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# Obtaining Sponsorship in Organizations by Developing Trust through Outside of Work Socialization

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Obtaining Sponsorship in Organizations by Developing Trust through Outside of  
Work Socialization

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

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in

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Katie Kirkpatrick-Husk  
345 words

### Abstract

Sponsorship, defined as a relationship that produces objective career benefits for the person being sponsored, has recently grown in popularity in the media. This study sought to examine antecedents to sponsorship by testing the hypothesis that socializing outside of work with another individual leads to increased affect-based trust, which in turn positively affects the willingness to sponsor him or her. A dual-experimental design was employed to test this proposal in which the independent variable was manipulated in one experiment, and the mediator was manipulated in the second.

The study included 492 participants from the United States, 35% were female, and the average age was 31.6 ( $SD = 9.72$ ). Participants were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and received \$0.50 for a 10-minute survey. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. In each condition participants read a vignette and answered questions about trust, sponsorship, and mentorship. In Experiment 1 socializing outside of work was manipulated—Condition A included outside of work socialization, whereas Condition B did not. In Experiment 2, affect-based trust was manipulated—Condition A included affect-based trust, whereas Condition B did not.

Results indicated that socializing outside of work positively impacted sponsorship through the mediating mechanism of trust. Specifically, the 'a' path (outside of work socialization to affect-based trust) was significant,  $\beta = .36$ , 95% CI [.15, .56],  $t = 5.87$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the 'b' path (affect-based trust to sponsorship) was significant,  $\beta = .27$ , 95% CI [.05, .49],  $t = 4.35$ ,  $p < .001$ . The Sobel test, which determined the significance of the indirect effect, was significant,  $z = 2.70$ ,  $p = .007$ .



These results suggest that potential sponsees can build trust by socializing outside of work with coworkers. However, if sponsees are not willing/able to socialize with potential sponsors, the findings indicate that they may be less likely to be sponsored. Because, this study uncovered potentially important biases for sponsors to consider when choosing a potential sponsee, alternative ways for trust building are discussed, such as more frequent interpersonal interactions as well as cooperation opportunities within the work context.

## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction and Literature Review

Many great leaders are where they are today due to the help of an advocate. When Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook, became a research assistant she secured a champion in Larry Summers, an economist and President Emeritus of Harvard University. She followed Larry Summers to the United States Treasury Department where she served as his chief of staff—a highly visible role that may have contributed to her extensive career growth (Hewlett, 2013a; Sandberg, 2013). The topic of sponsorship has been growing in popularity—recently, there have been numerous newspaper articles and books written in the popular media about sponsorship (e.g., Elmer, 2013; Hewlett, 2013a; Hewlett 2013b; Nelson, 2013; Schawbel, 2013). A sponsorship relationship is one where the sponsor, usually an individual with power inside an organization, advocates for a sponsee to receive a promotion or challenging assignment (Friday, Friday, & Green, 2004). Sponsorship relationships are different from mentoring relationships in that sponsorship relationships may have more risk, as the sponsor puts his/her own name on the line for their sponsee. Researchers and practitioners have begun to view sponsorship as an important type of interpersonal relationship that creates the opportunity for individuals to advance inside organizations. For example, research by *Catalyst*, an organization that conducts research on leadership, talent management, and gender, found that women in general are promoted less often and to lower levels than men (Foust-Cummings, Dinolfo, & Kohler, 2011; Hewlett, Peraino, Sherbin, & Sumberg, 2010). However, the researchers found that with a sponsor, women are just as likely to be promoted as men (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011; Hewlett et al., 2010). In addition, research shows that men with sponsors ask their managers for stretch

assignments and pay raises at a higher rate than men without sponsors (Hewlett et al., 2010). Despite the recent popularity of the topic, quantitative examination of the motivations behind sponsorship behaviors is limited.

