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Female Mentorship: A Study on University of San Francisco President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Mentorship Program

Maria Bluth
mcbluth3@dons.usfca.edu

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Female Mentorship: A Study on University of San Francisco President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Mentorship Program

Master of Arts

In

Organization and Leadership

By

Maria Bluth

Dr. Jane Bleasdale

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgement:

Thank you to my fiancé, Matt who created a space in our busy lives for me to complete this project. And to Dr. Jane Bleasedale who had the patience and kindness for me to finally arrive. To all the women who were brave enough to share their stories with me.

As a young woman in my twenties working in higher education, I was lucky enough to have three incredibly strong women become lifelong mentors- personally and professionally. The idea of having many mentors was something I always took for granted, something I assumed I deserved, a relationship I assumed would occur naturally as I moved up in my career. I have always had mentors to discuss asking for a raise, plan my future, or to coach me on a tough conversation at work. As I matured and realized this type of mentorship was not as common as I thought and that accessibility to mentorship was actually rather rare I searched for mentorship on campus. As something that has been incredibly formative in my life and career, I want more women to have the opportunity to learn and grow from other women as they navigate their career working in higher education.

As an employee at the University of San Francisco for four years and a lifelong learner of Jesuit values at Jesuit schools I learned of the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Mentorship Program. I wanted to learn more about how the program worked, the development of the co-mentorship aspect, how impactful this model of mentorship could be, and how it could help promote female empowerment on a campus I care deeply about. I was able to connect with the Office of Diversity and Community Outreach to explore the program, interview participants, uncover strengths of the program and look for areas for growth.

Chapter 1: Introduction

According to an employment survey, 1 out of 5 women report that they have never had a mentor at work (Linkedin, 2011). Women also experience challenges in upward mobility in the workforce, claiming approximately 53 percent of entry-level management jobs but only 37 percent of mid-level management positions and 26 percent of positions at the Vice President and higher level (McKinsey Research, 2011). Additionally, women experience unique barriers obtaining mentors, from lack of institutionalized programs to hesitations to identifying or initiating a mentoring relationship (Ragins and Cotton, 1991).

Given the large disparity among gender, many organizations have put forth efforts to combat these issues and guide opportunities for women to advance their careers. Forte foundation highlights that only 36% of MBA grads are women, compared to 50% in law and medical schools. Only 6% of Fortune 500 CEOs are women. Only 21% of S&P 500 board members are women. According to 20-first and Schmitt (2017) 31% of Fortune 500 CEOs are MBAs and barely a third of business school graduates are women. This absence of female leadership is tied to an absence of efforts put forth to prioritize advancement for women, specifically women of color. There are such few women in positions to bring more women into these roles.

The lack of female and minority representation, mentors, and resources for women, especially women of color inhibit progress for women in the field. Mentorship is one of the best ways to develop and retain employees. According to a recent study (Heidrick and Struggles, 2017; Kunze and Miller, 2017; Burke and Mckeen, 1990; Benishek, Bieschke, Park and Slattery,

2004; McGuire and Reger, 2003; Searby and Tripses, 2006; Dishman, 2017; Schmitt, 2017; Allen, 2017; Ethier, 2018) found women and underrepresented talent find formal mentoring programs to be a major asset and critical in advancing their careers. Mentorship is one factor that can facilitate women's progress through the ranks.

People are drawn to mentors who they identify with, thus not seeing yourself in leadership or seeing the opportunity to progress is the start of the problem and Heidrick and Struggles (2017) note women place more value than men on professional feedback and development opportunities, but have fewer to take advantage of in their career. Thus, business schools, companies, and organizations have a long way to go in regards to seeking out ways in which women have more formal and informal mentoring platforms and opportunities.

In a recent study on Creating a Culture of Mentorship Heidrick and Struggles (2017) found most respondents said their primary mentoring relationship was crucial to their career development. Closing the gender gap requires participation from those already in place to make an impact- 61% of respondents' mentors were men and 39% were women pointing to the lack of gender parity in senior management available for mentorship for women, especially women of color. The recent report by Leanin.org and McKinsey found employees who receive career advice from managers and senior leaders are more likely to be promoted, but women are less likely to receive this advice and women of color are even less likely. Increasing gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity in leadership roles can increase profitability as well as benefit all involved. Heidrick and Struggles (2017) believe mentorship is one of the most important things we can offer to help develop and retain minority employees. Female mentorship programs such as the University of San Francisco President's Advisory Committee on the Status Women (PACSW)

Co-Mentor Program leads to more female leaders, builds confidence, career-readiness and

connectivity aimed at shrinking this gap through mentorship.

(https://myusf.usfca.edu/president/committees-commissions/pacsw/mentoringprogram)

Mentorship is one way to advance gender equity, and it can enhance a women's career,

but finding a mentor can be intimidating, the University of San Francisco President's Advisory

Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Women's Co-Mentoring Program seeks to

increase confidence, community, and capacity amongst women-identified employees at the

University of San Francisco. The program aims to accomplish this through the creation of

intentional, time-bound one-on-one relationships between University employees based on

confidentiality and collegiality (PACSW Mission Statement). The ideal goal of the

Co-Mentorship program is to benefit the co-mentors, as well as positively impact the whole

University community through co-mentor training, meet-ups, monthly sessions, and group

readings. Thus, ideally helping women establish relationships and make connections that can

impact their career trajectories, lead to more female leaders, build confidence, and provide

mentorship to those to come.

Background and Need

According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, women will not earn as much as

men for equal work until 2059. Discrimination in pay, recruitment, job assignment and

promotion, lower earnings and a disproportionate share of time spent on family care all

contribute to women earning nearly 20% less than men, and this gap is even wider for women of color. Over 4 years Leanin.org and McKinsey and Company looked at data from 462 companies employing 20 million people and discovered women remain significantly underrepresented, particularly women of color and companies need to change the way they hire and promote entry-and manager employees to see any real impact in closing the gender gap.

