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The Impact of Like-Mentors for Gay/Lesbian Employees

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The Impact of Like-Mentors for Gay/Lesbian Employees

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Although research has shown that mentors contribute significantly to employees' job-related outcomes, less research has examined the influence of diverse mentors have on similarly diverse protégés. As such, the current research examined the job-related outcomes of gay/lesbian workers who had a gay/lesbian mentor, a heterosexual mentor, or no mentor. Results showed that participants who had a mentor received more benefits than those without one. Also, gay/lesbian employees who had gay/lesbian mentors reported increased psychosocial job-related outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) but did not experience increased tangible outcomes (e.g., salary, promotions).

It is estimated that approximately 10% of the American workforce is composed of gay/lesbian workers (Van Den Bergh, 2004). Given the prevalence of stereotypes and negative attitudes toward homosexuality (Massey, 2009), it is not surprising that a great deal of prejudice and discrimination has been documented toward gay men/lesbians in the work arena (Embrick, Walther, & Wickens, 2007; Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Smith & Ingram, 2004). In fact, gay men/lesbians remain one of the few legally unprotected minority groups in the United States. That is, although several states, municipalities, and cities offer protection, there is little federal protection regulating discrimination against gay/lesbian employees (for a review, see Barron & Hebl, 2010). The challenges such individuals face in the workplace are reason enough to suggest that they may find mentoring relationships at work especially beneficial. Yet they simply have not received much empirical attention, particularly with respect to mentoring relationships.

For gay men/lesbians, mentors can provide the same advantages that they offer to other disadvantaged individuals (e.g., women, minorities), such as job and career guidance and advice, positive and negative feedback, and personal support and encouragement. For instance, having a mentor has been associated with increased salary compensation (Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, &

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Lima, 2004; Chao, 1997; Dreher & Ash, 1990), promotions (Allen et al., 2004; Dreher & Ash, 1990), career mobility and advancement (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Scandura, 1992), career satisfaction (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008), job satisfaction (Chao, 1997; Underhill, 2006), and greater self-esteem at work (Koberg, Boss, & Goodman, 1998; Underhill, 2006). Having a mentor has also been linked to greater career commitment (Underhill, 2006), lower turnover intentions (Laband & Lentz, 1995), lower psychological stress and strain (Eby et al., 2008), and greater job involvement (Eby et al., 2008; Koberg et al., 1998). Furthermore, higher quality mentoring (or more mentoring) during on-the-job training has been associated with greater positive transfer of training in trainees (Marks, Alonso, Royer, & Kantrowitz, 2001) and more effective on-the-job performance (Tonidandel, Avery, & Phillips, 2007). All of these factors may influence not only individual employees but also the effectiveness of an organization.

It is likely that gay/lesbian employees can reap many of the benefits of mentor relationships that heterosexual employees gain; however, it is unclear the extent to which gay men/lesbians may benefit from having a gay/lesbian mentor versus a heterosexual mentor. That is, how do like and unlike mentors help gay/lesbian protégés? This question is relevant for gay/lesbian employees who have either formal mentors (mentors who are typically assigned, have some structure, and often have less invested in the relationship) or informal mentors (mentors who are chosen, have no set structure, and may be more highly invested in the relationship; see Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Gay/lesbian mentors may be able to provide more specific advice, encouragement, and support to their similarly sexually oriented protégés because of their own personal experiences and insights as gay men/lesbians in the workplace. Furthermore, it may be easier for gay/lesbian protégés to trust and confide in a gay mentor who might provide particular social support and guidance relevant to managing a gay identity in the workplace (see Wells & Kline, 1987). Research shows that protégés who self-disclose information about themselves to their mentor (e.g., thoughts about what is important to them in life and at work) have higher perceptions of and satisfaction with the mentoring relationship and report that mentoring had a positive influence on future job outcomes (Wanberg, Welsh, & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2007) than those who do not disclose information about themselves. In addition, higher levels of protégé disclosure are related to higher levels of reported career mentoring (Wanberg et al., 2007). Self-disclosure is particularly difficult for gay/lesbian employees because they may fear backlash due to their sexual orientation; however, this disclosure may be instrumental in leading to a more trusting and positive mentoring relationship. When provided with such support, guidance, and acceptance, gay/lesbian employees may experience more positive job attitudes (Day & Schoenrade, 1997; see also Griffith & Hebl, 2001; King, Reilly, & Hebl, 2008; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

Although having a like mentor may be beneficial for gay/lesbian protégés, it is possible that protégés may receive similar benefits from heterosexual "ally" mentors who provide gay-specific advice. That is, perhaps it is not the similarity of the mentor that matters as much but rather the type of mentoring that is provided. Gay specific advice may include advice on how, to whom, and when to disclose one's sexual orientation; where to receive information ongay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) support groups; and how to manage one's sexual identity at work. Protégés whose mentors provide this type of advice (vs. those who do not) may feel more comfortable interacting with their mentors and more satisfied with the mentoring relationship and job as a whole. Likewise, mentors of any sexuality who provide such mentoring may be able to positively influence others on a wide variety of job-related variables.

Thus, in this article we seek to explore the extent to which mentor similarity and type of mentoring influence outcomes for gay/lesbian protégés. Although there is a burgeoning literature that studies the intersection of mentoring, gender, and race (Allen & Eby, 2004; Avery, Tonidandel, & Phillips, 2008; Blake-Beard, 2001; O'Neill, Horton, & Crosby, 1999; Ragins, 1999; Scandura & Ragins, 1993), the impact of mentoring for other marginalized groups, such as gay/lesbian workers, has received relatively little attention. In fact, a recent call was made for research to investigate the extent to which gay/lesbian/bisexual mentoring relationships are available as well as the extent to which they resemble those of heterosexual mentoring relationships (Morgan & Davidson, 2008). Therefore, given the paucity of studies synthesizing these two lines of research, the present study should help fill this gap by investigating how like and unlike mentors help gay/lesbian protégés.

