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POWER DISTANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON

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EUN SIK KIM

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POWER DISTANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC MENTORING

By

Eun Sik Kim

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

POWER DISTANCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON ACADEMIC MENTORING

By

Eun Sik Kim

Tens of thousands of international students are coming to the United States every year for the purpose of learning new and advanced knowledge in many different fields. This research was inspired by a group of international students who perceived difficulty in initiating good mentoring relationships between themselves and faculty members in their area of academic focus. The goal of this project was to investigate the legitimacy of these students' claims. This research focus is on an important issue because overcoming perceived barriers is critical to the success and advancement of international graduate students within American Universities. Moreover, successful graduate school experiences are often related to mentoring relationships with faculty members.

The Theory of Power Distance (PD) is investigated to determine how it influences the protégés perspective of the mentoring relationship during the initiation stage. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the difference between the number of formal and informal interactions initiated between inter-cultural relationships and intra-cultural relationships in the initiation stage, the difficulties and barriers experienced, and the initiation strategies used.

ACKNOLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

This research was inspired by a group of Asian international students who perceived great difficulty in establishing (initiating) good mentoring relationships between themselves and faculty members in their area of academic focus. The goal of this research project is to investigate the legitimacy of these students' claims. The project also seeks to establish a possible link between an Asian international graduate student's cultural orientation and the perceived difficulties that he or she faces when trying to initiate a mentoring relationship. Cultural orientation is viewed as a relevant factor in the investigation of this issue because Asian international graduate students reported more difficulties in initiating the mentoring relationship than non-Asian international graduate students.

This research seeks to focus on an important issue because the perceived barriers are critical to the success and advancement of Asian international graduate students within American universities. Successful graduate school experiences are often related to mentoring relationships with faculty members. This specifically applies to Asian international graduate students pursuing master's degrees who hope to advance and pursue their Ph.D.'s or Ph.D. students who hope to pursue their professional careers in the American institution. If a scientific relationship between these variables can be established, suggested ways of leveling the playing field can be offered.

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Using the theory of Power Distance we will seek to investigate how the cultural variable of Power Distance (i.e. either high or low Power Distance) influences the protégé's perspective of the mentoring relationship during the initiation stage. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the difference between the number of formal and informal interactions initiated by Asian international graduate students with U.S. mentors (i.e. inter-cultural relationships) and U.S. graduate students with U.S. mentors (i.e. intra-cultural relationships) in the initiation stage, difficulties and barriers experienced, and initiation strategies used.

Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research has often concluded that cultural differences play significant

roles in the interpersonal interactions between persons from different cultures

(Cross, 1995; Neuliep, 1997). Some studies have described and classified

cultures as the constructs known as individualism and collectivism (Hofstede,

1986; Sushila, 1998, Triandis, 1993). These two dimensions of culture have

been around in the social sciences for many years, but Hofstede (1984)

popularized them by conceptualizing them in terms of values. Hofstede (1984)

defined individualistic cultures as having a self-based orientation and advancing

individual achievement and responsibility, while collectivist cultures were defined

as those who promoted interdependence and group harmony. The focus here is

not on these cultural constructs, but it is important to mention these different

cultural conceptions because they help to clarify the concept of Power Distance.

Power Distance

One of the dimensions of Hofstede's (1984) study on cultural differences

focused on Power Distance across cultures. Hofstede (1984 & 1986) defined

Power Distance as a "characteristic of a culture which defines the extent to which

the less powerful persons in a society accept inequality in the power and

consider it as normal." He goes on to state that inequality exists within every

culture, but the degree to which it is tolerated varies between one culture and

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another. Hofstede (1984) also states that Power Distance can either be high or low. He explains that high Power Distance connotes a more bureaucratic structure and organization. It is said that people in high Power Distance cultures (i.e. collectivist cultures) accept power differentials as a fact of life and because they value obedience and conformity, they will not challenge this difference in power. In contrast to high Power Distance cultures, low Power Distance cultures (i.e. individualist cultures) value equal power distribution among its people. Low Power Distance cultures are said to prefer expert or legitimate power as opposed to referent or coercive power (Hofstede, 1984).

Power Distance differences across cultures have been conceptualized at various different levels of society (Hofstede, 1986). At the national level, Power Distance is operationalized by looking at differences such as social class, educational level and occupation. In most societies, these three areas are closely linked because higher education automatically equates membership in the middle class and level of education also dictates the occupations to which one can aspire. Power Distance differences have also been studied across cultures in the family, school and workplace settings. For each of these areas there was consistency in the ways that people from the different orientations to Power Distance responded.