The lack of female and minority representation, mentors, and resources for women, especially women of color inhibit progress for women in the field. Mentorship is one of the best ways to develop and retain employees. According to a recent study (Heidrick and Struggles, 2017; Kunze and Miller, 2017; Burke and Mckeen, 1990; Benishek, Bieschke, Park and Slattery, 2004; McGuire and Reger, 2003; Searby and Tripses, 2006; Dishman, 2017; Schmitt, 2017; Allen, 2017; Ethier, 2018) found women and underrepresented talent find formal mentoring programs to be a major asset and critical in advancing their careers. Mentorship is one factor that can facilitate women's progress through the ranks in the workplace personally and professionally.

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development. Closing the gender gap requires participation from those already in place to make an impact- 61% of respondents' mentors were men and 39% were women pointing to the lack of gender parity in senior management available for mentorship for women, especially women of color. The recent report by Leanin.org and McKinsey found employees who receive career advice from managers and senior leaders are more likely to be promoted, but women are less likely to receive this advice and women of color are even less likely. Increasing gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity in leadership roles can increase profitability as well as benefit all involved. Heidrick and Struggles (2017) believe mentorship is one of the most important things we can offer to help develop and retain minority employees. Mentorship programs such as PACSW can build confidence, career-readiness and connectivity aimed at shrinking this gap through mentorship.

A Harvard Business School study (Delong, 2008) found that every professional over 40 years old could name a mentor, but very few younger professionals were able to name a relationship that would influence their career trajectory. Understanding the story of women who have succeeded in the field can remove some of the intimidation that comes with entering an industry. Mentors don't always have to be at work, expanding one's network and exposure can create confidence and a safe space to explore. Bowling's (2018) How to Build a Culture of Mentorship guide explores why cross-departmental collaboration and mentorship builds better leaders, and develops more skills. Building this type of mentorship culture also requires a focus on communication and encourages women to practice effective, clear communication in turn establishing stronger leadership skills and access to a larger network across departments or offices.

Female employees and even leaders can miss out on promotions without proper mentorship, role models and access to appropriate networks. A total of 50 global women managers were selected for a study to evaluate the difficulties in career development around mentoring and networking and the role it can play or the deficiency that can exist in its absence. In regards to networking, the research found the main obstacles for female managers to be access to male networks and having less time for the traditional ways of networking due to domestic commitments. The research showed managerial women to be less integrated into organizational networks that can influence promotions. Therefore, the research noted the significance and benefit of being a part of certain groups, networks, and having meaningful relationships across all levels. (Linehan and Scullion, 2008) Having access to other women to learn more about salary negotiations, self-confidence, finding the right mentors, making your voice heard, and having a seat at the table will invite more women to grow and share their stories and inspire the women who follow.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact female mentorship has throughout a woman's career and employment in higher education. It is important to explore mentoring programs utilized by women-identified employees in school programs because the impact/power of female mentorship leads to more female leaders, builds confidence, career readiness, and connectivity. Therefore, as part of the thesis for the USF O&L program, this opportunity will allow us to learn about the formal PACSW mentorship program by interviewing a few mentors and a few mentees from the PACSW mentorship program. In exploring different models of

mentorship, additionally interviewing the Diversity Engagement team staff for a glance into the informal mentorship among the team that creates formal mentorship programming. Female mentorship builds, confidence, career readiness, and connectivity. It is important to change the narrative of who receives mentorship formal and informal as well as shift the sense of networks and the role they can play in career advancement. More and more young women are entering the workforce and although evidence shows everyone benefits from mentorship, it is especially significant for young women and primarily young women of color to connect with mentors in leadership positions who reflect a shared identity and can provide a sense of belonging into a network they may have never felt connected to before.

This qualitative study will conduct interviews with women who have participated in the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) co-mentorship program during the fall of 2019 and while being employed at the University of San Francisco in some capacity. This will be a qualitative study with conducted interviews that study the PACSW mentorship program, process and purpose. Recorded interviews will be used to analyze data and identify common themes that make a positive or negative mentor/mentee experience in higher education as well as ways to improve future programs.

Research Questions/Hypotheses

- What are the experiences of female mentees and mentors who have participated in PACSW Co Mentorship program method and model of mentorship? Were they successful? Was it worthwhile? Was it impactful?

- What tactics/characteristics/approaches within this model were most valuable for women in finding fulfillment, building their network, or advancing their careers in some capacity?

- Does Female mentorship build confidence, career readiness, and connectivity?

- Female mentorship has a positive impact on increasing the number of women advancing in higher education.

Limitations of the Study

Given the study will only look at one program over one semester - President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Women's Co Mentorship program and a small sample size of women who have participated in the program for guidance to advance their careers all findings may not be fully representative of the best model or the only ways to mentor women to advance women in the world of higher education. In addition, different women may have accessed some but not all of the opportunities the PACSW Co-Mentorship program offers, this would affect the data collected and need to be looked at given each woman comes with her own story, certain amount of years of work experience, and possibly an already existing network. The value of qualitative research is significant, but the study may show several different options and paths, rather than one clear model or example to follow.

Additionally, given the short time frame of the program and the evaluation period, it be me limiting in measuring if a participant does receive a promotion or advance their career as that process often happens gradually over time and we may not see immediate results, but rather a slow stepping stone toward progress. It also takes more time to establish new networks and see

the benefits of such a program as relationships grow and evolve over weeks, and months, and year. Thus, making it challenging to measure in a short time with a small sample size. Also, each individual has different goals upon entering the program, therefore success of a program may look different for every participant.