THEORY OF THE BENEFITS OF LIKE MENTORS

The similarity-attraction paradigm states that individuals are drawn to others who are similar to themselves (Byrne, 1971). This paradigm has been used as a theoretical basis in research showing that mentors who are engaged in mentorships with protégés they perceived as similar report higher quality of the mentorship and greater learning involved (Allen & Eby, 2003). Relational demography extends the similarity-attraction paradigm by focusing the relationship specifically on demographic characteristics (Linnehan, Chrobot-Mason, & Konrad, 2006). Some research has suggested that same-sex mentoring relationships yield more positive benefits, such as psychosocial support, than cross-sex mentoring relationships (Koberg et al., 1998). Relational demography processes (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989) may influence gay men/lesbians to seek out, associate with, and learn from mentors in their organizations who they believe have similar sexual orientations. The similarity of sexual orientation combined with the similarity of sex (which has been shown to have influential effects on mentoring) may increase the perception of similarity between protégé and mentor, which has also been shown to be related to more psychosocial benefits within mentorship experiences (Wanberg, Kammeyer-Mueller, & Marchese, 2006). Other research has shown that relational demography as well as deep-level similarity (e.g., similarity in personality, interests, personal values, work values) is positively related to mentors reports of providing mentoring functions to protégés (Lankau, Riordan, & Thomas, 2005). For example, Lankau and colleagues (2005) found that relational demography was positively associated with mentors' reports of role modeling efforts, whereas deep-level similarity was positively associated with reports of psychosocial support.

There is little research examining whether the affective benefits of like mentors translates into more objective job-related outcomes such as income, promotions, and a well-developed career network. Those studies that have addressed this differential functioning actually point to a schism between the material outcomes that traditional mentors supply and the attitudinal outcomes that similarly diverse mentors provide. For instance, in a questionnaire study of mentoring relationships in managerial and professional women, women with female mentors reported receiving slightly more psychosocial support functions from their mentors than women with male mentors (Burke & McKeen, 1996). In addition, the results of a study of working professionals from a variety of industries indicated that female protégés with female mentors received more role modeling from female mentors but more career development from male mentors (Sosik & Godshalk, 2000).

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Likewise, Wallace (2001) found that, although female protégés with female mentors report higher career satisfaction, those with male mentors earn significantly higher salaries. A similar trend seems to appear in the race and mentoring research. That is, although White male mentors may still have more power, stronger social networks, and greater access to resources, which leads to greater material success of their protégés (Blancero & DelCampo, 2005; Dreher & Chargois, 1998), demographically diverse mentors may be able to offer their protégés other, more subtle, advantages that can be gained only by sharing the same vantage point. For example, McGuire (1999) found differences in the psychological encouragement and other types of psychosocial help mentors provided to female and minority protégés compared to White male protégés. White male protégés, however, reported receiving more instrumental career helping functions from their mentors than did diverse protégés. Also, in a sample of women's college basketball coaches, having a White male mentor was associated with more reported career development opportunities than having a non-White mentor of the opposite sex (Avery et al., 2008). Likewise, in a sample of MBA graduates, having a White male mentor was associated with having a higher salary than having a minority mentor (Dreher & Cox, 1996).

Taken together, these findings suggest that gay/lesbian workers may benefit from merely having a mentor; however, the outcomes they receive from having a gay/lesbian mentor may be different from those received from having a heterosexual mentor. Specifically, we expect gay/lesbian workers to experience incremental psychosocial benefits from having a gay/lesbian mentor above and beyond the benefits of merely having a mentor who is not gay/lesbian, as well as having no mentor. However, we anticipate that gay/lesbian mentors, particularly those that are "out," may have less control over literal and virtual resources as a consequence of heterosexism. Furthermore, we anticipate that gay/lesbian workers with a heterosexual mentor should benefit in more tangible, job-related outcomes. That is,

H1: Gay/lesbian workers with a gay/lesbian mentor will report more favorable work attitudes than either gay/lesbian workers with heterosexual mentors or gay/lesbian workers with no mentors. Specifically, gay/lesbian workers with a similarly diverse mentor will report greater levels of job satisfaction (H1A), psychosocial affective job satisfaction (H1B), and job involvement (H1C) than gay/lesbian workers with heterosexual mentors or no mentors. Furthermore, gay/lesbian mentors will provide gay/lesbian workers with more psychosocial types of mentor functions (e.g., role modeling, providing gay-specific advice, providing encouragement) than heterosexual mentors do (H1D).

H2: Conversely, gay/lesbian workers with heterosexual mentors will report having more instrumental, career-related outcomes such as tangible objective job satisfaction (H2A), higher salary (H2B), and more promotions (H2C) than gay/lesbian workers with gay/lesbian mentors or no mentors. In addition and for a number of reasons (e.g., social networks, status hierarchies), heterosexual mentors will provide gay/lesbian workers with more tangible types of mentor functions (e.g., career guidance) than gay/lesbian mentors do (H2D).

