings of my study are consistent with Lerner's (1977) research that posits anger as a *taboo topic* where its sources are rarely discussed (p. 505). According to Lerner (1977), female anger is typically repressed and misdirected, often causing outbursts that result in poor results for the female who is considered at-risk. Findings of my study were also consistent with research conducted by Thomas (2005), which revealed that anger results in greater deficits in the at-risk female, such as emotions caused by the absentee father.

Absentee Fathers and Unaffectionate Mothers

Although anger is one common bond shared between both mentees, another casual factor for their at-risk behavior is the absentee fathers and mothers who showed

little to no affection towards their daughters. Study findings show that both young ladies struggled to manage emotions caused by an absent father for different reasons: divorce and prison. Only one struggled to manage emotions related to her mother. While it could be stated that the absence of the father may not be an underlying factor of at-risk behaviors, findings in this study indicate these young ladies internalized strong emotions with regards to choices each father made to no longer be a part of their families. Because only one mentee struggled to articulate her feelings caused by her strained maternal relationship, evidence to support a causal connection remains inconclusive.

On a similar note, McLanahan (1999) found that "it is not father absence per se but various other stressors associated with father absence (e.g., divorce, poverty, conflictual family relationships, erosion of parental monitoring and control) that foster at-risk behaviors in adolescent females" (p. 801). In the present study, each mentee found it difficult to articulate feelings regarding the absent father and his effect on their attitudes and behaviors.

Underlying personality traits may be considered causal factors in certain at-risk behaviors of females who have experienced the absence of their father. Bardone, Moffitt, Caspi, Dickson, and Silva (1996) posited, "children who display externalizing behavioral problems are at an elevated risk for a variety of negative psychosocial outcomes in adolescence" (p. 802). The mentees presented in this study were provided with a mentor to promote resilience and empowerment. Though both females had already shown resilience through their ability to overcome life course events, their mentors were beneficial in providing tools to empower their mentees to make better choices and be accountable for their actions.

The findings of this study were able to demonstrate that the absentee father and unaffectionate mother may trigger the at-risk behaviors experienced by the adolescent

females who participated in this study. However, the findings cannot indicate any causal relationship between the absentee father and unaffectionate mother and at-risk behavior.

Social Inadequacies and Sexual Promiscuity

The adolescent female is a complex being, due to numerous issues often faced to assimilate into high school culture. Thus, adolescent females are vulnerable to peer pressure that can often manifest into life-long negative behavior patterns, such as sexual promiscuity. The young ladies who participated in this study encountered experiences that were not unique to their age group. The adolescent female typically has a need to be accepted among peer groups, may display aggressive behaviors, lack self-esteem, and desire sexual exploration. Because friendships can be a source of knowledge and support, the lack of friends can create painful feelings of inadequacy and identity concerns (APA, 2016) as experienced by one of the mentee in the study who had limited social interactions.

Other concerns involve sexual behaviors, which may put the adolescent female at-risk. Most of the literature on female adolescent sexuality focuses exclusively on the problems of negative consequences associated with individual promiscuity, and narrowly defines sexual decision-making as individual risk-taking behavior (APA, 2016). What is often omitted from many research studies is that the decision to engage in risky sexual activities requires consent from two people, not just the adolescent female. Study findings show that one mentee was not eager to meet new people and struggled to maintain positive relationships until she began to seek solace through her spirituality. However, what cannot be explained by this study are the extraneous factors which may have led to premature thoughts of sexual behaviors, and if there was a predisposition from another unknown source (e.g., behavior observed from others close to her). The mentoring effect

was significant on both mentees by setting goals included not getting into extensive trouble.

As hypothesized in social theories, such as research presented by Bandura (1971) and Bowlby (1969), the at-risk female benefits from a caring relationship such as that established through a mentoring program designed to change her life course. Study findings show that the at-risk female is encouraged to alter her life and behaviors in exchange for a positive life course. Additionally, these frameworks seek to explain the natural attachment (bond) children have with others who appear to care for them, such as a mentor, and the integration of positive behavior modification. These frameworks could explain why the mentees appeared to gravitate to their mentors, rather than A) their mother, and B) the absent father who occasionally presented himself to his adolescent daughter.

Academic Deficits

Each mentee mentioned deficits where academic progress was concerned. Because grade reports were not requested or required for mentee participation, this study relied upon the participants' questions and responses to gauge academic progress. Mentees willingly spoke about the challenges each faced with assignments, including class and homework. Although the findings were limited in this area, the results were no less positive. Each mentee attributed her success, whether full or in part, to motivation and encouragement provided by her mentor. The mentor strategies proved to be an beneficial method to hold their mentee students accountable for the academic responsibilities, attendance, and teacher expectations. Additionally, the young ladies each mentioned their desire to visit with their mentors more often, thus the interactions with mentors sustaining motivation for the mentees to regularly attend school. Both mentees attribute their academic success to the established relationship with the mentor.

This relates to Bowlby's attachment theory (1980) that asserted even girls who are at-risk or participate in at-risk behaviors may benefit from a support system, such as the one provided by mentors from The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. Through this support system provided by the mentors, the young ladies have been able to attribute some measure of their success to their mentors, and are continuing to grow into mature, competent adults who, despite their circumstances, have shown enormous resiliency. When the mentor is able to serve as a prototype for the younger mentee, attachment tends to occur, thus strengthening the bonds of the mentor relationship. Relying on research from Tinto (1993), which posits how social integration is not only necessary, one can conclude that, through building positive social relationships that keep the individual accountable, mentoring is also imperative for successful academic achievement.

Strategies and Mentoring Program Benefits

Program Protocol Constraints

Findings from this study revealed difficulties in identifying the long-term benefits of the mentoring relationship because of the program protocol constraints. Although mentors are encouraged to remain paired with assigned mentees through graduation, this study could not include former participants or information on post-high-school-graduation success. I did not meet or engage with any mentors who have maintained a long-term mentor relationship beyond high school.

However, the positive short-term impact of mentoring proved beneficial for continuing support for the program. Each female participant appeared to make varying degrees of progress based on previous behaviors, although progress could have been the result of additional factors including personal decisions to alter their life course.