Significance of the Study

This research project will help inform future models of mentorship for educational institutions as well as organization programs and activities. Uncovering successful avenues or models that help advance women, specifically working in education that are repeatable and applicable, will continue to advance equity for women in education. Studying the experiences of women who have participated in the University of San Francisco PACSW Co-Mentorship program may help guide other universities, educational institutions, employers and leaders hoping to improve the personal, professional lives of their employees as well as campus or workplace culture. Hearing the stories and analyzing the progress of the participants may guide future projects, workshops, and help evolve models of mentorship and create cultural shifts in priorities of an organization focused around equity.

Organizations like University of San Francisco PACSW Co-Mentorship program find strength in other women, in larger groups who share a similar mission and vision of finding equity in schools and workforces. The USF PACSW Co-Mentorship program coalition connects smart women, creates space and time for leaders to evolve and confidence to grow on campus. Together University of San Francisco PACSW Co-Mentorship program women join to provide

practical tools, workshops, and mentorship opportunities all with the goal of benefitting women in education, and therefore education as a whole.

Uncovering the program's strengths and areas for growth will help the program create more access for women on campus to have a mentor. Additionally, conducting this study will explore options for the program to expand its reach and develop more women on campus. Ideally, the exploration of the impact will invite additional resources to help show the success of the program and invite others to participate and want to be involved on campus. A study of the participants' experience will help inform future on campus mentor programs and allow for future female focused mentorship programs to hone in on best practices and thrive.

Learning the experiences of mentors and mentees on campus can inform future programming structure, literature suggestions for lunch and learns, and spread knowledge of the program across campus. Research of the shift from a more traditional hierarchical mentorship model to a co-mentoring model will help establish options for a variety of female employees across campus at all levels of experience. Evidence that the matching program is successful or not, can help shape the process for matching mentors and mentees together. Additionally, the more known the program becomes across campus, the more likely more supervisors will support participation in the program, allowing more women to engage with this program and future similar programs on campus. The more research about different models of mentorship and the characteristics about what women look for in a mentor, the better we can build a process and create a setting for women to feel welcome and encouraged to share and grow.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

The lack of representation of women, especially women of color in leadership is detrimental to the closing of the wage gap as well as the overall advancement of gender equity in schools and therefore in leadership roles. Given limited mentorship, fewer women CEOs and board members, the gender pay gap, inequity in school leadership, women continue to struggle to find gender equity. Underrepresentation of female and minority mentorship inhibits advancement opportunities for women and therefore impacts leadership and women in position to mentor future generations.

A large part of the problem lies in the absence of female mentorship, the inability or opportunity to see oneself as leaders in one's workplace. Mentoring has been associated with power, privilege, and social stratification (Gardiner, 2000) and breaking down the network to be more accessible requires more diverse mentorship. The inadequate female representation in school is in direct correlation with the lack of female faculty, deans, CEOs, and board members. Without models and mentors to look up to, young women are less likely to make strides in their careers. A recent report (Thomas, 2018) found employees who receive career advice from managers and senior leaders are more likely to be promoted, but women are less likely to receive this advice and women of color are even less likely. Additionally, men and women tend to gravitate toward mentors who share their gender identity. Thus, there is a demand for women and women of color in positions to mentor, as women and racial minorities are the most likely to value mentorship and find the experience to be very positive and vital in their career advancement. (Heidrick and Struggles, 2017)

The claim for this literature review is that it is important to explore the impact of mentoring programs utilized by women working in higher education. Three pieces of evidence explain this claim. The reasons include a) Reason 1 (R1) The impact of female mentorship leads to more women leaders. b) Reason 2 (R2) Female mentorship has a positive impact on increasing the number of women advancing in higher education. c) Reason 3 (R3) Female mentorship builds confidence, career readiness, and connectivity. Female mentorship and designing and evaluating models of mentorship is significant in helping to advance women in higher education and therefore in leadership. Each reason can be used to make this claim as each piece of evidence that is interconnected and overlapping in a joint effort to see how all the elements that play a role in helping make women successful. Female mentorship before starting a career, early and midcareer, can have a positive impact on the number of women, becoming leaders and mentors. A visual representation of the logic equation is as follows: (R1 + R2 + R3) = C (Machi & McEvoy, 2012, p. 97).

R1: The positive impact of female mentorship leads to more women leaders

Female to female mentorship positively impacts and contributes to creating gender equity by creating more female leaders. Existing literature suggests that mentoring and being mentored are critical career development activities that help women to advance up the academic administrative ladder. (Brown, 2001) Given this existing literature and the fact that the number of female college presidents is disproportionately low, Brown (2005) did a study on female college presidents found "through mentoring, female college presidents can facilitate female presidents' understanding of the college presidency and empower them to attain the necessary

knowledge or and skills required for the position. And found that mentorship relationships are invaluable in advancing women through the ranks."

But creating a space for organizations to build programs and invite women to seek new opportunities takes time, resources, and stakeholder buy in to make mentorship a priority and a part of a group culture and dynamic. In a recent study on Creating a Culture of Mentorship Heidrick and Struggles (2017) found most respondents said their primary mentoring relationship was crucial to their career development. Closing the gender gap requires participation from those already in place to make an impact- 61% of respondents' mentors were men and 39% were women pointing to the lack of gender parity in senior management available for mentorship for women, especially women of color. Therefore, mentorship is one of the most constructive and beneficial ways to advance, develop and retain female employees. Organizations have far more to gain by building a diverse pipeline and companies that do to make leadership diversity a priority are more successful, especially given the knowledge of the positive impact mentorship programs can have on developing employees.

The Harvard Business Review did a study that claims, "Research on junior to mid-level professionals shows that mentorship programs enable them to advance more quickly, earn higher salaries, and gain more satisfaction in their jobs and lives than people without mentors do. For employers, the benefits are not only higher performance but also greater success in attracting, developing, and retaining talent" (de Janasz and Peiperl, 2015). A recent experimental study found mentorship to facilitate leadership. The study consisted of one group receiving a semi-formal mentorship program and the other group received a group-based leadership education program. The results showed mentorship programs not only provide support and

career guidance but can also develop leaders. The mentored group scored significantly higher than the education-based group in leadership self- efficacy. (Lester, Hannah, Harms, Vogelgesang, & Avolio 2011) Understanding the connection between providing mentorship, identifying the needs of women, implementing programs, and personal and professional development encourages a conversation about culture shifts in organizations and in society in general.