THEORY OF THE BENEFITS OF GLBT SUPPORTIVENESS

As previously stated, research has shown that for members of minority groups (e.g., gender, race), having a traditional mentor generally leads to more tangible job-related outcomes but less instrumental psychosocial outcomes. One reason for the lack of instrumental benefits may be

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that traditional mentors do not provide the specific types of mentoring that lead to instrumental outcomes. In fact, male mentors have indicated that they provide more career development in mentoring, whereas female mentors report providing more psychosocial support (Allen & Eby, 2004; Elliot, Leck, Orser, Mossop, & Inc, 2007; O'Brien, Biga, Kessler, & Allen, 2010). These findings may be indicative of what leads to differences in protégé outcomes for those with male versus female mentors. Thus, perhaps like mentors are successful at producing instrumental outcomes because they are more supportive and understanding of specific issues with which their protégés identify. However, if traditional mentors were to provide these functions, it is possible that their protégés would receive both tangible and instrumental benefits. Previous research examining gay/lesbian employees has shown that having a supportive work environment is critical to psychosocial benefits. For instance, Griffith and Hebl (2002) found that gay/lesbian employees who worked in organizations with GLBT-supportive policies reported higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of job anxiety than those whose organizations did not have such policies. Likewise, others have found that top management/supervisor support is positively related to job satisfaction (Day & Schoenrade, 2000; Huffman, Watrous-Rodriguez, & King, 2008) and coworker support is positively related to life satisfaction for gay/lesbian employees (Huffman et al., 2008). Research supports the notion that having a like mentor is related to instrumental outcomes for protégés; however, this relationship may be driven by the type of guidance provided more so than the vehicle providing the guidance. Heterosexual mentors, then, may be able to provide very high quality advice to and advance gay/lesbian mentees under certain circumstances (i.e., if protégés are very "out" and mentors are very supportive; if protégés are out and ask lots of specific questions).

Thus, like and unlike mentors may be able to help produce similar levels of instrumental outcomes for protégés if they provide guidance that is specific to gay/lesbian issues at work. We predict that the extent to which gay/lesbian workers receive highly specific guidance regarding issues related to managing their gay/lesbian identity in the workplace will mediate the relation between having a gay mentor and more positive work attitudes. In this way, the current study seeks to extend beyond previous research examining mentoring relationships of minority groups by examining a possible mechanism beyond relational demography or similarity for why protégés may receive greater benefits from having a mentor with the same sexual orientation.

H3: The relationship between having a gay/lesbian mentor and job satisfaction (H3A) and job involvement (H3B) will be mediated by the extent to which gay/lesbians receive specific mentoring advice on managing their gay identity in the workplace.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited at a convention of gay-friendly businesses from the greater Houston area. A total of 166 gay men, 77 lesbian women, and 10 individuals who did not identify their gender (but self-identified as gay/lesbian when approached about the survey) completed the study questionnaire ($N = 253$), out of approximately 500 attendees approached. Thus, the response rate was 50.6%. Twenty-four participants were excluded because they filled out only a small portion of the survey, had illegible responses, or identified as bisexual. An additional 22 subjects were excluded because they were either self-employed or unemployed. Thus, the number of useable

surveys was 207, yielding a usable response rate of 41.4%. However, for any particular analysis the response rate varies due to missing data on individual variables. Within this sample, 33% ($n = 80$) of participants reported having a gay/lesbian mentor, 35% ($n = 86$) reported having a heterosexual mentor, and 32% ($n = 79$) reported having no mentor. Eight participants failed to report the type of mentor they had. More than 75% of the sample described their mentoring relationship as informal as opposed to formal.

The ethnic composition of participants was 70.8% Caucasian, 11.1% Hispanic, 3.6% African American, 3.2% Asian American, 2.5% Native American Indian, and 4.0% Other; 5.1% did not indicate ethnicity. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 73 years, with the mean age of respondents being 39.05 years ($SD = 9.91$). Approximately half, or 55.3%, of participants had a bachelor's degree or higher, and participants came from a wide variety of work sectors.

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Procedure

At any given time throughout the event, four people were at a booth soliciting passing attendees. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and that completion of the survey would take only 15 min. As an incentive to encourage participation, (a) candy was distributed and (b) participants could complete an optional entry form with their name and phone number to be entered into a drawing for a $20 gift certificate to a local gay-friendly bookstore. All of this information was also presented via cover letter on the questionnaire. Upon consent to participate, participants were instructed to complete a seven-page questionnaire. The first portion of the questionnaire contained work attitude measures, and the second portion contained questions pertaining to mentors. Participants were provided with a definition of a mentor and asked if they currently have or have had a mentor based on the definition provided. Those who responded in the affirmative were asked to complete that portion and the remaining portions of the questionnaire, whereas those who had not experienced a mentoring relationship were asked to skip that section of the questionnaire pertaining to mentors and to complete the remaining sections of the questionnaire.

Measures

Definition of Mentor

Based off previous research by Ragins and McFarlin (1990), in this study a mentor was defined as an individual with advanced experience and knowledge who is committed to providing support and upward mobility to your career. All participants were provided this definition and asked to use it when answering questions pertaining to mentoring. Using this definition, participants were asked if they had ever had or currently have a heterosexual and/or gay/lesbian mentor, to which they answered "yes" or "no." On open-ended items, participants were additionally asked how long they had known the mentor, how long the mentoring relationship had occurred/been occurring, the age and ethnicity of the mentor, and the way in which the relationship had been established.

Job Satisfaction

The revised Job Descriptive Index (Balzer et al., 1990) was used to assess satisfaction with particular aspects of the job and global job satisfaction. Subscales included Job at Present, Present

Pay, Opportunities for Promotion, Supervision, and Coworkers (People). The internal consistency reliability as measured by coefficient alpha for each of the subscales was as follows: Job at Present = .89, Present Pay = .78, Opportunities for Promotion = .86, Supervision = .89, and Coworkers = .88. Three 18-item subscales (i.e., Supervision, Coworkers, Job at Present) were combined to form composite scales to measure psychosocial job satisfaction, whereas the nine-item subscales of Present Pay and Opportunity for Promotion were used to create a composite of tangible job satisfaction. The internal consistency reliability of both composites were acceptable ($\alpha = .94$ and $\alpha = .86$, respectively). Global job satisfaction was measured through Ironson, Smith, Brannick, Gibson, and Paul's (1989) 18-item Job in General Scale ($\alpha = .90$).