Since mentoring sessions were limited to only 45 minutes once a week, program participants cited time as a major barrier to establishing stronger relationships and

making more significant progress. However, what is known about mentoring suggests that scheduling should present the least concern to the mentee-mentor relationship (MENTOR, 2009). Although most mentors are able and willing to teach mentees tips to manage time as to make sure they do not miss any mentoring session, in an effort to make each session productive, conflict arises when student demands supersede participation in the mentoring event. Of those who participated in this study, each student cited more than one occasion when they were unable to meet with their mentor due to class schedules, assessments, or other school obligations. Unfortunately, the barrier of time does not apply solely to the student. Each mentor also cited a few occasions when he or she was unable to maintain the standard schedule and due to privacy concerns, he or she could not inform the mentee. In cases such as this, the mentee-mentor pair often begins the next available session attempting to catch up on the events missed during the missed session.

Is the SBM program beneficial?

Conclusively, research findings are positive when the benefits are measured against the program standards. The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center exists to address the complex needs of at-risk youth females in a safe, structured manner, but does not anticipate fully solving all the problems experienced by its participants. The goal of the program appeared to have been met by creating an environment for mentors who sought to provide at-risk females with the desire to attain certain goals such as:

1. Stay in School

2. Refrain from drugs or alcohol

3. Remain sexually abstinent

4. Refrain from violence

78

Although at least one of the participants experienced minor setbacks in relation to the goals of the program, significant progress was made. The mentees appeared to have sustainable plans in place to continue on a positive path toward a successful future.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Implications for Policy

Policy applies to the rules that govern participants and programs. Although there are is not a single set of guidelines for mentoring programs, The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center requires that all mentors must undergo an extensive background verification. This policy not only protects the church that sponsors the program, it also protects the participants. Because mentoring is a unique concept that allows those who are mentors to develop a closeness with their mentees, these selfless volunteers are much like counselors and an extension of a supportive parent combined. Only those who are committed to changing the life-course of others should consider being a mentor, as referenced by the interviews of the participants in this study, many of the youth who participate in these programs have experienced some aspect of poor adult relationships.

Data presented in this research study suggests that site-based mentoring in the school setting is not only beneficial to those who receive services, it is also an under-utilized method of reaching students who may be considered at-risk. In general, at-risk elementary students are not presented with the same interventions as middle and high-school students. Most often administrators rely heavily upon parental support and counselors through government programs such as special education and 504 committees. Therefore, policies that would support developing SBM programs in elementary schools may prove crucial to identifying and helping at-risk students earlier during their educational careers.

The frameworks used for this study sought to differentiate the type of mentoring used and how caring adults can have a positive impact on the lives of those considered at-risk. There is a plethora of research on at-risk behaviors as it pertains to adolescents, but limited research on beneficial programming that provides longitudinal life-course data, especially where females are concerned. What is widely available focuses on the participants and causes of at-risk behavior. Lack of longitudinal data that inform on the long-term benefits of mentoring creates a problem in developing school policies that incorporate mentoring as part of the school practices.

Implications for Practice

More research is needed to determine if mentoring would be a beneficial remedy for elementary-aged students and perhaps continued until graduation. Teachers and administrators are often left with limited options to intervene in the life of a child who is determined to be at-risk for concerns not related to academics. This study provided insight into the lives of two female students who have shown aggressive tendencies from an early age, but were not paired with anyone who was willing to assist them in their plight to process their thoughts and emotions or introduce the concept of goal-setting, much less hold them accountable for attainment.

As an educational administrator, former at-risk female, and mother, it is my recommendation that this program be presented to elementary-aged students, both male and female, who have been identified as at-risk students. By finding appropriate mentors and completing the pairing process sooner, students may be better equipped to manage seemingly insurmountable obstacles with more defined coping skills and motivational strategies. Research studies that focus on at-risk factors show that elementary-aged students encounter the same obstacles as their high-school counterparts and can benefit from the same interventions.

Lessons Learned from the Study

One of the key lessons I learned while preparing to do research in this area concerns the limited number of reputable programs to address the problems facing at-risk females. Although many programs claim to provide a beneficial remedy, few are structured, and even fewer are equipped to manage the severity of the problems these young ladies face. The uniqueness of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center program provides a stable platform for girls to grow and freely express themselves without fear of judgment and retaliation. This organization fosters a sense of collaboration and trust due to its longstanding ties within the community. This is as important to me as it is for those involved in the program, either as mentees or mentors, for several reasons. Oftentimes, youth struggled to foster trust in others due to previous negative experiences. This program helps to rebuild that trust and allows the at-risk female to learn to create healthy boundaries and engage in healthy relationships. Because the severity of anger experienced by these young ladies, it was difficult to articulate a single causal factor for their choices and behavior, because too many factors could have contributed to their emotional outburst. With the help of a qualified mentor, the source of the anger becomes less important when the young woman realizes there are ways to overcome the manifestation of their inner feelings and there is hope to heal.

Limitations of the Study

I identified a few limitations to this study that included sample bias, lack of definitive causal correlations, use of a homogenous population, and reliance of self-reporting.

Sample Bias

The sample bias is the result of including only willing participants (convenience sampling). Obviously, both mentee and mentor were comfortable discussing the

mentoring process because overall they had a positive opinion about it. A larger sample obtained randomly may have included examples of mentoring relationships that were less harmonious.

Interpreting Causal Effects

Because the research was conducted at one point in time, the study was unable to explore whether behavior experienced by the mentee participants continued to exist after the fathers left and/or what their behavior was like prior to the departure.

Homogenous Population

Of those willing to participate, all were African American. The study may have had a different outcome if adolescent girls of other races were included in the study. Both mentees originated from similar backgrounds, attended the same Title I school, and lived in the same community. The findings were not inclusive of the male program participants who may have been able to share different experiences. Cautions should be taken when attempting to generalize findings of at-risk females who may differ in terms of ethnicity, race, national origin, or other demographic factors (Mann, Kristjansson, Sigfusdottir, & Smith, 2014). Although the purpose of this study was to focus on the particular issues experienced by Black female adolescents, I recognize that some of the findings could be limited to this student population.

Self-Report of Experiences

Both mentees provided perceptions of their experiences which were accepted as reality. As both researcher and former at-risk adolescent, I understand that perception is a complex process and that it may differ from reality. To increase the validity of the study, I observed the interactions between mentor and mentee but could not verify in any other way the validity of mentee's perceptions. Lastly, the findings of this study did not indicate whether the anger existed prior to the disclosed events, or if the emotions surfaced after

the events. This limitation could have been avoided by interviewing parents, teachers, or the school counselor who referred the students to the program in order to corroborate their perspectives.