Many organizations face difficulty when it comes to adjusting priorities and reevaluating programming or lack thereof in order to make changes that promote equity. These changes evolve over time, and require constant monitoring to ensure all parties involved are receiving mentorship in a capacity that works well for them. In hopes of moving away from and "old boys' network" a qualitative study was done to understand the ways women develop capacities to enter into and engage in mentoring relationships with more experienced leaders (Searby and Tripses, 2006).The study found many women desired this mentorship and saw a clear need, but were uncomfortable with the avenues available in which to seek out this development as they had not been presented with these opportunities prior in their career. Single, Donald and Almer (2018) conducted a similar study with 900 female accountants to uncover that having a mentor formal and informal is associated with greater career outcomes. Relationships that are characterized by stronger career development and higher compensation- both of which contribute to closing the wage gap and achieving eventual gender equity.

An evaluation of the current status of women in the workplace helps to gauge where women stand and what barriers are still facing women in business. A McKinsey & Company study uncovered women to be dramatically outnumbered in senior leadership. Only about 1 in 5

C-suite leaders is a woman, and only 1 in 25 is a woman of color. (Thomas, 2018) The study also found men far outnumber women at the manager level and that women are far less likely to be promoted to manager. The disparity in the promotion rate to manager is even worse for women of color. Based on their survey of 64,000 employees, it was very clear that women still experience an uneven playing field. They get less day-to-day support and less access to senior leaders. Women of color and lesbian women face even more biases and barriers to advancement. Less access to senior leaders can prevent advancement and development. Good mentors can make a difference in creating opportunities, but without representation in the proper roles, the likelihood decreases.

R2: Female co-mentorship has a positive impact on building confidence and equity

Female mentorship has a positive impact on the number of women growing their careers. Female mentorship and designing models of mentorship is significant in helping to advance women in higher education and therefore the same women advancing other and future women into leadership. Mentoring provides benefits to both mentor and mentee, including opportunities for reflection, sharing of ideas, professional growth, and personal satisfaction (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004) (Lucy and White 2017). However, with that said, research suggests that traditional mentoring is not equally accessible to all groups within academia, and members of dominant groups (i.e., white, male, heterosexual) receive more benefits from traditional mentoring relationships than do members of underrepresented groups (Mcguire & Reger, 2003).

Whereas, Co-mentoring is rooted in a feminist tradition that fosters an equal balance of power between participants, seeks to integrate emotion into the academic professional experience, and values paid and unpaid work. For instance, co-mentoring emphasizes the

importance of cooperative, egalitarian relationships for learning and development (Boxer 1998; Collins 1991; hooks 1994; Maher and Tetreault 1994). The equal balance breaks down the ego of traditional mentorship pressure and expectations. Therefore, creating a neutral safe space to trust, share and engage more fully.

Co-mentor- ing replaces the hierarchical model in traditional mentoring with one that focuses on mutual empowerment and learning (Laslett and Thorne 1997) (Mcguire & Reger, 2003). Thus, the positive reinforcement and validation that comes with co-mentorship boost confidence in isolating the feeling of being alone and the ability to celebrate accomplishments together rather than compete for success. The supportive nature and comradery that comes with this type of mentorship allows women at all stages of their careers to rediscover their voice as they process with a trusted confidant, rather than a supervisor or authority figure.

R3: Female mentorship builds career readiness and connectivity

Female mentorship builds, career readiness, and connectivity. It is important to change the narrative of who receives mentorship formal and informal as well as shift the sense of networks and the role they can play in career advancement. More and more young women are entering the workforce and although evidence shows everyone benefits from mentorship, it is especially significant for young women and primarily young women of color to connect with mentors in leadership positions who reflect a shared identity and can provide a sense of belonging into a network they may have never felt connected to before.

A Harvard Business School study (Delong, 2008) found that every professional over 40 years old could name a mentor, but very few younger professionals were able to name a relationship that would influence their career trajectory. Understanding the story of women who

have succeeded in the field can remove some of the intimidation that comes with entering an industry. Mentors don't always have to be at work, expanding one's network and exposure can create confidence and a safe space to explore. Bowling's (2018) *How to Build a Culture of Mentorship* guide explores why cross-departmental collaboration and mentorship builds better leaders, and develops more skills. Building this type of mentorship culture also requires a focus on communication and encourages women to practice effective, clear communication in turn establishing stronger leadership skills and access to a larger network across departments or offices.

Female employees and even leaders can miss out on promotions without proper mentorship, role models and access to an appropriate network. A total of 50 global women managers were selected for a study to evaluate the difficulties in career development around mentoring and networking and the role it can play or the deficiency that can exist in its absence. In regards to networking, the research found the main obstacles for female managers to be access to male networks and having less time for the traditional ways of networking due to domestic commitments. The research showed managerial women to be less integrated into organizational networks that can influence promotions. Therefore, noted the significance and benefit of being a part of certain groups, networks, and having meaningful relationships across all levels. (Linehan and Scullion, 2008) Having access to other women to learn more about salary negotiations, self-confidence, finding the right mentors, making your voice heard, and having a seat at the table will invite more women to grow and share their stories and inspire the women who follow.