Job Involvement

Three items from Lodahl and Kejnar's (1965) Job Involvement scale were used to assess protégés' psychological identification with their jobs. Sample items included, "The major satisfaction of my life comes from my job" and "I live, eat, and breathe my job." Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Internal consistency reliability as measured by coefficient alpha was .68.

Mentoring Functions

A 34-item composite questionnaire was used to assess the extent to which their mentors have provided participants with particular mentoring functions. First, 11 items addressing gay- and lesbian-related issues were developed specifically for this study. To develop these *gay-specific mentoring* items, we examined both the general goals of mentoring (Kram, 1985) and adapted them with respect to issues specific to gay/lesbian workers (e.g., McKnaught, 1994; Winfeld & Spielman, 2001). As a result, we generated items intended to measure role modeling, gay-specific advice, psychosocial benefits, and career guidance. The gay-specific items we measured appear in the appendix (Items 1–11). Second, an additional 23 items were drawn heavily from Noe's (1988) mentor-roles instrument, Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) mentor roles instrument, and Scandura's (1992) Mentoring Functions scale. This allowed us to examine the constructs of *role modeling* (see Items 32–34 in the appendix), *career-related mentoring functions* (see Items 12–24 in the appendix), and *psychosocial support* (see Items 25–31 in the appendix). For all 34 of these items, participants indicated on a 7-point Likert scale to what extent they *strongly disagreed* (1) to *strongly agreed* (7) with the list of statements describing these mentoring functions provided by their mentors. The reliability of this scale was good ($\alpha = .95$).

Demographic Information

Participants were asked to indicate their gender, ethnicity, age, education level, and sexual orientation. They were also asked to indicate whether they had "a significant other," and if so, how long they had been together in years and months. Finally, participants were asked to indicate the number of family, friends, and people at work they were "out" to on three separate scales, each ranging from 1 (*not "out" to any of them*) to 7 (*"out" to all of them*).

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Work-Related Information

Participants were asked to answer questions regarding (a) employment status ("full-time," "part-time," or "unemployed"), (b) current job and industry (they answered on open-ended items, but these responses were then categorized into education, health care, travel services, high tech, government, the arts, entertainment, energy, sales, human services, and finance), (c) number of years they had worked in their current organization, (d) number of years they had worked in their current field/industry, (e) firm size or "the total number of employees in your organization," (f) information about the hierarchical structure of the organization or "the number of levels there are in the hierarchy of your organization," and (g) status in the organization of "level at which you currently are in your organization." Participants' hierarchical level was then measured as a ratio of their current organizational level divided by the total number of levels in the hierarchy of the firm that they reported (see Cox & Nkomo, 1991). Participants also indicated the extent to which they "felt their organization was nondiscriminating on the basis of sexual orientation" to which they responded on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*not at all supportive*) to 7 (*extremely supportive*). Finally, participants indicated whether their organization has a formal mentoring program. Unless otherwise mentioned, all of the responses to work-related information were made via open-ended responses.

Work Outcomes

After reporting basic personal and work demographics, participants were asked to report on outcome-related variables such as salary, rate of promotion, and career success. In particular, they were asked (a) "What is your approximate salary?" (13 salary ranges anchored by *below $10,000* and *above $1 million*); (b) "How does your current salary compare to that for others in positions similar to you?" (7-point Likert-type scale from 1 [*much lower*] to 7 [*much higher*]); (c) "How successful have you been in your career?" (7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 [*not at all successful*] to 7 [*extremely successful*]); and (d) "How do you feel your rate of promotion compares to others in similar positions to you?" (7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 [*much lower than average*] to 7 [*much higher than average*]).

RESULTS

Analytical Approach

The hypothesized relationships were tested using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) with linear contrasts. Because there were three groups of participants, an ANOVA approach seemed most parsimonious. However, a traditional ANOVA evaluates whether there is a statistically significant difference between the three groups. The linear trend procedure permits us to test the exact form of the pattern of differences observed to see if it is consistent with the hypothesized pattern. Given that we had an a priori expectation of a certain pattern of results, linear contrasts are both a more direct and more powerful approach for testing the exact form of the hypothesized relationships. We performed these analyses both with and without a variety of different covariates (e.g., participant race, gender, age, education level, tenure with their organization, industry

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they worked in, and when possible mentor gender and ethnicity). The results remain largely unchanged, so in what follows we report the results without the covariates as these represent the more parsimonious models.