Recommendations for Improving Research Design

The following recommendations are suggested ways to improve and expand research in adolescent mentoring. They are based on challenges I experienced while preparing and conducting my research and questions I would have wanted to answer:

The Recruitment Process

This process should begin early and appeal to multicultural students at more than one campus. If unable to get enough participant interest, allow the site director to provide mentor contact information. Once able to gain mentor support, the mentees may participate based on her recommendation.

Study Participants

It may be helpful to not only increase the sample size for females but also consider the inclusion males for comparison and contrasting purposes. Including participants who were past recipients of the program would be also beneficial in order to examine long-term effects.

Interviews

At least one parent should be included in the interview process. The parent should be able to provide insight on behavior both before and after the child was paired with a mentor. The parent should also be able to provide insight on pre- and post-parental absence, in case of an absentee parent. All interviews should take place separately to maintain confidentiality and trust. If possible, including teacher perspectives and grade reports would validate self-reporting from study participants. More research is

necessary to understand the adolescent female behavior patterns experienced prior to the absence of the father or mother who is claimed to have limited affection.

Final Thoughts

The plight of adolescent females will always be a subject that invokes a sense of urgency for me, due to my own challenges as an at-risk female youth. I recognized myself in the young ladies whom I interviewed and observed. After learning about their tribulations, it became apparent that these young ladies must decide each day whether to engage in the social norms of their environment and risk their futures or be considered an outlier to the community where they were born and make choices that will have a positive impact on their lives.

As a person who was once considered an at-risk female, and now has become an elementary school administrator, I am aware of the current challenges facing African-American female youth who face the possibility of not living up to their potential. As this study concludes, I am reminded of my own experiences as an African American girl who grew up in a lower-middle class neighborhood where I lived my entire life before moving out at age 19. Being raised by my grandparents, we were a proud family with limited means; yet, I never missed a meal or otherwise experienced deficits. My life was very compartmentalized: church was the primary source for spiritual support, academics occurred only in the school setting, and friendships were established early and for life. Rarely did any of those entities overlap. Each setting came with a unique set of rules and relationships. Stability was expected, and academic excellence was required. Unfortunately, many of the youth today lack those experiences. School and residential transition occurs often. Friendships are lost due to frequent transitions, and social media is the primary source for support.

Using data to analyze female adolescents' experiences, the study detailed the mentoring phenomenon that is prevalent in many communities seeking to curtail the wayward behavior of today's youth. Unfortunately, while there are many programs, few are reputable and able to provide the structure necessary to make a positive impact. Relying on data collected from my interviews and observations, an attempt was made to understand how participants experience school-based mentoring, and whether this program appears to make differences in their lives. Findings were consistent with research and theory, which suggest that females who are exposed to negative life course factors at an early age are often prone to continue to engage in those same behaviors that cause them to become at-risk unless some interventions are applied. In particular,, the findings showed that consistent nurturing and role models are needed which is what formal mentoring is able to provide. These caring adults may hold the key to impact the way young people respond to adversity. As I analyze the parallels of my life and those of mentees, I am reminded of the star fish described in the preface. My goal is to save all of them; but for now, I will seek to save them one at a time.

References

Abrams, L. S. (2002). Rethinking girls "at-risk": Gender, race, and class intersections and adolescent development. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, 6*(2), 47-64.

Allen, T. D., Eby, L. T., & Lentz, E. (2006). Mentorship behaviors and mentorship quality associated with formal mentoring programs: closing the gap between research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*(3), 567.

Amato, P. R. (1994). Father-child relationships, mother-child relations, and offspring psychological well-being in early adulthood. *Journal of Marriage and the Family, 56*, 1031-1042.

American Psychological Association. (2014). *A new look at adolescent girls*. Retrieved from http://www.apa.org/pi/families/resources/adolescent-girls.aspx.

Anderson, M. B. (2006). *Efficacy of problem solving focused mentoring with minority youth* (Order No. 3247973). (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from http://uta.summon.serialssolutions.com/#!/search?bookMark=ePnHCXMw42JgAf ZbUznQesycDI6uoDMREpMrFfLTFKC3pSgAwxfUb1ZIy08GdspTFEAjYuCFZwq gYUiF3My8fNAdbgqVoPvkuBnk3FxDnD10YYVmfEpOTjywgAU2880NTUA3FBB QAABFkzF8 (305320214).

Apgar, D. (2015). *Social work ASWB clinical exam guide: A comprehensive study guide for success*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Appleyard, K., Egeland, B., Dulmen, M. H., & Alan Sroufe, L. (2005). When more is not better: The role of cumulative risk in child behavior outcomes. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *46*(3), 235-245.

Astroth, K. A. (1993). Are youth at-risk? *Journal of Extension*, *31*(3), 2.

Back, A. L. (2009). The education of girls and women in the United States: A historical

       perspective. *Advances in Gender and Education 1*(1), 11-13.

Baker, J. A. (1999). Teacher-student interaction in urban at-risk classrooms: Differential

       behavior, relationship quality, and student satisfaction with school. *The*

       Elementary School Journal, 100(1), 57-70.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory.* NJ: General Learning Press.

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change.

       Psychological Review 84(2), 191-215.

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory.*

       Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Barber, T. X. (1976). *Pitfalls in human research: Ten pivotal points.* New York, NY:

       Pergamon Press.

Bardone, A. M., Moffitt, T. E., Caspi, A., Dickson, N., & Silva, P. A. (1996). Adult mental

       health and social outcomes of adolescent girls with depression and conduct

       disorder. *Development and Psychopathology*, 8, 811–829.Benard, B. (1997).

       Turning it around for all youth: From risk to resilience. *ERIC Clearinghouse on*

       Urban Education, 126(1), 1-7.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to*

       theory and methods. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bowen, G. A. (2008). Naturalistic inquiry and the saturation concept: A research note.

       Qualitative Research, 8(1), 137-152.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. I. Attachment.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. II. Separation, anxiety and anger*. New York,

       NY: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Vol. III. Loss, sadness and depression*. London:

Hogarth Press.

Brinkmann, S. (2014). *Interview* (pp. 1008-1010). Springer, NY: Sage Publications

Brown, L. M., & Gilligan, C. (1992). *Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girls' development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown, S.D., & R.W. Lent (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of counseling psychology* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Bynner, J. (2001). Childhood risks and protective factors in social exclusion. *Children & Society, 15*(5), 285-301.

Benjamin, D. (2014). *Deans of students as crisis managers: Perceptions of roles and leadership competencies in 12 public higher education institutions in Florida* (Doctoral dissertation, Florida Atlantic University Boca Raton, FL).