For the purpose of this study, Power Distance will be studied specifically in a university setting. From his research, Hofstede (1986) summarized the key differences between low and high Power Distance societies. In this research he said that teachers in low Power Distance cultures 1) expect initiatives from

students in class, 2) are experts who transfer impersonal truths, and 3) treat students as equals. In contrast, the research found that teachers in high Power Distance cultures are 1) expected to take all initiative in class 2) are gurus who transfer personal wisdom, and 3) students treat them with respect. The present study will focus specifically on how Power Distance differences affect students from high and low Power Distance cultures in the initiation stage of a mentoring relationship.

<u>Mentoring</u>

Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & Mckee (1978) suggested that the most important relationship in a young adult's life is that of the mentor relationship. Mentors are generally defined as higher ranking, influential senior members of the organization who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to their protégés' careers (Hunt & Michael, 1983; Kram, 1985; Lunding, Clements, & Perkins, 1978; Roche, 1979). Mentoring relationships have been identified as important for organizational success (Fagenson, 1988, 1989; Lunding, Clements, & Perkins, 1978; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher, 1988), career development (Kram, 1983; Phillips-Jones, 1982; Reich, 1985), and career satisfaction (Fagenson, 1989; Riley & Wrench, 1985; Roche, 1979). Kram (1985, p.2) adds that a mentor "helps the younger individual learn to navigate in the adult world and world of work. A mentor supports, guides, and counsels the young adult as he or she accomplishes this important task."

Phases. Kram (1980) says that a mentoring relationship proceeds through four distinct, but entirely predictable phases. The first phase is the

initiation period where the relationship between the mentor and protégé gets started and begins to have importance to both parties. The initiation stage is usually characteristic of the first six to twelve months of this relationship. Years two to five of the mentoring relationship are characterized as the cultivation period in which psychological and career functions are expanded to a maximum. The next phase is the separation period, which generally happens between six months and two years after a significant change in the role relationship or emotional experience has occurred. The fourth and final stage is the redefinition period. This period is indefinite and involves totally ending a relationship or seeing the existing one undergo significant change.

The focus here is on the mentoring relationship in the initiation stages. Kram (1980) says that in the initiation stage of a mentoring relationship the parties are attracted to each other because of respect for the other and anticipated enjoyment out of their interaction. Kram's research, which was conducted with young and senior managers from a professional organization, concluded that during the initiation period, the young manager begins to experience some closeness to the senior manager, and receives special attention and emotional support from the mentor (senior). In turn, the mentor starts getting acquainted with the protégé on a more intimate level, observes the young manager's (protégé) potential, and begins to share with the protégé work values and personal observations about the organization or profession. The mentor might also begin to test the protégé's capabilities by arranging certain assignments on which the protégé's performance can be observed. According to

Kram (1988) the initiation stage was successfully identified, however, she did not provide explanations about specific skills, behaviors or communication strategies that future protégés can use to initiate the mentoring relationship with potential mentor (Waldeck, Oggero, Plax & Kearney, 1997).

Benefits. Kram and Olian et al. (1988) found that protégés who have closer contacts and/or more interactions with a mentor see two primary benefits obtained from the relationship. They are job and career benefits such as promotability, and more exposure and visibility through information and external brokering provided by the mentor, and psychological benefits like the enhanced self-concept, and satisfaction with his or her work from the emotional support and friendship obtained within the relationship.

Supportive communication relationships are those relationships with significant organizational others that enhance an individual's work life. According to Kram (1983), individuals seek relationships at work that provides opportunities for solving the dilemmas posed in early adult and career years (p.609). These relationships are essentially communicative in nature. Moreover, the range of significant others who support the development of organizational newcomers as young professionals include friends, family members, coworkers, peers, mentors, superiors, and subordinates (Kram, 1988; Kram & Isabella, 1985). In the academic setting, communication support emerges in several ways (Bahniuk, Dobos, & Hill, 1990). One of those most central to the graduate student is mentor-protégé relationship.

Academic Mentoring. In the academic setting, mentors provide multiple functions. Bova and Phillips (1984) have reported that academic mentors enhance the ability of protégé's risk-taking behaviors and develop and improve political, professional, and communication skills. Mentoring is an efficient tool for graduate students to establish formal and informal relationships with faculty members. Without the support and help of a good mentor, the graduate student's life at school becomes unnecessarily difficult and anxious (Waldeck et al., 1997). Mentors are also responsible for graduate student degree program design, learning activity design, selection and monitoring, learning evaluation, and several types of advisement (Bradley, 1981), and help educate and train the graduate assistant as a college professor (Sprague & Nyquist, 1989).