Factor Structure of Mentor Functions

To evaluate the factor structure of the mentor functions scale, we first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) specifying the four-factor a priori structure. The fit of this model was unsatisfactory (confirmatory factor analysis [CFI] = .75, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .08). Given the unsatisfactory model fit, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to see if we could identify a suitable factor structure. The EFA was conducted using maximum likelihood and an oblique rotation method (Promax). We specified to retain four factors in this EFA based on the results obtained from conducting parallel analysis on our data. Turning our attention to the individual items, a number of items failed to have meaningful loadings on a single scale or displayed substantial cross loadings on multiple scales. We retained only those items that loaded above .6 on their respective scale and had no cross-loadings above .35 on another scale. Using this approach, no items were eliminated from the Role-Modeling scale, two items were eliminated from the Gay-Specific Mentor Functions scale, four items were eliminated from the Career Mentoring subscale, and eights items were eliminated from the Psychosocial Mentor Functions scale. No items were found to load on factors that they were not originally hypothesized to load on. Not surprisingly, this new factor structure produced acceptable CFA fit indices (CFI = .90, RMSEA = .07). The fit of this new model was compared to the fit of a variety of alternative three- and two-factor models. In every instance, this four-factor solution fit the data better than an alternative model. For the tests of our hypotheses, we analyze our data using both our a priori four factors and the four factors identified using the procedure just discussed. Our results and conclusions remain unchanged regardless of which of the two-factor structures are used. We have chosen to report those results from the original a priori factor structure despite its poor fit according to the CFA results. This choice was driven by multiple factors. Because of missing data on individual items, the final sample size for this factor analysis relative to the number of parameters being estimated was quite small, and there was no opportunity to perform cross-validation, thus calling into question the stability of our factor solution. Also, the two scales that required the most modification (career and psychosocial mentoring) are the two scales that have the most support in the literature. Given our concerns regarding the reproducibility of our factor solution, we felt uncomfortable modifying the scales for our use here. Moreover, by using the original scales, our work can be compared to previous studies relying on these scales. Again, our results remain unchanged regardless of the factor solution used to test our hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

Table 1 contains the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among study variables. Consistent with H1A, there was a significant effect of mentor type on global job satisfaction. Gay/lesbian protégés with gay mentors reported greater global job satisfaction ($M = 43.28$, $SE = 1.49$) than those with heterosexual mentors ($M = 41.44$, $SE = 1.49$), who in turn reported greater job satisfaction than those with no mentors ($M = 37.76$, $SE = 1.55$), $t(196) = 2.57$, $p = .01$. Support was also found for H1B, as there was a significant effect of type of

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TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations of Study Variables

	M	*SD*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*
1. Gender	—	—	—											
2. Age	38.50	9.48	0.08	—										
3. Tenure	7.40	7.43	−0.12	0.51**	—									
4. Job satisfaction	40.91	12.35	−0.09	0.15*	0.16*	—								
5. JDI "Psychosocial"	119.41	33.14	−0.08	0.14*	0.12	0.78**	—							
6. JDI "Tangible"	32.14	13.32	−0.18*	−0.02	0.11	0.60**	0.57**	—						
7. Job involvement	3.51	1.50	−0.21**	0.07	0.14	0.38**	0.33**	0.33**	—					
8. Salary	5.48	2.47	−0.18*	0.23**	0.25**	0.25**	0.25**	0.41**	0.24**	—				
9. Promotions	4.58	1.45	−0.06	0.06	0.04	0.32**	0.36**	0.51**	0.31**	0.28**	—			
10. Gay-specific mentoring	3.97	1.80	0.01	−0.08	0.08	−0.03	−0.04	−0.01	0.05	−0.20*	0.06	—		
11. Psychosocial mentoring	5.33	0.99	0.10	−0.02	0.09	0.11	0.12	0.22*	0.07	0.00	0.40**	0.60**	—	
12. Role modeling	5.55	1.35	−0.02	0.07	0.11	0.20*	0.20*	0.21*	0.13	0.08	0.27**	0.43**	0.66**	—
13. Career-related mentoring	5.13	1.22	−0.13	−0.12	0.04	0.12	0.14	0.30**	0.15	0.17	0.41**	0.26**	0.60**	0.60**

Note. Gender coded "0" for men and "1" for women. JDI = Job Descriptive Index.
*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

mentor on psychosocial job satisfaction. Gay/lesbian protégés with gay mentors reported greater psychosocial job satisfaction ($M = 126.23$, $SE = 3.99$) than those with heterosexual mentors ($M = 122.56$, $SE = 3.85$), who reported greater psychosocial job satisfaction than those with no mentors ($M = 108.53$, $SE = 4.12$), $t(196) = 3.08$, $p < .01$.

H1C was also supported as a significant effect of type of mentor was also found for job involvement. Consistent with the previous pattern, a significant linear trend for job involvement was found such that protégés with gay mentors reported greater job involvement ($M = 3.91$, $SE = 0.18$) than protégés with heterosexual mentors ($M = 3.51$, $SE = 0.17$), who in turn reported greater job involvement than those with no mentors ($M = 3.07$, $SE = 0.19$), $t(201) = 3.26$, $p < .01$. Support was obtained for H1D, as gay/lesbian workers with a gay/lesbian mentor received more psychosocial mentor functions than workers with a heterosexual mentor. Specifically, gay/lesbian employees with a same-sexual-orientation mentor received more psychosocial support ($M = 5.56$, $SE = 0.13$) than those with a heterosexual mentor ($M = 5.11$, $SE = 0.12$), $t(120) = 2.61$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, gay/lesbian mentors were perceived by gay/lesbian workers to be better role models ($M = 5.97$, $SE = 0.18$) than heterosexual mentors ($M = 5.26$, $SE = 0.17$), $t(115) = 2.42$, $p = .02$. Gay/lesbian mentors also provided more gay/lesbian-specific advice and mentoring ($M = 5.06$, $SE = 0.20$) to their gay/lesbian protégés than did heterosexual mentors ($M = 3.02$, $SE = 0.19$), $t(116) = 7.44$, $p < .001$.

An anonymous reviewer suggested we explore the potential moderating effects of the extent to which participants were out to family, friends, and coworkers on the aforementioned dependent variables.[1] The only significant moderating effect concerned the amount of gay-specific advice and mentoring ($B = .18$, $p = .046$). Not surprisingly, participants reported receiving more gay-specific mentoring advice from heterosexual mentors to the extent that they were more out to family, friend, and coworkers. However, the amount of gay/lesbian-specific mentoring received from gay mentors did not differ depending on "outness." Figure 1 contains a graphical depiction of this interaction.