Caffarella, R. S., & Olson, S. K. (1993). Psychosocial development of women: A critical review of the literature. *Adult Education Quarterly, 43*(3), 125-151.

Carmichael, K. Y. (2007). *Plugging the leaky pipeline: How academic deans support the persistence of underrepresented minority students in science and mathematics. A case study* (Order No. 3287129). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304806691). Retrieved from https://login.ezproxy.uta.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uta.edu/docview/304806691?accountid=7117

Coleman, J., & Hagell, A. (Eds.). (2007). *Adolescence, risk and resilience: Against the odds.* City, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

Cowen, E. L. (1994). The enhancement of psychological wellness: Challenges and opportunities. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 22*(2), 149-179.

Christens, B. D. (2012). Toward relational empowerment. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 50*(1-2), 114-128.

Clay, R. A. (1996). Psychologists' faith in religion begins to grow. *APA Monitor*, *27*(8), 1.

Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (3rd ed).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research.* NJ: Upper Saddle River Saddle River.

De Anda, D., Bradley, M., Collada, C., Dunn, L., Kubota, J., Hollister, V., Wadsworth, T. (1997). A study of stress, stressors, and coping strategies among middle school adolescents. *Social Work in Education, 19*(2), 87–98

DuBois, D. L., Holloway, B. E., Valentine, J. C., & Cooper, H. (2002). Effectiveness of mentoring programs for youth: A meta-analytic review. *American Journal of Psychology, 30*(2), 157-197.

DuBois DL, Karcher MA. (2005). Handbook of youth mentoring. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Dunlop, R., Burns, S., & Berminghan, S. (2001). Parent child relations and adolescent self-image following divorce. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 30, 117–134. In Nielsen. L (2012) *Father–Daughter Relationships: Contemporary Research and Issues*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group 711 Third Avenue New York, NY 10017.

Furlong, M., & Morrison, G. (2000). The school in school violence. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *8*, 71–82.

Garmezy N. (1991). Resilience in children's adaptation to negative life events and stressed environments. *Pediatrics, 20*, 459–466.

Garmezy, N. (1993). Children in poverty: Resilience despite risk. *Psychiatry, 56(1), 127-130.*

Ghauri, P. N., & Grønhaug, K. (2005). *Research methods in business studies: A practical guide.* London: Pearson Education.

Gilbert, D. (2003). *The American class structure in an age of growing inequality*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thompson Learning.

Gilman, D. A. (1974). The economics and psychology of the report card. *Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, 7*(3), 157-1.

Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. M. (2003). The descriptive phenomenological psychological method. London: Sage, pp. 25-50.

Gist, M. E., & Mitchell, T. R. (1992). Self-efficacy: A theoretical analysis of its determinants and malleability. *Academy of Management Review 17*(2), 183-211.

Givens-Skeaton, S., Baetz, W., & D'Abate, C. (2003). *Mentoring in industry: The top 10 issues when building and supporting a mentoring program*. Paper presented at the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Orlando, FL.

Goldner, L., & Mayseless, O. (2009). The quality of mentoring relationships and mentoring success*. Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *38*(10), 1339-1350.

Hancock, B., Ockleford, E., & Windridge, K. (1998). *An introduction to qualitative research.* Nottingham: Trent Focus Group.

Hatch, J. A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Herrman, H. D. E., Stewart, M. D., Diaz-Granados, N., Berger, E. L., Jackson, B., & Yuen, T. (2011). What is resilience? *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 56(5),* 258–265*.*

Herrera, C. (2004). *School-based mentoring: A closer look*. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.

Holcomb-McCoy, C., & Moore-Tomas, C. (2001). Empowering African American

adolescent females. *Professional School Counseling, 5*(1), 19-25.

Holmes, J., David R., Hodgson, P. K., Simari, R. D., & Nishimura, R. A. (2010).

Mentoring: Making the transition from mentee to mentor. *Circulation, 121*(2), 336-

340.

Hops H, Davis B, Leve C, & Sheeber L. (2003) Cross-generational transmission of

aggressive parent behavior: a prospective, mediational examination. *Abnormal*

Child Psychology, 31(2), 161–169.

Husserl, E. (2012). *Logical investigations* (Vol.1). Abingdon: Routledge.

Inzer, L. D., & Crawford, C. B. (2005). A review of formal and informal mentoring:

processes, problems, and design. *Journal of Leadership Education*, *4*(1), 31-50.

Jacobi, M. (1991). Mentoring and undergraduate academic success: A literature review.

Review of Educational Research, 61(4), 505-532.

Jacobs, J. A. (1996). Gender inequality and higher education. *Annual Review of*

Sociology, 22(1996), 153-185.

Johnson, R. B. (1997). Examining the validity structure of qualitative research. *Education,*

118(1), 282-292.

Kamps, D. M., Barbetta, P. M., Leonard, B. R., & Delquadri, J. (1994). Classwide peer

tutoring: An integration strategy to improve reading skills and promote peer

interactions among students with autism and general education peers. *Journal of*

Applied Behavior Analysis, *27*(1), 49-61.

Kazdin, A. E. (1993). Adolescent mental health: Prevention and treatment programs.

American Psychologist, 48(2), 127-141.

Kelley, P., Hood, S., & Mayall, B. (1998). Children, parents and risk. *Health & Social Care*

in the Community, *6*(1), 16-24.

Kenny, M. E. (1987). Family ties and leaving home for college: Recent findings and implications. *Journal of College and Student Personnel 28*(5), 438-442*.*

Kerr, C. (2010). Assessing and demonstrating data saturation in qualitative inquire supporting patient-reported outcomes research. Expert Review of *Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research*, *10*(3), 269-281.

Klauss, R. (1981). Formalized mentor relationships for management and executive development programs in the federal government. *Public Administration Review, July/August,* 489-496.

Kram, K.E. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life.* Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Lerner, H. (1977). The taboos against female anger. *Menninger Perspective*,*8*(4), 4-11.

Levinson, D., Darrow, C., Klein, E., Levinson, M., & McKee, B. (1978). *Seasons of a man's life*. New York, NY: Knopf.

Lewis, C. E. (2001). *A qualitative examination of attachment and resilience in homeless girls* (Order No. 3013727). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (304743395). Retrieved from https://login.ezproxy.uta.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uta.edu/docview/304743395?accountid=7117

Li, L.W. and Seltzer, M.M. (2005). Relationship quality with parent, daughter role salience, and self-esteem of daughter caregivers. *Marriage & Family Review (The Haworth Press, Inc.) 37(1/2), pp. 63-82*.