Hill, Bahniuk, and Dobos (1989) report that graduate students who had mentoring relationships with their professors had lower levels of communication apprehension, increased satisfaction, received more support, and perceived an adequate flow of information between mentor and protégé. Hill et al. (1989) also found that the mentoring relationship could be related to the protégé's perceptual, attitudinal, and performance indicators of academic success.

The previous research on mentoring in an academic setting (Hill et. al., 1989; Bahniuk et. al., 1990) focused mainly on the benefits of this kind of relationship, but none focused on the evolution of the relationship through the stages defined by Kram (1980). Kram's (1980) research is important to this project since it looks at mentoring specifically in the initiation stage. Kram's (1980) definition of the phases, and activities within those phases, of the

mentoring relationship was studied in an organizational context. It could be applied to the academic setting because the forces at play are very similar. The relationship between a professor and a graduate student it is very similar to that of a young manager and senior manager. In this study, differences due to Power Distance, one of four fundamental dimensions of culture, will be expected to influence the interaction on the mentoring relationship, especially in its initiation stage, between graduate students and their mentors.

Hypotheses

For the purpose of empirically testing the relationship between Power Distance and its' perceived implications on initiating a mentoring relationship, the following hypotheses and research questions are posited.

H1: Protégés from high Power Distance cultures initiate fewer formal interactions with their potential mentors than protégés from low Power Distance cultures.

H2: Protégés from high Power Distance cultures will initiate less informal interactions with their potential mentors than protégés from low Power Distance cultures.

Research Questions

Difficulties and barriers would cause fewer interactions, thus this following research question is posed.

RQ1: What difficulties and barriers are experienced more by protégés high in Power Distance when initiating interactions with mentors.

Finally, it is important to identify the differential use of initiation strategies by those high and low in Power Distance.

RQ2: What mentor initiation strategies are used more often by those high in

Power Distance than those in low Power Distance.

Since Communication Apprehension might influence the predicted

relationships, it is critical to identify the relationship between Communication

Apprehension and high/low Power Distance.

RQ3: Does Communication Apprehension affect high and low Power Distance?

Chapter 2

METHODS

<u>Subjects</u>

This study was conducted using 100 graduate students from a number of colleges at Michigan State University. The participants were drawn from a larger pool of graduate students who satisfied certain selection criteria, and random convenience sampling was employed to conduct this project. For example, participants who were chosen had to be master's students who were hoping to go on for a Ph.D. in their specific field, Ph.D. students who hoped to pursue become faculty members in their specific area. This was a selection criteria because previous studies suggested that academic mentors are responsible for designing graduate students' degree programs and also training them as college professors (Bradley, 1981; Sprague & Nyquist, 1989).

The number of participants formed two groups of approximately 50 each who represented the cultural orientations of either high or low Power Distance. Specifically, a sample of international graduate students and American graduate students who reported a desire to continue their educational pursuits were categorized as either high or low Power Distance scores according to Power Distance Index Scores (PDI) (Hofstede, 1984 & 1986) (See appendix A for the scale).

Out of 100 students, there were 41 American graduate students who were identified as the low Power Distance group, and 59 students who were identified as the high Power Distance group. Also, there were 41 males, 58 females, and 1 participant who didn't identify his or her sex. A variety of academic departments were represented by the protégés, including 17 % from Business, 57% from Social Science and Communication, 11% from Engineering, and 15% from Natural Science.

Forty percent indicated that they were American graduate Students including both European American and African American, and fifty one percent indicated that they were Asian international graduate students; 28% Korean, 9% Japanese, 5% Chinese, 6% Taiwanese, 2% Hong Kong and 1% Thai. There were 9% of international graduate students from the following countries; Singapore, Norway, Arab, East Africa, Columbia, Cambodia, Srilanka and Puerto Rico.