Due to the significant role of sponsorship relationships in achieving career objectives, it is important to consider the factors that facilitate sponsorship behavior. Sponsorship can be a risky endeavor for sponsors, as their reputation is often at stake when they nominate a sponsee for an assignment or position (Hewlett, Marshall, & Sherbin, 2011). Therefore, it is important for trust to be established between the sponsor and sponsee. For example, the sponsor must trust that the sponsee will perform well in their new assignment or position, and the sponsee must trust that their sponsor has his/her best interests in mind (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). In order to build trust, individuals must be familiar with each other, especially in terms of their capabilities and ability to keep confidences (McAllister, 1995). One way sponsors and sponsees can learn about each other on a deep level is to socialize outside of the context of work. For example, if a potential high-powered sponsor socializes with a co-worker after work, they may begin to develop a deep sense of trust with this co-worker. This may eventually lead to a situation where the sponsor nominates this individual for a highly visible assignment because they trust that they will succeed in the position. This type of sponsorship may be more important than mentorship for fostering certain outcomes such as salary and promotions. However, sponsorship has been considered and treated in the research as a subset of mentoring.

This study will contribute to the existing literature by developing a theoretical framework from which to understand the similarities and differences between mentoring and sponsorship and examine factors that are necessary in order

for people to obtain sponsorship. Specifically, the purpose of the current study is three-fold: (a) to review the literature about sponsorship and mentoring to gain a better theoretical understanding of sponsorship, (b) to determine if sponsorship occurs under different conditions, and (c) to examine if outside of work socialization impacts sponsorship through trust.

Researchers have called for expanding the developmental relationship domain that has largely consisted of mentoring to include: (a) other types of developmental relationships (e.g., sponsorship, Friday et al., 2004) and (b) multiple simultaneous developmental relationships (e.g., developmental networks, Higgins & Kram, 2001). Therefore, I will begin by reviewing relevant mentoring literature to lay the theoretical foundation for the phenomenon of sponsorship. Second, I will discuss sponsorship and how it is related to, yet distinct from, the construct of mentoring. Moreover, I will explain how it may be an especially important relationship to predict employee career advancement. Third, I will describe the role of trustworthiness in developing important developmental relationships. Fourth, I will discuss the role of outside of work socialization and its relationship to building trust and sponsorship.

### **What Is Mentoring?**

The description of mentorship dates back to Greek mythology when it was used to describe a friend of Odysseus, who was entrusted to educate Odysseus's son, Telemachus. Mentoring has been viewed as a positive and beneficial relationship for thousands of years, but has only relatively recently been examined empirically (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992). Mentoring is a process by which a senior member of an organization (the mentor) takes a personal interest in a junior member of an organization (the protégé; Chao et al., 1992). The mentor has "experience and power

in the organization and personally advises, counsels, coaches, and promotes the career development of the protégé” (Chao et al., 1992, p. 624). Mentoring research has greatly increased since 1983 when Kathy Kram reported her qualitative research on mentoring. A literature search with the keyword “mentoring” in peer-reviewed journals in PsychInfo revealed mentoring research has at least doubled every five years, as there were three articles published from 1976-1980, 23 from 1981-1985, 48 from 1986-1990, 146 from 1991-1995, 301 from 1996-2000, 671 from 2001-2005, 1,442 from 2006-2010, and already 1,146 from 2010- September, 2013.

Mentoring relationships can be formal or informal. Formal mentoring, as compared to informal mentoring, represents an organization’s attempt to structure mentoring relationships between mentors and protégés. Formal mentoring programs are considered formal to the extent that management intervenes in the mentoring process (e.g., matches protégés and mentors, sets duration of mentorship), whereas informal mentoring relationships occur naturally without intervention. In the next section of this literature review I will briefly describe the resultant benefits of mentoring (for a full review, see Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004; de Tormes Eby, Allen, Hoffman, Baranik, Sauer, Baldwin et al., 2012), then the types of support mentors provide to their protégés.

**Benefits of mentoring.** One of the benefits of mentoring is increased protégé learning. Two types of learning include task/role learning and personal learning (Lankau & Scandura, 2007). It is predicted that learning task-related skills and procedures is not sufficient to being able to actively adapt to new work settings (Lankau & Scandura, 2002). Instead, a worker must also develop personal learning skills. The facets of personal learning skills include recognizing that a worker’s job is connected to other workers and to the broader organization, and also include

factors of interpersonal skills (e.g., effective communication; Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Lankau & Scandura, 2007). Lankau and Scandura (2002) reported that mentors can provide protégés with relational job learning which, in turn, increases learning about the social network that is involved in the protégé's organization. In the same study, they also found that workers who have higher relational job learning have lower intentions to leave the organization. Relational job learning can provide necessary skills, such as communication, that may be beneficial for workers to develop the capacity to adapt to a changing work environment.