Luthar, S. S., Cicchetti, D., & Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and guidelines for future work. *Child Development*, *71*(3), 543–562.

Lynch, M., & Cicchetti, D. (1997). Children's relationships with adults and peers: An examination of elementary and junior high school students. *Journal of School Psychology*, *35*(1), 81-99.

Madigan, J.C. (2009). The education of girls and women in the United States: A historical perspective. *Advances in Gender and Education*, *1(2009),* 11-13.

Mann, M. J., Kristjansson, A. L., Sigfusdottir, I. D., & Smith, M. L. (2014). The impact of negative life events on young adolescents: comparing the relative vulnerability of middle level, high school, and college-age students. *RMLE Online*, *38*(2), 1-13.

Masten, A. S., Best, K. M., & Garmezy, N. (1990). Resilience and development: Contributions from the study of children who overcome adversity. *Development and Psychopathology*, *2*(04), 425-444.

Maxwell, J. (1996). *Using qualitative research to develop causal explanations*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University: Harvard Project on Schooling and Children.

McGee, R., & Williams, S. (2000). Does low self-esteem predict health compromising behaviors among adolescents? *Journal of Adolescence*, *23(5*), 569–582.

McLanahan, S. S. (1999). Father absence and the welfare of children. *Coping with divorce, single parenting, and remarriage: A risk and resiliency perspective*, 117-145.

McLearn, K. T., Colasanto, D., Schoen, C., & Shapiro, M. Y. (1997). Mentoring matters: A national survey of adults mentoring young people. In J. B. Grossman (Ed.), *Contemporary issues in mentoring* (66-83). Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.

Mentoring.org (n.d.). *MENTOR: Expanding the world of quality mentoring.* Retrieved from http://www.mentoring.org/

MENTOR. (2009). Elements of effective practice for mentoring (4th ed). Retrieved from

http://www.mentoring.org/new-site/wp-

content/uploads/2016/01/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth.pdf

MENTOR National Mentoring Partnership. (2005). *How to build a successful mentoring program using the elements of effective practice.* Retrieved from

http://www.mentoring.org/downloads/mentoring_413.pdf

Mickelson, R. A. (1989). Why does Jane read and write so well? The anomaly of

women's achievement. *Sociology of Education, 62(1),* 47-63.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new

methods. *Qualitative data analysis: a sourcebook of new methods*. Beverly Hills,

CA: Sage Publications.

Morales, A., Yakushko, O. F., & Castro, A. J. (2012). Language brokering among

Mexican-immigrant families in the Midwest: A multiple case study. *The*

Counseling Psychologist, *40*(4), 520-553.

Morrow, S. L., & Smith, M. L. (2000). Qualitative research for counseling psychology. In

S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Psychology* (3rd ed.)

(199–230). New York, NY: Wiley.

Myall M, Levett-Jones T & Lathlean J. (2008). Mentorship in contemporary practice: the

experiences of nursing students and practice mentors. *Journal of Clinical*

Nursing; *17*(1), 834-842.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

School Officers. (2010a). *Common core state standards for English language*

arts and literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects.

Washington, DC: Authors.

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State

    School Officers. (2010b). *Common core state standards for mathematics.*

    Washington, DC: Authors.

Needham, B. L., Crosnoe, R., & Muller, C. (2004). Academic failure in secondary school:

    The inter-related role of health problems and educational context. *Social*

    Problems, *51*(4), 569–586.

Nettleton P, Bray L (2008) Current mentorship schemes might be doing our students a

    disservice. *Nurse Education in Practice*; 8, 205-212.

National Women's History Museum. (2007). Retrieved from https://www.nwhm.org/online-

    exhibits/education/1700s_1.htm

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. (2004). Last best chance: Educating

    young adolescents in the 21st century. Middle Grades Task Force report.

    Retreived from http://www. ncpublicschools.org/docs/curriculum/lbc/

    lastbestchance.pdf.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2002). *A conceptual framework for assessing legitimation in*

    qualitative research. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED471659)

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2003). Effect sizes in qualitative research: A prolegomenon.

    Quality & Quantity: International Journal of Methodology, 37(4), 393-409.

Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. (1998). *Juvenile mentoring*

    program: 1998 report to congress. Washington, DC: United States Department of

    Justice.

Ornstein, A .C., & Levine, D. U. (1984). *An introduction to the foundations of education*

    (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Rak, C. F., & Patterson, L. E. (1996). Promoting resilience in at-risk children. *Journal of*

    Counseling & Development, 74(4), 368-373.

Rhodes, J. E., Lowe, S. R., Litchfield, L., & Walsh-Samp, K. (2008). The role of gender in youth mentoring relationship formation and duration. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 72*(2008), 183–192.

Rhodes, J.E. (2005). A model of youth mentoring. In D. L. DuBois, & M. J. Karcher (Eds.), Handbook of youth mentoring (pp. 30-43). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rhodes, J. E. (2002). *Stand by me: The risks and rewards of mentoring today's youth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., Nicholls, C. M., & Ormston, R. (Eds.). (2013). *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*. Sage: Great Britain.

Riessman, C. K., & Quinney, L. (2005). Narrative in social work a critical review. *Qualitative Social Work, 4*(4), 391-412.

Riordan, C. (1990). *Girls and boys in school: Together or separate?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Roth, J., Brooks-Gunn, J., Murray, L., & Foster, W. (1998). Promoting healthy adolescents: Synthesis of youth development program evaluations. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 8*(4), 423-459.

Sharma, G. V., & Freeman, A. M. (2014). Mentoring: Why it matters even after training. *Journal of the American College of Cardiology*, *64*(18), 1964-1965.

Shea, G. F. (1997. *Mentoring* (Rev. Ed.). Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications.

Seidman, I. E. (1991). *Interviewing as qualitative research.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. *Education for Information*, *22*(2), 63-75.

Sigfusdottir, I. D., & Silver, E. (2009). Emotional reactions to stress among adolescent boys and girls: An examination of the mediating mechanisms proposed by general strain theory. *Youth & Society*, 40(4), 571–590.