The average number of years in a graduate program was 2.53; 3.22 for people from the low Power Distance group and 2.05 for the high Power Distance group. This difference was significant (t = 3.40, p < .05). Graduate students were asked to respond to items describing their sex of mentors; 52% of mentors were male, 40% were female, and 8% did not indicate. Sixty three percent of mentors were the graduate student's academic advisor, 36% were someone other than their academic advisor, and 1% did not indicate. The average length of the relationship between graduate students and their mentors was 15.05 months; 20.18 months for the respondents from the low Power Distance group,

and 11.39 months for the high Power Distance group. This difference was significant ($\underline{t}$ = 2.51, $\underline{p}$ < .05). All participants said they had access to a personal computer so that they could use e-mail or the Internet. Sixty eight percent of respondents preferred to use e-mail to contact their mentor (27% of whom were from low and 41% from high PD), 7% preferred to use telephone, and 24% preferred to use office hours (6% from low and 18% from high PD). None of the respondents from high Power Distance group preferred to use telephone to contact with their mentors compared to 7% from the low PD group.

Design (Independent & Dependent Variables)

The first independent variable, Power Distance, had two levels: high and low Power Distance (PD). All participants were assigned either high or low Power Distance scores according to Power Distance Index (Hofstede, 1984 & 1986). The second independent variable, Communication Apprehension (CA), was analyzed for its factor structure and reliability. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) indicated a single factor solution that exhibited internal consistency with an alpha reliability estimated at .81. These 100 participants were asked to complete a questionnaire that asked a variety of questions about their relationship with their mentor.

After a small pilot study, it became apparent that there was a need to differentiate between a mentor and an academic advisor's role. To help clarify the concept of a mentor, the definition of the difference between an academic advisor and a mentor was provided. It said "unlike assigned academic advisors who simply direct students' course of study and other procedural matters,

mentors go beyond by fulfilling other important functions for their protégés including both academic careers and psychosocial/personal relationships." These questionnaire items were used to create various dependent variable measures: 1) frequency of initiating formal meetings (range 0 to 30 times per month), 2) frequency of initiating social interactions/informal meetings (range 0 to 15 times per month), 3) perceived barriers both in terms of a scale and responses to an open-ended question, and 4) initiation strategy usages (see appendix A for all measures). These measures were created by the researchers except the measure for initiation strategy usages which was created by Waldeck et al. (1997).

The open-ended responses to the question asking respondents to list perceived barriers and difficulties to initiating contact with mentors were coded using a grounded theory method. Two researchers generated a list of categories after looking at a subset of the responses. Then, two coders independently coded one quarter of the responses into this scheme. Coding reliability was high with a Cohen's Kappa of .91.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

The objectives of this project were to develop empirically a profile of two different groups either low or high PD of graduate student protégés and their faculty mentors. The number of times protégés interacted with their mentors both formally and informally, the initiation strategies protégés preferred to use, and barriers and difficulties protégés perceived were investigated.

<u>Hypothesis 1</u>

The data reveal that graduate student protégés from both low and high PD group were equally likely to establish formal interactions with their faculty mentors. The results were showed that the two groups, low PD ($\underline{M}$ = 3.46, SD = 5.72) and high PD ($\underline{M}$ = 4.41, SD = 5.31), did not differ significantly on the frequency of initiating formal meetings. In other words, graduate students from both low and high PD group were equally likely to formally initiate relationships with their mentors. Therefore no support was found for Hypothesis 1.

<u>Hypothesis 2</u>

However, in accordance with the predictions in Hypothesis 2, graduate student protégés from high PD reported initiating significantly fewer informal interactions with their faculty mentors than protégés from the low PD group. T-tests indicated that the two groups, low PD ($\underline{M}$ = 3.80, SD = 3.89) and high PD ($\underline{M}$ = 1.87, SD = 3.11), differed significantly ($\underline{t}$ = 2.63, $\underline{p}$ < .05) on the frequency of

initiating informal meetings. Therefore, support was found for the prediction advanced in Hypothesis 2.

Research Question 1

The CFA on the perceived barriers scale indicated a single factor solution with alpha reliability estimated at .81. T-tests showed that the two groups, low PD (M = 2.91, SD = .28) and high PD (M = 3.22, SD = .33), were significantly different (t = -4.89, p < .05) in that the high PD group perceived more barriers than low PD group did.

Research Question 2

T-tests showed that the two groups, low PD (M = 3.36, SD = .59) and high PD (M = 3.32, SD = .55), did not differ significantly on initiation strategy usage.

Since international students perceived more barriers and difficulties including cultural differences and language difficulties between them and their mentors, they were less likely to be involved informally with their mentors.