Hypothesis 2

H2 examined the relationship between type of mentor and tangible outcomes. It was hypothesized that having a heterosexual mentor would allow for greater tangible benefits than having a gay/lesbian mentor or having no mentor at all. H2A was partially supported as the hypothesized linear trend of mentor profile for tangible job satisfaction was significant, $t(156) = 1.89$, $p = .045$. The tangible job satisfaction of gay/lesbian protégés with heterosexual mentors ($M = 33.75$, $SE = 1.57$) was not greater than those workers with gay mentors ($M = 33.26$, $SE = 1.63$) but both groups of participants with mentors reported greater tangible job satisfaction levels than participants with no mentors ($M = 29.10$, $SE = 1.68$). In addition, there was no support for H2B, as there was not a significant effect of mentor type on current salary. Participants' salaries did not significantly differ as predicted as a function of type of mentor. Those with a heterosexual mentor reported the largest salary ($M = 5.90$, $SE = 0.29$), followed by those with no mentor ($M = 5.35$,

[1]To test the moderating effect of "outness" here and throughout, we used moderated multiple regression and followed the procedure recommend by Aiken and West (1991) whereby we first mean centered the individual predictors and then created an interaction term. Simple slopes were plotted at high and low levels of the continuous predictor for the two groups.

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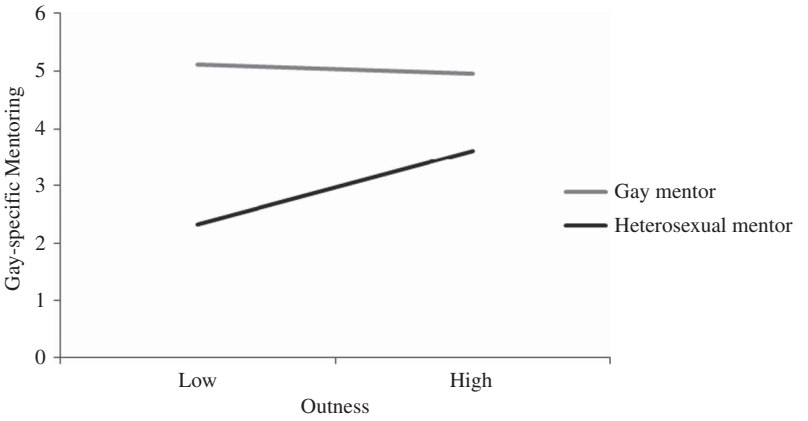

FIGURE 1 The impact of level of "outness" on the amount of gay-specific mentoring provided to protégés by gay and heterosexual mentors.

$SE = 0.31$). Individuals with a gay mentor reported the lowest salary ($M = 5.13$, $SE = 0.30$), but these differences were not statistically significant, $F(1, 200) = 1.85$, $p = .16$. However, there was a significant effect of mentor type on rate of promotion, consistent with H2C. As predicted, a linear contrast revealed that workers with heterosexual mentors ($M = 5.00$, $SE = 0.17$) had received more promotions than workers with gay mentors ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 0.17$), who in turn received more promotions than workers without mentors ($M = 4.03$, $SD = 0.18$), $t(200) = 3.95$, $p < .001$. Analyses also revealed that the amount of tangible mentor functions received by participants was a function of both the type of mentor and the extent to which the participant was out to friends, family and coworkers ($B = .16$, $p = .03$); however, the main effect of type of mentor was not statistically significant as predicted ($B = .12$, $p = .28$), thereby showing no support for H2D. Figure 2 contains a graphical depiction of this interaction. Heterosexual mentors tended to provide more career-related mentoring to participants who were more "out," whereas gay mentors appear to provide slightly less career mentoring to that same group.

Hypothesis 3

As previously shown, having a gay/lesbian mentor as opposed to a heterosexual mentor was significantly related to the amount of specific psychosocial mentoring advice on managing gay identity in the workplace, the amounts of psychosocial support, and the amount of role modeling provided. To establish evidence of mediation, a significant relationship between mentor functions and the outcome variables must also exist after controlling for the type of mentor. However, no relationship was found between the psychosocial mentor functions and job satisfaction—gay-specific mentoring, $F(1, 111) = 0.38$, $p = .54$; psychosocial support, $F(1, 114) = 1.33$, $p = .25$; role modeling, $F(1, 110) = 0.81$, $p = .78$—or job involvement—gay-specific mentoring, $F(1, 114) = 3.31$, $p = .07$; psychosocial support, $F(1, 118) = 0.19$, $p = .66$; role modeling, $F(1, 113) = 2.44$, $p = .12$—after controlling for the sexual orientation of the mentor. Each of the aforementioned analyses was conducted examining the relationship between an individual mentor function by itself with a specific outcome variable while controlling for the mentor's sexual

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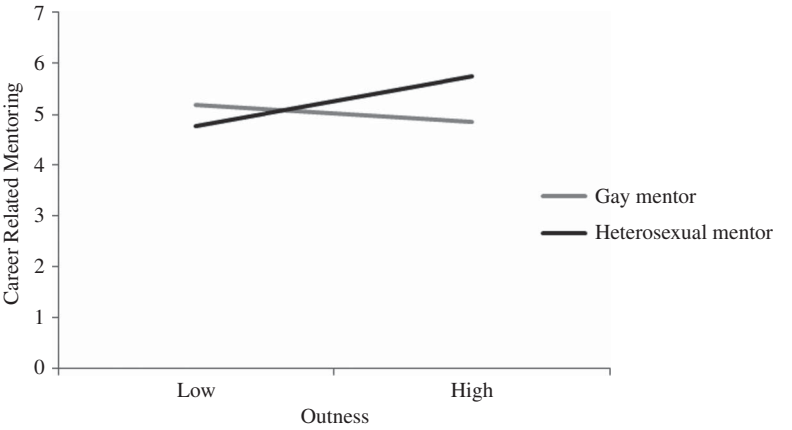

FIGURE 2 The impact of level of "outness" on the relationship between mentor sexual orientation and career-related mentoring.

orientation. A separate analysis was conducted for each mentor function. Based on this series of analyses, there was insufficient evidence to support H3 that the relationship between having a gay/lesbian mentor and psychosocial outcomes such as job satisfaction and job involvement was mediated by the extent to which gay/lesbians receive different types of mentoring. Similarly, we failed to find support for H3B that career-related mentoring would mediate the relationship between type of mentor and career-related outcomes, as the relationship between career-related mentoring and salary and promotions was not statistically significant.