Sipe, C., & Roder, A. (1999). *Mentoring school-aged children: A classification of mentoring programs.* Retrieved from Public/Private Ventures: http://ppv.issuelab.org/resource/ mentoring_school_age_children_a_classification_of_programs

Smith, C., & Denton, M. L. (2005). *Soul searching: The religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Spencer, R., & Liang, B. (2009). "She gives me a break from the world": Formal youth mentoring relationships between adolescent girls and adult women*. The Journal of Primary Prevention*, *30*(2), 109-130.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques.* London: Sage.

Takei, M. L. (1995). *Mentoring the masculine* (Order No. 9604531). (Doctoral Dissertation) Retrieved from https://login.ezproxy.uta.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uta.ed u/docview/304219619?accountid=7117 (304219619).Texas Education Agency*. (2012). Glossary for the academic excellence indicator system 2011-12. Retrieved from http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/2012/glossary.html.*

Texas Education Agency. (2012). *School report card for A large high school in Dallas/Fort Worth, 2014-2015.* Retrieved from https://rptsvr1.tea.texas.gov/perfreport/src/2015/static/campus/c057907001.pdf.

The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. (n.d.) Retrieved from

      http://www.turnaroundagenda.org/.

Thompson, L. A., & Kelly-Vance, L. (2001). The impact of mentoring on academic

      achievement of at-risk youth. *Children and Youth Services Review*, *23*(3), 227-

      242.

Thomas, S. P. (2005). Women's anger, aggression, and violence. *Health Care for*

      Women International, *26*(6), 504-522.

Thomas, S. P., Groer, M., Davis, M., Droppleman, P., Mozingo, J., & Pierce, M. (2000).

      Anger and cancer: An analysis of the linkages. *Cancer Nursing, 23*, 344–349.

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition.*

      Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

United States Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). Retrieved from

      http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/assurances/irb/.

Wanberg, C. R., Welsh, E. T., & Hezlett, S. A. (2003). Mentoring research: A review and

      dynamic process model. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources*

      Management, *22 (*2003)*,* 39-124.

Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1997). *Fostering educational resilience in*

      inner-city schools. (Publication Series No. 4).

Wang, M. C., Haertel, G. D., & Walberg, H. J. (1998). Building educational resilience. *Phi*

      Delta Kappa Fastbacks 430. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa Educational

      Foundation, 7-61.

Wasogna, T., Christman, D. E., & Kilmer, L. (2003). Ethnicity, gender and age: Predicting

      resilience and academic achievement among urban high school students.

      American Secondary Education, 32(1), 62-74.

Weinberg, F. J., & Lankau, M. J. (2011). Formal mentoring programs: A mentor-centric
and longitudinal analysis. *Journal of Management, 37*(6), 1527-1557.

Werner, E. E. (1984). Resilient children. *Young Children*, 68-72.

Williams, A. E. (2014). *Teacher and administrator perceptions of standards-based report
cards* (Order No. 3582104). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses
Global. (1657430047). Retrieved from
https://login.ezproxy.uta.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uta.ed
u/docview/1657430047?accountid=7117

Wilson, J. A., & Elman, N. S. (1990). Organizational benefits of mentoring. *The
Executive*, *4*(4), 88-94.

Winders, S.J., (2014). From extraordinary invulnerability to ordinary magic: A literature
review of resilience. *Journal of European Psychology Students. 5*(1), 3–9.

Witter, R.A., Stock, W.A., Okun, M.A., & Haring, M.J. (1985). Religion and subjective
well-being in adulthood: A quantitative synthesis. *Review of Religious Research*,
26, 332-342.

Zevallos Nunez, A. L. (2007). *Mentoring: Perspectives from attachment theory* (Order No.
3329401). (Doctoral Dissertation). Retrieved from
https://login.ezproxy.uta.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.uta.ed
u/docview/304748484?accountid=7117 (304748484).

Zey, M. C. (1984). *The mentor connection.* Homewood, IL: Dow Jones-Irving.

Appendix A Invitation to Participate and Parent Consent

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study regarding the services and programs provided by The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. However, before you give your consent, please read the following and ask as many questions as necessary to be sure that you understand what consent for participation will involve.

Investigator

Nina L. Price, M.Ed., is a doctoral student at the University of Texas at Arlington in Arlington Texas. Her chairperson for this study is Maria Trache, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this qualitative study is to examine which methods of mentoring, if any, have a positive effect on the social behavior of adolescent girls who are clients of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center and are between the ages of 14 and eighteen. Furthermore, this qualitative study aims to identify ways in which the mentoring process positively affects the life of female youth who attend The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center.

Duration of Participation and Expected Number of Participants

Each participant (mentee, mentor, and site director) will the opportunity to be involved in a maximum of two interview sessions with an anticipated duration not to exceed 45 minutes per interview, inclusive of the first and potential subsequent follow-up interview.

Research Procedures

This study will be comprised of no more than two interview sessions and at least one observation visit of the mentor and mentee interactive session. During the initial

interview, I will ask questions which will range from general to detailed information regarding the mentor and mentee experiences with the organization and its mentoring process. During the follow up interview, I will clarify any areas of ambiguity or misconceptions that may have resulted during the initial interview.

Benefits

There are no direct benefits to the participants, neither implied nor stated, other than the opportunity to indirectly impact the manner in which mentoring will be provided by The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. However, I may benefit by gaining a more in-depth perspective of the mentoring process and have the potential to positively impact future mentoring programs.

Research Alternatives

There is no known alternative to this research study. Participation remains optional for all subjects.

Confidentiality

All information obtained from this study will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. If you allow your child to participate in this study, audiotaping and/or videotaping will occur for research purposes. These tapes will be heard only by the researcher's doctoral committee and will be destroyed upon completion of this research study. The results of this study can be used as long as your child cannot reasonably be identified.

Questions Regarding this Study

If you have any questions about this study, please contact Nina Price at nina.price@mavs.uta.edu or Dr. Maria Trache at mtrache@uta.edu.

Participant Compensation

At the conclusion of the study, each participant will receive lunch with a value not to exceed $10.

Subject Rights and Withdrawal from the Study

Participation is voluntary and may be discontinued at any time. Should you find it necessary to withdraw your participation, for any reason, please contact Nina Price, M.Ed. at nina.price@mavs.uta.edu.

Acknowledgement and Signature of Parent

I understand that by signing below, I authorize participation in the research study. I am the parent of the child listed below. I have read and fully understand what is required for participation in this study, and fully intend to comply with reasonable requests to meet, complete forms, and be observed by the researcher. I have been informed of my rights and understand that I may: a) ask questions at any time, and b) withdraw my child's participation at any time. Participation in this study does not waive any legal rights that I or my child may have.