Research Question 3

CA could be a contributing factor, but it was not the case here as a T-test (t = .076) showed that the two groups, low PD (M = 26.82, SD = 2.89) and high PD (M = 26.77, SD = 2.90) did not differ significantly on CA.

Respondents were also asked to make a list of difficulties and barriers they perceived as an open-ended question and Table 1 shows the categories that emerged. There were significant differences between low and high PD in

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Table 1 about here

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time constraints (schedule conflicts), language difficulties, research interests and knowledge, apprehension, anxiety and nervousness, and cultural differences. Graduate student protégés from low PD perceived more barriers and difficulties in time constraints (schedule conflicts), mentor's personality and work habits, and structural issues. However those in high PD perceived more barriers in terms of language difficulties, apprehension, anxiety and nervousness, research interests and knowledge, and cultural differences.

Post Hoc analyses were run to determine the relationship among all variables (see table 2). There were significant correlations between PD and the

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Table 2 about here

----

length of the graduate programs, PD and the length of the mentoring relationship, and PD and the frequency of informal relationship all of which decreased with higher PD. No significant differences emerged between CA and PD, but CA was highly positively correlated with both perceived barriers and difficulties, and the frequency of initiating the informal relationship.

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Chapter 4

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

One of the very important reasons for this project was to present and provide more applicable information about establishing the mentor relationship to both American and international graduate students and their mentors. The role of the mentoring relationship enhances graduate students' personal and academic success, and this relationship very well might provide the blueprint for current protégés to become successful mentors later.

This investigation centered on the relationship between Power Distance and the frequency of initiating formal and informal meetings between graduate student protégés and their mentors. The results of the two hypotheses explained the general behavior of graduate students in terms of: 1) high and low PD graduate students were equally likely to initiate formal interactions with mentors, however 2) low PD graduate students were significantly more likely to initiate informal interaction with their mentors than are high PD graduate students.

There might be several different reasons for this pattern of results. International graduate students from high PD cultures might think that the informal relationship is less important than the formal relationship with their faculty mentors because their primary purpose of being in America is to study and to be a good student. Evidence for this exists in that many of the international graduate students from high PD countries perceived difficulties and

barriers in language problems and cultural differences, but when they had to resolve matters in formal structured ways, they actively participated with their mentors at a rate comparable to American graduate students. Perhaps high PD graduate students do not perceive the importance of the informal relationship. Or perhaps even though they know the importance of the informal relationship, the informal relationship between faculty mentors and themselves could be perceived by them with unfamiliarity since they are from high Power Distance cultures in which these informal relationships are unlikely to exist.

Another reason could be the way that gradate students from high PD cultures were educated or raised in their own countries. One of the distinct phenomena in high PD cultures, compared to low PD cultures, is that students are not the one who initiate the conversations or relationships with their teachers or professors (Hofstede, 1986). This could subconsciously influence the general behaviors of the graduate students from high PD cultures, so that it is very difficult for them to initiate conversations or relationships, particularly their informal relationships with faculty mentors.

Our data showed that there were no significant differences on the trait measure of Communication Apprehension between the two groups of students. Still, many of international graduate students from high PD countries thought that the language and cultural differences were their largest difficulties and barriers since 52% and 29%, respectively, of international graduate students from high PD reported this. Due to the language difficulties, they have suffered state apprehension, anxiety, and nervousness that made them reticent to reach out in

informal relationships, more so than the low PD group. This is due to cultural differences, not their other abilities or capabilities as evidenced by the lack of difference on the trait CA scale measures.

Both groups of high and low PD graduate students used a variety of initiation strategies (they did not differ significantly), such as frequent exposure, intentional course enrollment, searching for similarities, seeking advice, showing veneration, and disclosing personal self.

Finally, there are some practical implications and future research directions suggested by this research. It is important to train international students that the learning process across both formal and informal situations is equally important, especially in graduate programs. The importance of building informal communication/relationship networks cannot be under-emphasized. Some specific strategies that might be taught are:

1. Begin to get to know others in the department in informal small groups. Initiating conversation with students in class is one example of this.

2. Accept invitations to informal get togethers.

3. Find an international graduate student who has been in the department for more than a year to serve as a mentor. This person can inform you about the informal aspects of the host culture.

4. Spend time in your department. This includes just being in the mail room or computer room so that informal conversations can begin.

5. Once you feel comfortable in informal interactions in general, you will feel more comfortable initiating informal interactions with your mentor.

6. It would be very nice if the departments or individual colleges provide a space in the department or the college building for all graduate students and faculties to get togethers.