Summary

Women in across industries, roles, levels of education continue to have a desire and yet a shared struggle in career advancement and while searching for the right type of mentorship for the right point in time in their careers. Many organizations are attempting to uncover programs that will create a supportive mentorship program, some are succeeding more than others. Some have placed a high priority on diversity, while other organizations still struggle to move away from older patriarchal hierarchy. A shift from traditional hierarchical mentorship programs to co-mentorship are more inclusive and create a less intimidating, more productive environment. Universities need to be a leader in creating space for women to set an example for students, inspire and thrive in one's career. Several qualitative studies and guides have been evaluated to reflect and establish the necessity of mentorship and co-mentorship and its contribution in achieving gender equity.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact female mentorship has throughout a woman's career in education. It is important to explore mentoring programs utilized by women-identified employees in school programs because the impact/power of female mentorship leads to more female leaders, builds confidence, career readiness, and connectivity. Therefore as part of the thesis for the USF O&L program, this opportunity will allow us to learn about the formal PACSW mentorship program by interviewing a few mentors and a few mentees from the PACSW mentorship program.

In exploring different models of mentorship, additionally interviewing the Diversity Engagement team staff for a glance into the informal mentorship among the team that creates formal mentorship programming. Female mentorship builds, confidence, career readiness, and connectivity. It is important to change the narrative of who receives mentorship formal and informal as well as shift the sense of networks and the role they can play in career advancement. More and more young women are entering the workforce and although evidence shows everyone benefits from mentorship, it is especially significant for young women and primarily young women and young women of color to connect with mentors in leadership positions who reflect a shared identity and can provide a sense of belonging into a network they may have never felt connected to before.

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process and purpose. Recorded interviews will be used to analyze data and identify common themes that make a positive or negative mentor/mentee experience in higher education.

The benefits of sharing one's lived experience as a mentor and or mentee will help identify mentorship programs and patterns they may be effective to nurture next generations of female leaders. Participating in this study is an opportunity to share one's story of mentorship and rise to leadership to help uncover the steps and people that played a role along the way that were empowering.

Research Design

In partnership with the Diversity Engagement team – reach out via email women participating in PACSW Co-mentorship program this year and share description of the research and inquire about interest in sharing their experience. Women identified employees enrolled in the PACSW Co- mentorship program and the women who make up the Diversity Engagement team at University of San Francisco**.**

In conducting outreach to PACSW Mentors and Mentees, they were asked for a commitment of a 45 minute in person interview in the USF library conference room. Several interview questions were prepared for discussion around participants' work experience, experience in the on-campus mentorship program, and expectations around mentorship throughout one's career. Participants in the study will be a combination of mentors and mentees who participated in the fall 2019 program. Participants are female identified, USF employees across departments. Ages range from 30-60, with varying degrees of work experience and higher education experience. Some participants have been employed by the university for less than one year and some for twenty plus years. All in person interviews will be recorded with a voice

recording application and then transcribed and coded following the interview. All participants will sign a consent form, be informed of the recording, and all information disclosed will be kept confidential.

Research Questions

1. What are the experiences of female mentees and mentors who have participated in the PACSW method/model of mentorship? successful/worthwhile/impactful?

2. What tactics/characteristics/approaches within this model were most valuable for women in finding fulfillment or advancing their careers in some way?

Chapter 4: Results

In a recent study on Creating a Culture of Mentorship Heidrick and Struggles (2017) found most respondents said their primary mentoring relationship was crucial to their career development. Closing the gender gap requires participation from those already in place to make an impact- 61% of respondents' mentors were men and 39% were women pointing to the lack of gender parity in senior management available for mentorship for women, especially women of color. The recent report by Leanin.org and McKinsey found employees who receive career advice from managers and senior leaders are more likely to be promoted, but women are less likely to receive this advice and women of color are even less likely. Increasing gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity in leadership roles can increase profitability as well as benefit all involved. Heidrick and Struggles (2017) believe mentorship is one of the most important things we can offer to help develop and retain minority employees. Female mentorship programs such as the University of San Francisco President's Advisory Committee on the Status Women (PACSW) Co-Mentor Program leads to more female leaders, builds confidence, career-readiness and connectivity aimed at shrinking this gap through mentorship.

Mentorship is one way to advance gender equity, and it can enhance a women's career, but finding a mentor can be intimidating, the University of San Francisco President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) Women's Mentoring Program "seeks to increase confidence, community, and capacity amongst women-identified employees at the University of San Francisco . The program aims to accomplish this through the creation of intentional, time-bound one-on-one relationships between University employees based on confidentiality and

collegiality (PACSW Mission Statement)." The ideal goal of the Co-Mentorship program is to benefit the co-mentors, as well as positively impact the whole University community through co-mentor training, meet-ups, monthly sessions, and group readings. Thus, ideally helping women establish relationships and make connections that can impact their career trajectories, lead to more female leaders, build confidence, and provide mentorship to those to come.

Summary of Collected Data

The case study data collected for this thesis includes 45-minute interviews with five female identified USF staff members, including a combination of mentors and mentees who participated in the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women' (PACSW) Co-mentorship program during the fall 2019 semester. These interviews tell the stories of and the experiences of four women from all different backgrounds and experiences who yearn for mentorship on campus. Each woman brought varying degrees of higher education experience and a wide range of mentorship participation, training, involvement or lack thereof prior to participating in this program.

The President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women' (PACSW) mentorship program started in the fall of 2018 as a more traditional hierarchical model of mentorship and in fall 2019 shifted to a Co-mentorship model for faculty and staff to participate. Given the results of the 2017 Campus Climate Survey, there was a clear need and desire for such a program. The program received more applications than the current resources could support- 50 - 60 applications to be a mentee and only 30 applications to be a mentor. Thus, the program this year, encompassed 20 individuals across campus and departments to co-mentor each other. The program hosted an initial kickoff, a mid year check in, and a final semester conclusion with

several brown bag lunch discussions throughout the semester for less formal meetup

opportunities for the group. The brown bag lunches included a speaker or article to read and

discuss with other women participating in the program. Each pair received a $100 stipend to

meet off campus and create a safe space for connection.

The matching of mentor and mentee pairing process was very thorough and intentional.