_____

Parent's Signature

Date

_____

Child's Name   *Child's age at the time of signing*

Date

_____

Witness's Signature

Date

Appendix B Child Interview Assent

I understand I am being asked to participate in a study to learn more about children who have mentors and are clients of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center. I understand that if I am allowed by my parent to participate, I will be asked questions about my academic progress, my feelings, and my life since having a mentor. I also understand that I will be observed by Nina Price as a part of this study to determine how I interact with my mentor. I understand that the interviews may require more than one session; initial and follow-up and should take no more than 45 minutes per session. I understand that by participating this study, I will receive lunch with a value not to exceed $10. My participation is voluntary and I can stop at any time, for any reason. Any questions I have can be directed to Nina Price.

_____
Child's Name   Age

_____
Parent's Name

_____
Witness's Signature

Appendix C Subject's Bill of Rights

As a participant in a research study or as someone who is requested to give consent on behalf of another for such participation, you have certain rights and responsibilities. It is important that you understand the mature and purpose of the research and that your consent be offered willingly and with complete understanding. To aid in your understanding, you have the following specific rights:

1. To be informed of the nature and purpose of the research in which you are participating.

2. To be given an explanation of all procedures to be followed and of any drug or device to be utilized.

3. To be given a description of any risks or discomforts which can be reasonably expected to occur.

4. To be given an explanation of any benefits which may be expected to come to the subject as a result of this research.

5. To be informed of any appropriate alternative procedures, drugs, or devices that may be advantageous and of their relative risks and discomforts.

6. To be informed of any medical (treatment which will be made available to the subject if complications should arise from thus research.

7. To be given an opportunity and encouraged to ask any questions concerning the study or the procedures involved in this research.

8. To be made aware that consent (to participate in the research may be withdrawn and that participation may be discontinued at any time without affecting continuity or quality of your medical care.

9. To be given a copy of the signed and dated written consent form if requested.

10. To not be subjected to any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, coercion, or any influence in reaching your decision to consent or not consent to participate in the research.

If you have any further questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact either your researcher Nina Price at nina.price@mavs.uta.edu or IRB (Human Subjects) Coordinator Mary-Colette Lybrand at marycolette.lybrand@uta.edu.

Appendix D Interview Protocol-Child

Date_____   Family ID_____

Pseudonym_____

Structure of the Interview:

Introduce myself

Discuss the purpose of the study

Provide Parental consent, Child/Adolescent Assent and obtain signatures.

Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)

Test audio recording equipment

SMILE-make the participant feel comfortable

Interview Questions

1. Please begin by telling me about yourself, such as your name, age, and interests.

      A. Is there anything else you would like for me to know?

2. In what grade were you when you became a client of The TurnAround Agenda

Outreach Center?

3. Did you help select The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center mentor or was the

person chosen for you?

4. What can you tell me about your experiences at The TurnAround Agenda Outreach

Center so far?

5. How often do you meet with The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center mentor?

      A. When and where do you meet with your mentor?

6. How would you describe the mentor selection process?

7. How would you describe your mentor (i.e., kind, good listener, etc.)?

8. Do you know why you have a mentor?

9. Is there anything that your mentor doesn't do that you wish she could/would do?

    A. Why?

10. Is this the only mentor you have had since becoming a The TurnAround Agenda

Outreach Center client?

    A. If not, what happened to the other one(s)?

11. Have you noticed any changes since you have been a member of The TurnAround

Agenda Outreach Center (i.e. grades, behavior, etc.)?

        1. Do you believe your mentor is the reason for these changes?

    A. Is so, what changes?

    B. If not, is there a reason?

        2. Is there anything your mentor could do to improve?

12. Tell me about your best memory with your mentor?

13. Tell me what you think your life would be like without your mentor.

14. Does your mentor encourage you to make changes in your life or at school?

    A. What does she say or do to encourage you?

    B. If not, is there anyone who does (motivate or encourage you)?

        1. If so, who is that person?

15. Tell me about a time when your mentor encouraged or motivated you to do

something.

    A. How did it turn out?

    B. Did you learn anything from that experience?

16. Tell me about the perceptions of you from those who do not have a mentor.

    A. Do they view you differently?

    B. Do you view yourself differently?

17. Is there anything that I did not ask that you feel is important and want to share with me about your mentor or your experiences at The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center?

18. Do you have any other questions for me?

Appendix E Interview Protocol-Mentor

Date_____   Family ID_____

                    Pseudonym_____

Structure of the Interview:

Introduce yourself

Discuss the purpose of the study

Provide consent and obtain signatures.

Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)

Ask if they have any questions

Test audio recording equipment

SMILE-make the participant feel comfortable

Interview Questions

1. Please begin by introducing yourself and telling me about your role at The TurnAround

Agenda Outreach Center.

2. How did you become involved with The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center

program?

3. What prompted you to become a mentor?

    A. How long have you been a mentor?

4. Do you mentor at other places?

    A. If so, how many mentees do you have?

    B. Is your mentoring preference gender specific?

5. Describe some of the activities that you do with the mentee(s).

6. How long is a typical session or interaction?

7. How frequently do you meet with your mentee?

8. Please describe the mentor selection process.

       A. Is there anything you would change about the process?

9. Please share if you have expectations of the organization?

       A. Of the mentee?

       B. Of the parent?

10. Have you noticed any changes in your mentees since becoming involved with her?

       A. What changes have you noticed?

       B. Do you believe those changes are a result of your interaction?

       C. Why or why not?

11. How do you believe you have impacted the life of the mentee through your support?

12. What do you believe the impact of The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center mentoring program has had on:

       A. self-esteem,

       B. school attendance,

       C. academic achievement for your mentee?

13. What are some the barriers to mentorship?

14. What aspects of the program do you believe has been most beneficial on your mentee?

15. What aspects of the program do you believe has been least beneficial on your mentee?

16. Is there anything else you would like to share with me?

Appendix F Interview Protocol-Site Director

Date_____   Family ID_____

Pseudonym_____

Structure of the Interview:

Introduce yourself

Discuss the purpose of the study

Provide consent and obtain signatures.

Provide structure of the interview (audio recording, taking notes, and use of pseudonym)

Ask if they have any questions

Test audio recording equipment

SMILE-make the participant feel comfortable

Interview Questions

1. Please begin by introducing yourself, including how long you have been a part of The

   TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center.