In the future studies, the relative effectiveness and satisfaction of the mentoring relationship over time should be investigated. Also, it will be interesting to examine how pairs made up of both American and international faculty mentors and graduate student protégés resolve or negotiate when they face disagreements or conflicts.

It would be very nice if the results of this research could be used as a reference for both American and international students and faculty mentors so that they could understand each other more fully. This also applies to the university personnel, especially those who frequently work with international students. On many occasions, people have incorrect ideas about people who have different cultural backgrounds, and sometimes it leads people on both sides to feel awkward. It doesn't mean that there is something wrong with either of them, simply they just do not understand the differences that exist between them. Hopefully this research will play a small role so that this existing gap will be narrowed.

APPENDICES

COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

Thanks for your participation!!

To help you clarify the concept of the mentor, here is the definition of, difference between an academic advisor and a mentor: *Unlike assigned academic advisors who simply direct students' course of study and other procedural matters, mentors go beyond by fulfilling other important functions for their protégés including both academic careers and psychosocial/personal relationships.*

MENTORING QUESTIONNAIRE

I.   Demographics:
1. Are you: Male ( ) or Female ( )
2. How old are you?

Under 20 ( )	20-24 ( )
25-29 ( )	30-34 ( )
35-39 ( )	40-44 ( ) 45 or over ( )

3. What is your nationality?

_____

4. What was your nationality at birth (if different from your present nationality)?

_____

5. What is your native language?

_____

6. If your native language is other than English, what is your level of knowledge in general of English?
        High ( )   Medium ( )   Low ( )
7. What is your major? (Please pick one, which is the closest to your major)
        Business ( )   Social Science ( )
        Engineering ( )   Science ( )
8. How many years have you been in the graduate program at MSU?
        _____year(s)
9. How long have you been in the United States as a student?
        1-2 year(s) ( )   3-4 years ( )
        5-6 years ( )   7 years or more ( )
        All my life ( )
10. Do you have access to a personal computer so that you can use e-mail or internet?
        Yes ( )   No ( )

11. Which one do you prefer to use most to contact with your mentor (professor)?

E-mail ( )   Telephone ( )   Office-hour ( )

12. I have a faculty member who I consider to be a mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

13. If you have a mentor: Male ( )   Female( )

14. I like my mentor in terms of both personal and working relationship.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

15. I have a great admiration to my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

16. I have a great relationship with my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

II.   Power Distance Index.

Which country are you from according to the table provided in the below?
(The country associated with your native language)

Arab countries	Great Britain	Mexico	Taiwan
Argentina	Germany	Netherlands	Thailand
Australia	Greece	Norway	Turkey
Austria	Guatemala	New Zealand	Uruguay
Belgium	Hong Kong	Pakistan	U.S.A.
Brazil	Indonesia	Panama	Venezuela
Canada	India	Peru	West Africa
Chile	Iran	Philippines	Yugoslavia
Columbia	Ireland	Portugal	China
Costa Rica	Israel	South Africa	
Denmark	Italy	Salvador	
East Africa	Jamaica	Singapore	
Equador	Japan	Spain	
Finland	Korea	Sweden	
France	Malaysia	Switzerland	

III. General Questions about your mentor and initiation of interaction.
1. Is your mentor your academic advisor?   Yes ( )   No ( )
2. How long have you considered this person as your mentor?
_____ Months
3. What channels do you use to initiate interactions with your mentor?

Email	Yes ( )	No( )
Phone	Yes ( )	No( )
Office hours	Yes ( )	No( )
In or after class	Yes ( )	No( )

4. How many times have you initiated a **formal** interaction with your mentor during the last month? (activities related only to the work)
_____ times

5. How many times have you initiated an **informal** interaction with your mentor during the last month? (activities related to other than work, e.g., social gathering)
_____ times

6. I feel competent with English speaking and listening skills, especially when I speak with my mentor.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. I am able to stand up in front of crowds and make a good speech.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. I am able to stand up in front of my mentor (professor(s)) and make a good speech.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. I feel anxiousness when I need to talk with my mentor about my work.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. I am willing to talk with my mentor about my personal life.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

IV. Initiation Strategies.
1. I ensure contact with my mentor.

( )	( )	( )	( )	( )
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. I find ways to be visible and accessible to my mentor through a prearranged working relationship.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

3. I find ways to be visible and accessible to my mentor with intentional course enrollment.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

4. I find ways to be visible and accessible to my mentor with frequent exposure.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