Formal mentoring is associated with higher salaries for both men and women (Ramaswami, Dreher, Bretz, & Wiethoff, 2010). Formal mentoring may also provide benefits to protégés such as increasing positive behaviors, positive attitudes, and motivation (Eby, Allen, Evans, Ng, & DuBois, 2008). Mentoring also provides benefits to the leaders in the organization, such as increasing organizational attractiveness to job applicants (Horvath, Wasko, & Bradley, 2008; Spitzmüller et al., 2008), increased organizational commitment, and decreased turnover rates (Payne & Huffman, 2005).

Formal mentorships also relate to a protégé's subjective evaluations of their work environment as well as objective measures of career success. For example, protégés in formal mentorships are more likely to be satisfied with their careers, be more committed to their careers (Payne & Huffman, 2005), believe they will advance in their careers, and tend to receive relatively higher compensation and promotions (Allen et al., 2004). The mentoring behaviors that take place in the context of formal programs have been found to be positively associated with job performance ratings and they help the protégé set performance goals early in the mentorship (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). In addition, formal mentoring programs relate to increased protégé

commitment to their careers and to the organization in which they work (Allen et al.; Payne & Huffman).

Although formal programs can be beneficial, organically-formed mentorships may be more beneficial to protégés than formal mentorships. For example, protégés in informal mentorships reported greater career-related support than protégés in formal mentorships (Chao et al., 1992). Moreover, the protégés reported slightly higher levels of organizational socialization, intrinsic job satisfaction, and salary than formal protégés (Chao et al.). A possible reason for this is because they reported they had similar goals to their mentors, because they naturally chose each other for the mentorship (Chao et al.).

**Mentoring functions/behaviors.** Across both formal and informal mentoring contexts, mentors engage in two traditional types of behavior support with their mentees—psychosocial and career development. Examples of psychosocial (PS) support include providing friendship, acceptance, and role modeling (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Examples of career development (CD) support include coaching, exposure, protection, and challenging work assignments (Kram & Isabella). Recently, however, role modeling (RM) has begun to emerge as a third mentoring function that differs in significant ways from PS support. Scandura (1992) found that RM emerged as a separate construct when she conducted a psychometric analysis of her mentoring function scale. Similarly, a fourth mentoring role—sponsorship—may also be a career development function that mentors provide. Definitions of these functions can be found below in Table 1.

Table 1  
*Mentoring Functions*

Mentoring Functions	Definition	Citation
<b>Career Development Functions</b>		
Sponsorship	Mentor advocates for a protégé's promotion	Kram (1985)
Exposure and Visibility	Mentor facilitates relationships between protégé and powerful members of the organization	Kram (1985)
Coaching	Mentor suggests strategies to facilitate career growth	Kram (1985)
Protection	Mentor protects the protégé by taking responsibility for incomplete or failed work	Kram (1985)
Challenging Assignments	Mentor provides difficult assignments to protégé to help them develop skills	Kram (1985)
<b>Psychosocial Functions</b>		
Acceptance and Confirmation	Mentor respects the protégé and thinks highly of their competence	Kram (1985)
Counseling	Mentor allows protégé to discuss personal concerns that may interfere with work	Kram (1985)
Friendship	Mentor and protégé like each other and frequently have positive interactions	Kram (1985)
Social	Mentor and protégé frequently socialize outside of work	Ragins & McFarlin (1990)
Parent	Mentor is someone who is like a mother or father to the protégé	Ragins & McFarlin (1990)
Role Modeling Function	Mentor is someone who the protégé wants to be	Kram (1985)

***Psychosocial support.*** Psychosocial support is often seen in mentorships that are long in duration and have a high sense of trust (Kram & Isabella, 1985).