DISCUSSION

This study sought to synthesize two disparate areas of research on mentoring and research on gay/lesbian employees. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the sexual orientation of mentors and protégés' job attitudes (e.g., global and tangible job satisfaction and job involvement) and job outcomes (e.g., salary, promotion rate). Not surprisingly, and consistent with previous research (Chao, 1997; Eby et al., 2008; Koberg et al., 1998), having a mentor was generally related to more favorable job attitudes. That is, gay men/lesbians who reported having a mentor, regardless of the sexual orientation of the mentor, generally reported greater job satisfaction, job involvement, and positive instrumental outcomes. Such results suggest the importance of ensuring that all employees (stigmatized or unstigmatized) have access to mentors.

In addition to the benefits of having a mentor (vs. not), our results revealed that having a gay/lesbian mentor may be particularly beneficial for gay/lesbian protégés. Specifically, this study found that gay/lesbian protégés with gay/lesbian (vs. heterosexual) mentors expressed greater job satisfaction, greater job involvement, and more psychosocial mentor functions (e.g., psychosocial mentoring benefits, positive role modeling, and gay-specific advice). This finding supports the notion previously established in the mentoring research with women and ethnic

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minority individuals that having a similarly diverse (vs. not similarly diverse) mentor can translate to more positive job attitudes (e.g., Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Underhill, 2006). Similar mentors' personal experiences and expertise in dealing with the issues that come with being gay/lesbian may be an invaluable resource for gay/lesbian protégés who are striving for success in their jobs and careers. Having such mentors may be particularly advantageous in workplaces where nondiscrimination policies do not yet exist or do not translate into actual practice. Exploratory analysis of the moderating effect of "outness" revealed that gay/lesbian protégés who reported being out to a greater number of family, friends, and coworkers also reported receiving more gay-specific advice from heterosexual mentors. The extent to which one is out to a greater number of people may indicate their comfort level in talking about issues related to their sexual orientation. Those who are out to more people may be more likely to seek gay-specific advice or bring up issues that prompt gay-specific advice from their heterosexual mentor. In addition, this finding suggests that heterosexual mentors may be better able to assist gay/lesbian protégés with specific work-related issues concerning sexual orientation when they are certain about the protégé's sexual orientation.

Although gay/lesbian workers with similarly diverse mentors received more psychosocial benefits from having gay mentors, previous research led us to anticipate that such benefits would not extend to more tangible, material outcomes. Rather, we anticipated that gay/lesbian protégés would report greater tangible, material outcomes when their mentors were heterosexual (vs. gay/lesbian), and our results provided partial support for this finding. Specifically, gay/lesbian protégés with heterosexual (vs. gay/lesbian) mentors reported significantly higher promotion rates and, for those who are out, increased tangible mentoring functions such as career-related guidance. Contrary to our hypothesis, gay/lesbian protégés who had heterosexual (vs. gay/lesbian) mentors did not report significantly increased salaries or tangible job satisfaction, although the means were in the predicted directions.

So how is the type of mentor that a protégé has related to his or her job attitudes and outcomes? It was originally hypothesized that the relationship between type of mentor and job attitudes would be mediated by the extent to which mentors provide protégés with gay-specific mentor functions. That is, the more gay-specific advice and guidance a gay/lesbian protégé received, the greater job satisfaction and job involvement the protégé would report, regardless of mentor's sexual orientation. Although type of mentor was related to gay-specific mentor functions, there was no evidence that the extent to which gay/lesbians received gay-specific mentoring mediated the relationship between the type of mentor protégés had and their job attitudes. It would appear, then, that different mentors do provide different levels of gay-specific mentoring, but the results of this study do not provide adequate information to determine the mechanism through which type of mentor influences job attitudes. Gay mentors may be serving as role models for their gay/lesbian protégés. The successful images that gay mentors project may inspire protégés, fostering an "if he or she can do it, so can I" mentality. Having a gay mentor may also contribute to the overall sense of diversity in an organization, promoting feelings of acceptance and a friendly organizational climate (Mckim, 2000). It is also possible that gay/lesbian protégés (with gay/lesbian vs. heterosexual mentors) may feel more accepted and focus less attention on concealing their stigmas, the latter of which has been shown to create stress, disclosure management issues, and other outcomes that negatively impact interactions (see Ragins, 2008; Smart & Wegner, 1999). Further research is required to substantiate these possibilities.

Finally, the current research shows advantages that both gay/lesbian versus heterosexual mentors have in working with their gay/lesbian protégé, and we think it is important that mentors are aware of their relative strengths and weaknesses. More important, we hope mentors (regardless of their sexual orientation) will (a) understand that they can and (b) strive to positively impact the lives of their gay/lesbian protégés. Not only is there a moral imperative to do so, there is also a financial one (see King & Cortina, 2010).