5. I attempt to discover personal and professional areas of common interest with my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

6. I seek advice or counsel from my mentor about professional related issues.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

7. I seek advice or counsel from my mentor about personal related issues.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

8. I simply asked my mentor to be my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

9. I serve as a research or teaching assistant to my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

10. I engage in work-related activities to help support my mentor.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

11. I attempt to excel in class or work in order to make a favorable impression on my mentor

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

12. I claim that the relationship naturally evolved over time.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

13. I acquiesce to faculty or program attempts to institute mentoring.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

14. I communicate respect and admiration for my mentor (venerate my mentor).

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

15. I reveal personal information about myself in order to become closer to my mentor.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

16. I always participate meetings with faculty in order to initiate mentoring relationship.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

17. I attend departmental lectures and seminars in order to initiate mentoring relationship.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

18. I always sit in on research group meetings, discussions and reviews in order to impress my potential mentor.

( )　　　　( )　　　　( )　　　　　　( )　　　　　( )
Strongly　　Disagree　　Neither Agree　　Agree　　　Strongly
Disagree　　　　　　　　Nor Disagree　　　　　　　　Agree

V.　　Open-ended Question.

Please list the barriers and difficulties that you experience when trying to initiate interactions with your mentor.

VI.   Likert-type questions about perceived barriers:
1. My mentor is always available when I want to initiate an interaction.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
2. My mentor is difficult to approach when I want to initiate an interaction.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
3. I feel comfortable initiating interactions with my mentor.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
4. Language is a barrier to initiation of interactions with my mentor.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
5. I feel anxious when I want to initiate an interaction with my mentor.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
6. I am uncomfortable when I disagree with my mentor's opinion.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
7. I can avoid the work with my mentor that I don't like if I want to.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
8. I have a good working relationship with my mentor.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
9. My mentor can be trusted.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
10. Because of my cultural background, I believe that I have more
    difficulties than others with different cultural background.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree
11. I don't think that I have proper interpersonal skills.
( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

12. I believe that I can depend on my mentor, especially on issues related to the school-work.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

13. I believe that I should be independent from my mentor, especially on issues related to the school-work.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

14. As far as I am concerned, communication competence is very critical when I want to have and/or initiate a mentoring relationship.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

15. Frequently, in a class environment, I am afraid to express disagreement with my mentor (professor).

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

VII.   Communication Apprehension:
1. I look forward to expressing myself at meetings.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

2. I am afraid to express myself in a group.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

3. I look forward to an opportunity to speak in public.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

4. Although I talk fluently with friends, I am at a loss for words on the platform.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

5. I always avoid speaking in public if possible.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

6. I feel that I am more fluent when talking to people than most other people are.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

7. I like to get involved in group discussion.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

8. I dislike to use my body and voice expressively.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

9. I am afraid to speak up in conversations.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

10. I would enjoy presenting a speech on a local television show.

( )   ( )   ( )   ( )   ( )
Strongly   Disagree   Neither Agree   Agree   Strongly
Disagree   Nor Disagree   Agree