Psychosocial support (PS) is often an antecedent to self-disclosure in mentorships (Kram & Isabella). The PS aspects of both formal and informal mentoring are equally beneficial to the protégés but it is seen more often in informal mentorships



(Chao et al., 1992). A possible explanation is that informal mentorships are often longer in duration and PS often increases as the length of mentorship increases (Chao et al.). Psychosocial support functions can provide acceptance and confirmation (Noe, 1988), which may increase the protégé's self-efficacy. Protégés that receive PS from their mentors are more likely to receive more compensation, promotions, and have higher career satisfaction (Allen et al., 2004).

***Career development support.*** Mentors can provide important career development (CD) functions to protégés. Mentors and protégés exchange career-related information that allows protégés to gain knowledge and perspective about the organization (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Career development functions may provide protégés with opportunities for advancement in the organization through exposure to critical networks (Kram & Isabella). Mentors may also provide protection to protégés; if a protégé fails to complete a task, a mentor may protect the protégé by taking responsibility and allowing the protégé a safe and comfortable environment to learn and make mistakes (Kram & Isabella).

Career development functions are beneficial to protégés in a variety of ways. For example, CD behaviors are associated with increased compensation and increased promotions for protégés (Allen et al., 2004). It may also provide the protégé with increased job performance ratings and may help the protégé set performance goals early in the mentorship (Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

***Role modeling support.*** Role modeling (RM) has often been conceptualized as a sub-function of PS support (e.g., Noe, 1988). However, researchers have recently begun to analyze RM as a separate function from PS (e.g., Pellegrini & Scandura, 2005). Role modeling occurs when the mentor is someone who the protégé admires and wishes to emulate (Scandura, 1992). Role modeling provides protégés with

increased job satisfaction (Castro, Scandura, & Williams, 2004), increased skill development, and reduced role ambiguity (Lankau & Scandura, 2002). Moreover, a recent meta-analysis of mentoring functions found RM to be the strongest predictor of protégé outcomes, compared to CD and PS (Dickson, Kirkpatrick-Husk, Kendall, Longabaugh, Patel, & Scielzo, 2013).

In summary, mentors are said to provide development support to protégés which include CD, PS, and RM functions. Similar to RM only just being conceptualized as a separate mentoring function, sponsorship, which is traditionally seen a mentoring function, has recently been examined as an entirely separate construct from mentoring, offering its own set of predictors, functions, and outcomes. The next section describes sponsorship and how it can be conceptually distinguished from mentoring.

### **What is Sponsorship?**

Sponsoring is a process whereby a sponsor advocates for a sponsee's promotion (Friday et al., 2004). Traditionally, sponsorship has been conceptualized as a subset of content domain of mentoring behaviors. In other words, it is one of several behaviors that an effective mentor demonstrates toward his or her protégé (Kram, 1983). However, Friday and colleagues, and others (e.g., Foust-Cummings et al., 2011; Hewlett et al., 2010) have argued sponsorship is a separate construct that is not necessarily provided by a mentor. Thus, I will make the case for two major propositions in this section. First, I will argue that sponsorship and mentoring are theoretically separate constructs, and that it is important to clarify this distinction because these two phenomena have, by default, been conflated in the extant literature (and consequently, are assumed to occur together). However, there is evidence that in reality they may be: (a) related to different outcomes and (b) require

separate antecedents. Second, I will focus on the importance of sponsorship relationships with an examination of sponsorship applied to women's careers.

**Sponsorship and mentoring as separate constructs.** It has been proposed that mentoring and sponsorship are distinct but related constructs (Friday et al., 2004). It is important to distinguish between mentoring and sponsorship because if it is assumed these reflect the same underlying behaviors, important nuances that exist may not be caught to help researchers and practitioners really understand how individuals advance in their careers. Therefore, it is important to begin to test sponsorship as a distinct set of behaviors to come to a more rich understanding of the antecedents and outcomes of this type of relationship. If sponsorship continues to be studied as if it were mentoring and assumed to be synonymous with it, then it will be impossible to determine if it plays a role apart from mentoring.