The application included questions like the following to establish similarities and a partnership

that would create an influence and meaningful relationship.

- Are you a commuter?

- Are you single?

- Do you have children?

- Are you athletic?

- Do you identify as trans?

- Do you care for an order parent?

- What are your goals for the program?

Once matched, partners had the freedom to meet as frequently or infrequently as they chose and

to navigate the topics most important to them at this point in each of their careers.

All participants began the program with hopes to meet other like-minded women to learn

and grow from within the greater USF community. The interviewee ages ranged from 30-65 and

were all staff members across development, financial aid, school of nursing, CASA, and Health

Promotion Services. Several levels across Program Assistant to Associate Director were

addressed and shared their experience in the program and possessed a master's degree level of

education or are currently pursuing higher education. Each interview was informed of the

premise of the study and invited to share their experience in the program- the negative, the positive, and the recommendations for improvement.

Demographic Data

Age Range: 25-65

Average Years employed at USF: 8.5

Years employed by USF range: 1-15 Years

Identify as White/Non-Hispanic: 3 participants

Identify as Latina: 2 participants

Participant 1 was a first-time mentee who has worked at the university for over 10 years. The opportunity to participate in the PACSW co-mentorship program is the first time she has been presented with any formal or informal mentorship at USF. All of her supervisors have been men and she has not felt they were able or willing to provide mentorship at any point in her career. Her goal in participating in this program was to establish new relationships to help advance her career at the university. Her supervisor was not supportive of her dedicating time to this program and she had to advocate for herself to allow the time to participate as she felt this program was an important avenue for her to finally gain a seat at the table. She shared she recently discovered a way to find her voice, late in her career, and intends to find ways to identify upward mobility. She felt she could trust her mentor and appreciated the validation that accompanied the relationship, but does not feel she has new contacts to help progress her career. Given she had never sought mentorship before, had hoped to be paired with someone who had a

lot to offer and took the program seriously. Someone who would prepare for mentorship meetings ahead of time, thus would have liked more guidelines and structure within the program.

Participant 2 has worked at the university of twelve years and acted as a mentor twice in the PACSW co-mentorship program. She is very active in the campus community and has always been interested in women's development, women in the workplace, and issues around women in personal and professional development. She found her love of higher education after an unfulfilling experience in the business sector. Her supervisor was supportive of her participation in the PACSW mentorship program and was happy and eager to share her experience with a mentee. It was important to her to share any knowledge she had, especially after a very negative past experience in seeking mentorship. Even as someone who has provided mentorship to many due to the nature of her role on campus, she still acknowledged a struggle with what she expected a 'dream' mentor in life to be, the career guru to guide you to success. She expressed some resentment in the idea that she had mentored many young students, but no one had formally offered to mentor her at this point in her career. She shared the personal conflict of the expectation of someone coming to take her under their wing and leading the way to success, when in reality mentorship doesn't always look like we imagine. Ego can get in the way of being at peace with where you are in your professional development, in wondering why I don't have a mentor. If I should be further along in my career. Would having a 'real' mentor make me more successful or is having a job I love and believe enough?

She was confident that she can provide prospective on the university to her mentee, and her expertise in finding work life balance between raising children and caring for older parents, and a full-time work load. With that, she shared the personal inferiority complex of being a

mentor and wondering if she would be enough. Am I qualified to be a mentor, even though I haven't had my own in the past? Do I have enough experience to share? Their mentor and mentee relationship was careful not to let their meetings become a venting session, but often found it difficult to find the time to schedule meetings as busy working women wearing several hats in their life. In order to get the most out of the program, she felt mentees should drive the level of intensity of the process in establishing goals up front and carving out the time to go into depth. In two years of participating in the program, both partners seemed unclear of their goals, and too busy to fully engage. However, she found tremendous value in knowing these women that she would have otherwise never encountered. In that, she also learned about an entire new and different part of the university, she had not been introduced to over the last decade on campus.

In being new to the university, participant 4 found the invitation and opportunity to participate in the PACSW mentorship program as a very valuable way to be introduced to a new workplace environment. Upon starting at USF, she had read the campus climate survey, which shed light on women of color employees to be the least happy group on campus. As discouraging as that fact was, as a woman of color, she was excited to have for the first time a supervisor who was also a woman of color. She saw the program as an intentional approach to help address some of the issues that came out of the campus client survey. She was grateful to have been selected, and eager to meet more and new people on campus. As her first position in higher education was hoping this program would help her navigate the greater university community and allow her to know how to best approach her new role. The program did a fantastic job matching her with a partner who she connected great with and was able to share her vast experience at the university and acknowledge some of the same and different issues in both

of their departments. The non-judgmental space was the perfect, open, friendly connect she needed at that moment. The program created the right amount of structure to be helpful, but also leaving room for the pair's own dynamic to evolve. She felt after the program, the door was open to reach out, but would still seem like a "favor" and not as though the relationship was reciprocal going forward as the partnership was most beneficial for participant 3 compared to her mentor.

She shared the only real mentor she would ever fully trust is her sister, and her sister would always be the first person she would go to for guidance, personally and professionally. She had had mentors in coaches in the past and from an old boss who she connected with mainly due to their similarity in their family background. They shared a lot in common in the way they saw their childhood- in how they raised themselves among family turmoil brought them closer. They were also both mixed people of color in an environment where there were not many people of color. They both understood what it felt like to be told by a culture that you are half a part of that you are different. That point of relation was really important to why things worked out for their mentoring relationship. She felt so much of this connection or lack thereof can come from the position where others are coming from.