        A. What is your role at The TurnAround Agenda Outreach Center?

2. Tell me more about how mentors are paired with mentees.

3. Please describe the mentor selection process.

        A. Are mentors recruited?

        B. If so, from where?

3. Do mentors have to submit to background verification?

4. Are mentors required to have formal training?

      A. If there is training, how would you describe the training process?

      B. If no training is required, how are mentors expected to be successful with the

mentee?

5. How is a successful mentoring relationship defined?

      A. Is there a success story that you would like to share?

6. Is there anything else you would like to share about the program?

Appendix G IRB Approval

UNIVERSITY OF **TEXAS** ARLINGTON | OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION REGULATORY SERVICES

March 25, 2016

Nina Price
Dr. Maria Trache
The University of Texas at Arlington
Educational Leadership & Policy Studies
Box 19575

EXPEDITED APPROVAL OF HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH

IRB No.:   2016-0281
TITLE: *Examining the Social Effects of Community-Based Mentoring on At-Risk Adolescent Girls*
Approval Date: March 25, 2016
Expiration Date: March 25, 2017

Approved Number of Participants: 6 (Do not exceed without prior IRB approval)

The University of Texas Arlington Institutional Review Board (UTA IRB) has made the determination that this research protocol involving human subjects is eligible for expedited review in accordance with Title 45 CFR 46.110(a)-(b)(1), 63 FR 60364 and 63 FR 60353, categories (6) & (7). The IRB Chairperson (or designee) approved this protocol effective **March 25, 2016.** IRB approval for the research shall continue until **March 25, 2017.**

APPROVED NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:
This protocol has been approved for enrollment of a maximum of **6** participants and is not to exceed this number. The IRB considers a subject to be enrolled once s/he consents to participate in the study. If additional data are needed, the researcher must submit a modification request to increase the number of approved participants **before** the additional data are collected. Exceeding the number of approved participants is considered an issue of non-compliance and will be subject to deliberation set forth by the IRB and the Vice President for Research.

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT:
The IRB approved version of the informed consent document (ICD) must be used when prospectively enrolling volunteer participants into the study. All signed consent forms must be securely maintained on the UT Arlington campus for the duration of the study plus a minimum of three years after the completion of all study procedures (including data analysis). The complete study record is subject to inspection and/or audit during this time period by entities including but not limited to the UT Arlington IRB, Regulatory Services staff, OHRP, and by study sponsors (if the study is funded).

MODIFICATION TO AN APPROVED PROTOCOL:
Pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, "promptly report to the IRB *any* proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are **not initiated without prior IRB review and approval** except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject." Modifications include but are not limited to: Changes in protocol personnel, number of approved participants, and/or updates to the protocol procedures or instruments. All proposed changes must be

REGULATORY SERVICES | The University of Texas at Arlington, Center for Innovation
202 E. Border Street, Ste. 201, Arlington, Texas 76010, Box#19188
(T) 817-272-3723 (F) 817-272-5808 (E) regulatoryservices@uta.edu (W) www.uta.edu/rs

UNIVERSITY OF
TEXAS
ARLINGTON

OFFICE OF RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
REGULATORY SERVICES

submitted via the electronic submission system prior to implementation. Failure to obtain prior approval for modifications is considered an issue of non-compliance and will be subject to review and deliberation by the IRB which could result in the suspension/termination of the protocol.

ANNUAL CONTINUING REVIEW:
In order for the research to continue beyond the first year, the Principal Investigator must submit a Continuing Review for approval via the online submission system within 30 days preceding the date of expiration indicated above. Continuing review of the protocol serves as a progress report and provides the researcher with an opportunity to make updates to the originally approved protocol. Failure to obtain approval for a continuing review will result in automatic *expiration of the protocol* all activities involving human subjects must cease immediately. The research will not be allowed to commence by any protocol personnel until a new protocol has been submitted, reviewed, and approved by the IRB. Per federal regulations and UTA's Federalwide Assurance (FWA), there are no exceptions and no extensions of approval granted by the IRB. The continuation of study procedures after the expiration of a protocol is considered to be an issue of non-compliance and a violation of federal regulations. Such violations could result in termination of external and University funding and/or disciplinary action.

ADVERSE EVENTS:
Please be advised that as the Principal Investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services within 24 hours of the occurrence or upon acknowledgement of the occurrence.

HUMAN SUBJECTS TRAINING AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:
All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented Human Subjects Protection (HSP) training on file and must have filed a current Conflict of Interest Disclosure (COI) with The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services. HSP completion certificates are valid for 2 years from completion date.

COLLABORATION:
If applicable, approval by the appropriate authority at a collaborating facility is required prior to subject enrollment. If the collaborating facility is *engaged in the research*, an OHRP approved Federalwide Assurance (FWA) may be required for the facility (prior to their participation in research-related activities). To determine whether the collaborating facility is engaged in research, go to: http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/assurance/engage.htm

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS:
The UT Arlington Office of Research Administration; Regulatory Services appreciates your continuing commitment to the protection of human research subjects. Should you have questions or require further assistance, please contact Regulatory Services at regulatoryservices@uta.edu or 817-272-2105.

Sincerely,

Ray, Christopher T

Digitally signed by Ray, Christopher T
DN: cn=Ray, Christopher T, o, ou,
email=chrisray@uta.edu, c=US
Date: 2016.03.25 10:59:11 -05'00'

Christopher Ray, PhD, ATC, CSCS
Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology
UT Arlington IRB Chair

REGULATORY SERVICES

The University of Texas at Arlington, Center for Innovation
202 E. Border Street, Ste. 201, Arlington, Texas 76010, Box#19188
(T) 817-272-3723 (F) 817-272-5808 (E) regulatoryservices@uta.edu (W) www.uta.edu/rs

114

DUNCANVILLE
Independent School District

January 29, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am granting Nina Price, Assistant Principal in Duncanville ISD, the right to conduct interviews with both mentors and mentees associated with the TurnAround Agenda at Duncanville High School as a part of research on the role of mentors and the effects of the mentor-mentee relationship. She has shared her protocol, including the forms used for parent and student permission to participate, as well as the interview questions for both mentors and mentees.

I would ask that no students be interviewed without written parent consent. I would also like to receive a copy of the findings of this research. The information may help in evaluating the program's effectiveness.

Sincerely,

Deborah Cron, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent

Administration   710 S. Cedar Ridge Duncanville, Texas 75137   p. 972.708.2000 f. 972.708.2020