Sponsorship and mentorship are distinct in some respects. For example, sponsorship is characterized as a higher risk relationship than mentorship because a sponsor puts his/her reputation on the line for a sponsee (Hewlett et al., 2011), which does not necessarily have to be the case in a typical mentorship. In other words, a sponsor may have more to lose than someone serving solely in a mentor role. The case I will build for the conceptual distinction between sponsorship and mentoring rests on the following four arguments: (a) historically there have been some theoretical issues in the way mentoring has been conceptualized, apart from other types of developmental relationships like sponsorship and coaching, (b) mentoring relationships often require different contextual conditions than a sponsorship relationship, (c) mentoring and sponsorship relationships may predict different outcomes, and (d) different groups of people may have similar access to mentors while having dissimilar access to sponsors. I will discuss each of these

points in detail over the next few sections. See Table 2 below for a summary of the distinctions between mentoring and sponsoring relationships.

Table 2

*Summary of Differences between Mentorship and Sponsorship Relationships*

<i>Mentor &amp; Protégé</i>	<i>Sponsor &amp; Sponsee</i>
Mentor	Sponsor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides counseling, friendship, and acceptance &amp; confirmation</li> <li>• Is someone you aspire to be</li> <li>• Provides coaching, advice, feedback, and challenging assignments</li> <li>• Helps you navigate the political org environment and acts as a sounding board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocates for your next promotion</li> <li>• Calls in favors for you</li> <li>• Expands your perception of what you can do</li> <li>• Makes connections to senior leaders</li> <li>• Advises you on executive presence</li> </ul>
Protégé	Sponsee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively listens</li> <li>• Asks for guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be trusted</li> <li>• Contributes 110%</li> <li>• Allows you to help shape the next generation of leaders</li> </ul>

**Theoretical conceptualization of mentoring.** This first section highlights the issues in the theory behind mentoring, including: (a) definitional issues of

mentoring, (b) measurement issues of mentoring, (c) an examination of sponsorship in Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) Mentor Role Instrument, (d) an examination of the relevancy of the original mentoring functions, and (e) an exploration of a single mentor versus a developmental network. First, I will discuss the definitional issues of mentoring.

There are numerous gaps in the conceptualization and definition of mentoring as a construct, including the theory and development of mentoring functions (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2007). For example, Scandura and Pellegrini describe how researchers continue to fail to distinguish mentoring from coaching and sponsorship. This problem is amplified in empirical studies when researchers use many different definitions of mentoring with study participants, which include elements of mentoring and sponsorship. This may lead participants to answer questions in research studies about behaviors other than mentoring (e.g., sponsorship), whereas the findings are written up and discussed within the context of mentoring relationships only. This results in uncertainty as to the discriminant validity among various categories of developmental behaviors, such as sponsorship and mentoring.

A seminal work on mentoring was written by Kathy Kram (1983, 1985), as most all mentoring function scales are based on her work (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008). As described earlier, the research in mentoring has greatly increased since this initial work on mentoring. The most frequently used mentoring scales (e.g., Noe, 1988; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990) have been constructed based on at least one of Kram's publications. Scandura's (1992) Mentoring Function Questionnaire (MFQ), another frequently used mentoring measure, cited these articles in their literature review, but based their question development on the overall mentoring

literature.

Kram (1983) identified mentoring functions from her exploratory, qualitative research of 18 developmental relationships (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2007). Most mentoring measures are based on Kram's (1985) taxonomy of functions that were derived from these developmental relationships in a public utility company (Allen et al., 2008). However, Kram (1985) did not wish to limit her research to mentoring relationships and was in fact studying developmental relationships more broadly (Dougherty & Dreher, 2007). This is noteworthy because typically mentoring relationships are conceptualized as distinct from developmental relationships. For example, a developmental relationship is any relationship that aids an employee in developing skills and navigating through their career. A developmental relationship could include a manager-subordinate relationship or a mentorship. Mentorship can thus be understood as one type of a developmental relationship. Kram (1985) chose not to define mentoring to her participants, or even invoke the word "mentor"; instead, she asked managers to think about people in their lives who had influenced their development. Nevertheless, the majority of scales that are currently being used in the mentoring research to date are based on her original work.

This highlights the definitional issues in mentoring research, as the development of the theory that underlies much the work in current mentoring research was perhaps initially intended to apply to a broader umbrella category that can best be summed up as behaviors that are present in developmental relationships, which include sponsorship. Perhaps the behaviors captured by measures that are currently used in mentoring research were not originally intended to be restricted to mentoring relationships. Therefore, sponsorship may not be an element of mentoring in the first place, and it therefore should be explored

as a set of behaviors that do not necessarily co-occur with mentoring behaviors. For instance, an individual may provide some types of mentoring functions (e.g., feedback, career counseling); but at the same time, be unable/unwilling to advocate on another individual's behalf to top management for the purpose of enhancing his/her likelihood of promotion.