Her PACSW mentorship mentor had experience being an outsider, as has this participant, which she felt helped them navigate space together as people who both understood and could relate to the feeling of being on the outside due to race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. They decided together to do *Meyers Briggs* and *Strength Finders* and to discuss- thus helping to guide their conversations about professional goals. Over time they were able to build trust and open up and felt participation in this program helped build goodwill on campus. Being in a new role in a new place, being selected to participate in this program has impressed leadership in her

department and acted as an internal networking avenue and would like to participate again. She saw the significance and importance of the program being sponsored by the President's Advisory Committee, as it should sit in a central place of priority, but noticed a disconnect, between the involvement of the president and the committee.

Participant 4 was a community organizer before coming to USF and had not experienced a strong leader or mentor. She wanted to participate in the program to gain additional support to help navigate the school landscape and politics to help anticipate moving forward to the next level in her career. She and her mentor still stay in touch and have plans to connect in the future. She felt the program spent a lot of time and did an excellent job in the matching process. She felt the co-mentorship model was valuable in being able to support each other in different areas of work and life. She felt it was easy to connect with her mentor given their similar background and experience and felt that the program was structured appropriately, meaning enough structure to begin the process, and enough freedom to explore and make it one's own experience and meet the needs of the pair.

She went to each meeting prepared with a list of concerns, curiosities, and questions. Given all her managers had always been white men and that the more she advanced in positions, the whiter and more male dominant it became, she was thrilled to be paired with a female faculty member to help bridge the relationship between faculty and staff at the university that can often be very siloed. Learning from a faculty member who was able to fill in some institution specific blanks was very beneficial as she attempted to grow in her role and within the university. She found it nice to talk to someone who could share their own struggle of learning to say no, setting boundaries, and asking for things as a woman in a male leadership dominated space. Thus, she

believes the institution needs to continue to support the effort and provide additional resources to meet the need for this type of mentorship program.

Analysis of Collected Data

The data suggested the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) co-mentorship program had overall very positive influence on the women who participated, and they would gladly participate again to grow personally and deeper their campus community. An analysis implies it is important that the program is hosted by the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women to show the universities commitment to prioritizing the need for mentorship on campus for women across all departments. The support needs to be communicated to all leadership to ensure all women have the support from their supervisors to participate and to show the university and united in shared goals that support the greater campus community. The program did a superb job in the matching of mentors and mentees to find women who could help each other and shared similar backgrounds or experiences that would make the shared experience more valuable.

Many stories of woman of all ages and ethnicity and a variety work experiences and mentorship experiences demonstrates the need for some version of mentor, a friend, a network, a confidant, to help navigate a new space, a new role, being stuck in an old role, or to find connection to themselves or others on campus. Most of the women had not had a mentorship opportunity prior to the program. With several white men still making many decisions at the leadership level, many participants sought an opportunity to find ways to become connected on campus and advance their career. They all felt it was important to have a female mentor to

identify with and to feel comfortable opening up to share their struggles, their authentic self, and long-term goals. In all their years of experience, none of them had been invited to participate in such a program and it would appear it was significant in each of them sharing struggles with someone they could identify with, acknowledge some ego and insecurity prior to the process. There appears to be a generational gap in what to expect from mentorship, one generation found the concept of this guidance and voice much more foreign than younger generations who expected this to be a large part of their life and career and still struggle in identifying the right person and the right path at the right time in their life and career.

However, the brief experience in the PACSW mentorship program did create a sense of support and growth in each of their communities to develop their on-campus confidence and ability to ask for what they need, set boundaries, and say no when needed given each of their busy and full lives.

A common data point was the issue around trust, needing the time in a relationship to build trust to be honest about one's true goals and true needs at this point in their career. Once they were able to trust and be open to a mentor or mentee, they were more likely to gain real insight and advice on navigating their workplace to be more confident and successful. A large way they were able to gain that trust was by building an authentic connection overtime, and eventually being able seeing themselves in their mentor or mentee- how they identify, their past, their background, if they were in a similar place in life, a similar in place in career, and shared the same struggle with a lack of representation or mentorship in their career. Given all participants work on the same campus and share many co-workers, it was daunting to be honest, but over time finding their shared identity or struggle invited more vulnerability amongst the

group. Once they felt more connected by shared experience, they developed more confidence to speak up and lead in other spaces.

Given this program is designed to build confidence and empower women, many insecurities and self-doubts still came up during the process. Women wondering if they should have had a mentor earlier to help them advance their career? Should they be further along in their career? Do they know enough to be able to help support another woman? Even in the midst of a program meant to promote women, it took time for some to realize others had similar challenges and they were not alone in their struggle to navigate a system or an office or an institution. The awareness that came with sharing across levels and departments broke down barriers of expectations about oneself and others.

All the participants already held roles on several committees on campus, were also raising children, tending to older parents, spouses, doing demanding working with less than enough resources and this program was one thing in their life meant for them. Meant to help empower, grow, and connect with other women, and it often fell to the bottom of the to do list. Women already balancing so much and caring for so many others often don't make time for themselves. Having the time to attend the brown bag lunches or read the provided weekly article or attend lunch with one's mentor or mentee was an ongoing challenge. It would seem the women who either need or want this type of program the most are also the type that when juggling life, put others before themselves- often a common theme especially among women who have chosen this line of work. Everyone supports the idea of this program, but living it out was more challenging in one brief semester. The women who set concrete goals, chose to share personality test results, and already possessed more self-confidence also seem to have gained

more from the program. Some other participants may have needed additional guidance to fully access all that the program has to offer.

Recognizing the limited budget and resources currently dedicated to this program, it would have been beneficial to have the program extend into the spring semester to allow for a deep dive, and extended period to learn and uncover new strengths and how to navigate the workplace with new tools. The brown bag lunches are a great opportunity to have larger conversations and include more women looking for mentorship and to continue offering multiple avenues of connection and mentorship. It was recommended to archive all articles from all meetings in a central accessible place for anyone to access. Additionally, there appears to be a need for more mentors as the number of women searching for mentorship is much larger than the number of women offering to be mentors.