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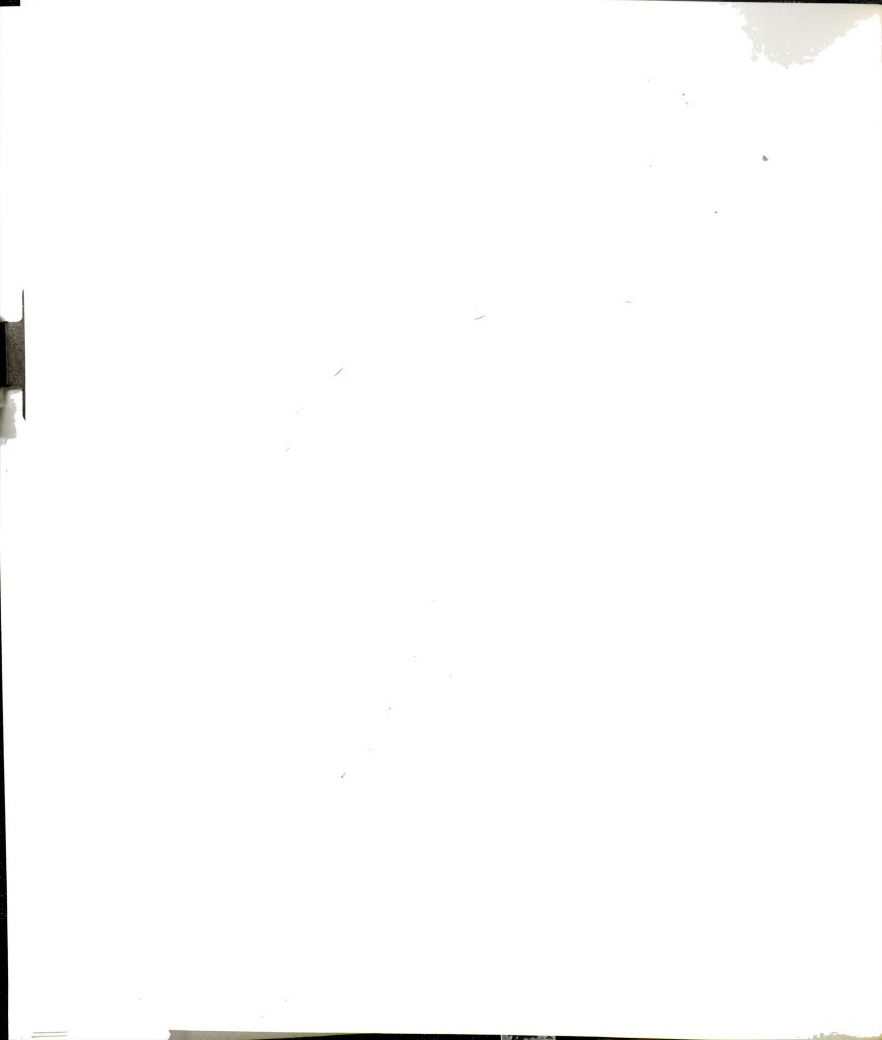
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Table 1

(T-test of proportions of perceived barriers and difficulties from the open-ended questions between high and low PD)

	Low PD	High PD
Time constraints (t = 2.21, p < .05)	20/41 49%	16/59 27%
Language difficulties (t = -6.22, p < .05)	2/41 5%	30/59 52%
Research interests and knowledge (t = -2.41, p < .05)	1/41 2%	9/59 15%
Apprehension, anxiety and nervousness (t = -2.64, p < .05)	1/41 2%	10/59 17%
Appropriate topics	1/41 2%	2/59 3%
Distance (physical)	4/41 9%	0
Cultural differences (t = -4.10, p < .05)	1/41 2%	17/59 29%
Mentor's personality and work habits	8/41 20%	4/59 7%
Structural issues	5/41 12%	2/59 3%

Table 2
(The correlations among variables)

		GRADTIME	MENTLENG	FORMAL	INFORMAL	HLPDI	INIT	BARRIER	COMAPP
GRADTIME	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.772(**)	-.005	.034	-.330(**)	.217(*)	.168	-.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.958	.740	.001	.038	.101	.729
	N	100	96	99	99	100	92	97	99
MENTLENG	Pearson Correlation	.772(**)	1.000	.062	.118	-.259(*)	.197	.176	-.061
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.549	.257	.011	.062	.089	.557
	N	96	96	95	95	96	90	94	96
FORMAL	Pearson Correlation	-.005	.062	1.000	.222(*)	.085	.114	.218(*)	.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.958	.549	.	.027	.403	.280	.032	.377
	N	99	95	99	99	99	92	96	98
INFORMAL	Pearson Correlation	.034	.118	.222(*)	1.000	.267(**)	.194	.315(**)	.253(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	.257	.027	.	.008	.064	.002	.012
	N	99	95	99	99	99	92	96	98
HLPDI	Pearson Correlation	-.330(**)	-.259(*)	.085	-.267(**)	1.000	-.036	-.483(**)	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.011	.403	.008	.	.735	.000	.940
	N	100	96	99	99	100	92	97	99
INIT	Pearson Correlation	.217(*)	.197	.114	.194	-.036	1.000	.274(**)	.110
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.038	.062	.280	.064	.735	.	.009	.298
	N	92	90	92	92	92	92	90	92
BARRIERS	Pearson Correlation	.168	.176	.218(*)	.315(**)	-.483(**)	.274(**)	1.000	.533(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.101	.089	.032	.002	.000	.009	.	.000
	N	97	94	96	96	97	90	97	97
COMAPP	Pearson Correlation	-.035	-.061	.090	.253(*)	-.004	.110	-.533(**)	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.729	.557	.377	.012	.940	.298	.000	.
	N	99	96	98	98	99	92	97	99

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).