Limitations and Future Research

Although the present research provides a useful examination of the impact of different types of mentors and functions provided by mentors on various job attitudes of minority individuals, it does have some limitations. First, the correlational nature of this study limits the conclusions that can be drawn as no conclusive statements can be made about causality or directionality. Future research might adopt more quasi-experimental approaches. Second, the small subsample sizes and a somewhat racially homogeneous sample did not allow us to thoroughly test how sexual orientation, gender, or race similarity interacted and which variables were most closely related to work outcomes. Given previous research documenting the interactive effects of gender, sexual orientation, gender role orientation, and race (Finkelstein, Allen, & Rhoton, 2003; Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003; Scandura & Ragins, 1993) in mentor and protégé relationships, future research should seek to determine how these interactions unfold. Third, we adopted our use of the definition of a mentor from previous mentor research (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990); however, there are some limitations that arise with our use of mentor, mostly relating to the fact that we did not collect additional, more specific information about the mentoring relationships. For instance, it may make a difference in individuals' outcomes if the mentors were assigned or chosen, official versus personal, and superior or equivalent in status. Clearly future research on mentoring should consider these potentially influential factors of mentor characteristics. Fourth, as with most research on sexual orientation, the dependent measures that we used are not previously well established. When possible, we tried to use measures that have been used in previous research and adapt them to focus on gay/lesbian targets. Certainly, however, future research would benefit from validated measures on this specific population. Fifth, we relied on self-reported data from only one perspective (that of the protégé); therefore, it is possible that protégés may have been unaware of their mentors' actual sexual orientation. This may have potentially contributed to some noise in the data. Sixth and similarly, convenience samples of gay/lesbian respondents may constitute a nonrepresentative and nonrandom sample of gay/lesbian employees. We point the interested readers to a lengthy discussion by Rothblum (1994), who claimed, however, that this is not such a severe problem after all.

In addition to the research addressing these limitations, future research might address a host of other questions relevant to mentoring relationships for gay/lesbian employees. For example, what are the mechanisms through which type of mentor impacts job outcomes? What are the implications for organizations? How can mentoring relationships for gay/lesbian workers be improved so they can simultaneously receive the tangible and psychosocial benefits of a mentoring relationship? Does mentoring matching need to be type specific? That is, what about minority individuals

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matched with other minority individuals as mentors, but not for the same token characteristics (i.e., a heterosexual Black male protégé with a gay mentor)?

Perhaps most important, an experimental approach in which mentors are assigned to protégés or a longitudinal approach in which psychosocial and tangible outcomes are measured over time would be particularly helpful in disentangling the causality issues present in the current correlational study. Through exploring the effects of similarity in mentoring (not only with regard to sexual orientation but through other forms of demographic diversity, including gender, race, physical disability, religion, and national origin), organizations can move closer to more fully utilizing the unique set of experiences and characteristics that diverse employees bring to the workplace.

Conclusion

The current study addresses an important component of the experiences of gay/lesbian employees in the workplace. Namely, we examined how gay/lesbian employees are affected by mentoring itself as well as by different types of mentors. As has been shown consistently in past research, having a mentor yields more favorable job-related outcomes than not having a mentor. When looking at the sexual orientation of the mentor himself or herself, however, we found that gay/lesbian employees do not consistently benefit from having a mentor who shares the same sexual orientation. Rather, it seems, that having a same sexual-orientation mentor results in greater psychosocial job-related outcomes but either negligible or poorer tangible-related outcomes. Such results suggest that gay/lesbian employees face a mentoring dilemma in selecting and/or being assigned a mentor that is also observed with female and Black employees. The answer, which we hope is addressed in future research, may lie in obtaining multiple mentors, each for different purposes.

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APPENDIX

Mentoring Function Items Arranged by Factor

Gay-Specific Mentoring

1) My mentor has advised me on managing my gay or lesbian identity at work.
2) My mentor has counseled me on how to handle comments and inquiries about my sexual identity.
3) My mentor talks with me about specific strategies and issues to being "out" in the workplace.
4) My mentor has helped me find resources about the GLBT community at work and in the area.
5) My mentor has helped me decide how, when, and whom to come out to in the workplace.
6) My mentor has encouraged me to be proud of my sexual orientation.
7) I have discussed with my mentor how to react to verbal and/or physical threats related to my gay or lesbian identity.
8) My mentor counsels me when I have personal relationship distress.
9) My mentor participates in diversity workshops and company social groups.
10) My mentor speaks out against homophobia and heterosexism in the workplace.
11) My mentor sets an example that has empowered me and given me a sense of pride.

Career Mentoring

12) My mentor brings my accomplishments to the attention of important people in the organization.
13) My mentor uses his/her influence in the organization for my benefit.
14) My mentor provides me with support and feedback regarding my job performance.
15) My mentor helps me meet new colleagues.
16) My mentor provides me with challenging assignments.
17) My mentor shares information with me about his/her job.
18) My mentor accepts me as a competent professional.
19) My mentor encourages me to prepare for advancement.
20) My mentor sets high standards of performance for me.
21) My mentor suggests specific strategies for achieving career aspirations.
22) My mentor thinks highly of me.
23) My mentor serves as a buffer between me and the organization from various forms of discrimination.
24) My mentor shields me from damaging contact with important people in the organization.

Psychosocial Mentoring

25) I consider my mentor to be a friend.
26) My mentor is someone I can confide in.
27) My mentor provides support and encouragement.
28) My mentor and I frequently socialize one-on-one outside the work setting.
29) My mentor accepts me as I am.
30) My mentor guides my personal development.
31) My mentor is like a father/mother to me.

Role Modeling

32) I try to imitate the work behavior of my mentor.
33) My mentor is someone I identify with.
34) My mentor serves as a role model for me.

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