Reflective Narrative

Original Research Plan

This will be a qualitative study with 45-minute interviews conducted in person that study the PACSW Co-mentorship program, process and purpose. Recorded interviews will be used to analyze data and identify common themes that make a positive or negative mentor/mentee experience in higher education. The research will take place on campus at University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA. 8-10 Women identified enrolled in the PACSW mentorship program and the women who make up the Diversity Engagement team at USF will be interviewed in the USF library to answer questions and share their experience in the program. With assistance from the Diversity Engagement team the participants in these past years program

will receive email inviting them to participate in in person interviews-this year and share description of the research and inquire about interest in sharing their experience.

Change and Response in Circumstances

While conducting this research, a global pandemic occurred and the world became incredibly uncertain and impossible to plan for. The first wave of five interviews were scheduled in person in March, until Covid 19 occurred and USF closed. I was able to conduct a few in person interviews, but then rescheduled the already scheduled interviews to zoom interviews. With the university closed and so much uncertainty with what options and opportunities the future would hold or not, I paused the interview process, was not able to interview anyone from the Diversity Engagement and Community Outreach team and moved forward with solely the data I had already collected in order to complete on time.

Insights and Re-Imagining

Knowing what we know now, I may have considered alternative methods of collecting data, which would have allowed for interviewing more women and also may have widened the scope of participants in the first place and could have made more robust analysis with larger amounts of data. Additionally, in retrospect, it would have been interesting to do the study over the course of the semester or year to check in on the progress of participants and their changing thoughts and feelings over time as they progress with their new connections and confidence, ideally leading to leadership.

Re-imagining the project would have included the concept of virtual mentorship and how in our busy lives, especially of the women involved in this program- would incorporate a virtual

element allowing for women to stay engaged in a program. Thus, broadening my data collection and adding to the literature of best practices and models of mentorship we may need access to in the future.

Next Steps and Conclusion

Moving forward, I plan to continue my reading and research around mentorship, co-mentorship, and the idea of what virtual mentorship could do and be for making programs like this more accessible to more women. Thus, potentially, developing a program at my current place of work that would invite cross office mentorship, without the need to be in the same city or state.

In conclusion, the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) co-mentorship program had a positive impact on all participants and the growth and programming is improving each year. There is a need for additional mentors, to meet the need and desire of several mentees interested in participating. Many of the women had not had the opportunity to participate in a mentor program prior and felt honor to be included. Each woman felt the program was very thorough and accurate in assigning mentor and mentee partnerships and would be willing to participate in any capacity in the future. The group felt it was important that the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women (PACSW) sponsor the program and invest resources to meet the clear interest and need. The shift from a more traditional mentorship model to the co-mentorship concept, was well received. In order to trust and build a relationship with a mentor and mentee it was significant that one felt a sense of shared identity or understanding in order to openly discuss topics such as asking for a raise or how to find one's voice in a meeting full of men.

The data reflected an acknowledgement of the need for centralized and prioritized mentorship for female staff across departments, the power of a community of women brought together to share and affirm one another. These affirmations and celebrations of accomplishments built confidence and connectivity across the program. Mentorship and programs such as the PACSW mentorship program are key to career development and creating a more diverse and equitable campus.

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Appendix:

Consent Form

(1a) The purpose of this study is to explore the impact female mentorship has throughout a woman's career in education. It is important to explore mentoring programs utilized by women-identified employees in school programs because the impact/power of female mentorship leads to more female leaders, builds confidence, career readiness, and connectivity.

(1b) An explanation of the purposes of the research: The lack of female and minority representation, mentors, and resources for women, especially women of color inhibit progress for women in the field. It is important to establish what models or informal and formal mentorship programing are the best ways to develop, retain employees and advance self-identified women in higher education.

(1c) the expected duration of the subject's participation: 45 minute in person interview.

1d) a description of the procedures to be followed.

(5) All information shared will be kept confidential.

Questions

If you have any questions about this broad consent, please contact Maria Bluth at 562.964.9279 or mcbluth3@dons.usfca.edu.

You may discuss your rights as a person who has agreed to, refused, or declined to respond to an offer of broad consent with Maria Bluth at 562.964.9279 or mcbluth3@dons.usfca.edu.

Please ask us to explain anything in this form that you do not clearly understand. Please think about this broad consent and/or discuss it with family or friends before making a decision to say "Yes" or "No."

STATEMENT OF AGREEMENT

I say yes. The broad consent has been explained to me, and I agree to give my broad consent to the future research uses of my information. My participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw at any time.

_____

Your Printed Name

_____

Legally Authorized Representative's Printed Name (if applicable)

_____

Your Signature or Signature of Legally Authorized Representative

_____

STATEMENT OF REFUSAL

I say no. The broad consent has been explained to me, and I **do not agree** to this broad consent.

_____

Your Printed Name

_____

Legally Authorized Representative's Printed Name (if applicable)

_____

Your Signature or Signature of Legally Authorized Representative

_____

Demographic Data Collected

Age:_____

Gender:_____

# of Years of work experience:_____

Position/Role at USF:_____

Race/Ethnicity:_____

Mentor/Mentee:_____

Qualitative Research | Interview Questions

- What made you first interested in participating in the PACSW mentorship program?

- What were your expectations going into the program?

- Were those expectations met during the semester? Or exceeded?

- Were you able to identify with your mentor or mentee? Build a connection with them?

- What impact, if any, has this mentoring experience had on your career? What impact do you think mentoring can have on your career?

- What impact, if any, has this experience had on your confidence?

- Do you think there is a need for a PACSW program on campus?

- Do you think it is important to have this program sponsored by the President's Advisory Committee on the Status of Women?

- Has your experience lived up to the mission on the USF, PACSW mentorship program on campus?

- What would you like to see more or less of in this mentorship program?

- Would you participate in the program again? Why or why not?

- Did you feel the program was accessible to enough people?

- Did the program provide -- takeaways you can use day to day on campus?