*An examination of sponsorship in the Mentor Role Instrument.* Most mentoring measures aggregate the individual mentoring functions into PS (e.g., friendship, acceptance, confirmation) and CD (coaching, feedback) functions for analysis. One exception is Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) Mentor Role Instrument (MRI) that analyzes the individual mentoring functions separately which allows researchers to assess if sponsorship is correlated to variables in a different pattern from the other mentoring functions. However, in searching for studies that utilized this measure, most studies that have used the MRI have combined sponsorship items with items measuring the other career development behaviors into one scale. There were, however, two studies in which the researchers separated the sponsorship facet from the others (e.g., Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). In the first study, sponsorship was most strongly related to the facets of exposure and protection (Ragins & McFarlin), two other functions that some argue sponsors provide (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). Sponsorship demonstrated weaker relationships with other development behaviors (e.g., feedback, coaching, acceptance; Ragins & McFarlin). In the second study, sponsorship was similarly related to exposure and protection and less strongly associated with the other types of development behaviors (Ragins & Cotton).

Thus, although limited, the evidence suggests that different mentoring functions are not all consistently provided by a mentor and may be differentially

related to other constructs (Kram, 1985; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Scandura & Pellegrini, 2007). Some of these functions (e.g., sponsorship, exposure) may be more consistently provided by a sponsor. For example, as Friday and colleagues (2004) suggest, Kram's original research was largely based on supervisory mentoring and it may be the case sponsorship and exposure are more likely to co-occur with other CD functions like coaching and challenging assignments when the mentor is also the protégé's supervisor. However, it is difficult to know whether this is really the case or whether the association of sponsorship with mentoring is a sheer artifact of measurement, due solely to the fact that mentoring functions are nearly always aggregated across scales.

*Original mentoring functions and their relevancy to the current workplace.*

Due to the rapidly changing work environment, Allen and colleagues (2008) speculate that perhaps the developmental behaviors (i.e., mentoring functions) that were originally identified almost 30 years ago, in the early 1980s, do not look quite the same as the ones that are currently observed. Recently careers have become more boundaryless (Arthur, 1994; Eby, Butts, & Lockwood, 2003), with individuals experiencing more unexpected job loss and are increasingly likely to make horizontal, lateral transitions (e.g., departmental, organizational, occupational) as opposed to traditional hierarchical moves (Eby & Dematteo, 2000; Thijssen, Van der Heijden, & Rocco, 2008). Therefore, it has become essential for individuals to continually develop the skills and capabilities that are sought after by organizations, so they can remain employable in a volatile job market. The targeted visible assignments and strategic advice for particular positions that sponsors can provide (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011) may be more crucial for success in the current business environment than it was a few decades ago. Finally, it may also be helpful



for employees to have multiple sponsors in order to help them to attain a job outside of their organization if necessary.

*A single mentor versus a developmental network.* In a similar vein, other avenues of research have examined if it is indeed realistic to expect a single mentor to provide all of the developmental functions necessary for protégés to navigate the current world of work. Recently, researchers have begun to argue for framing mentoring in terms of networks rather than the traditional idea of a single mentor, who fulfills most of the protégé's developmental needs. In this model, networks are composed of many individuals, who each contribute uniquely to the support and development of the protégé. (Dougherty, Cheung, and Florea, 2008; Sarason, Sarason, Shearin, & Pierce, 1987). Developmental networks can be composed of individuals, internal and external to the protégé's organization, who take an active interest in his/her career and provide different types and quantities of support (Higgins, Dobrow, & Roloff, 2010). This is also consistent with Kram's (1985) theory of relationship constellations, in which any given mentor in the network may provide a single avenue of support (Friday et al., 2004). However, these mentors' contributions come together, thereby supporting the protégé in ways that would not be possible with a single mentor. Just as a mentoring relationship is an example of one type of developmental relationship in a person's network, it could be that a sponsorship relationship serves a slightly different developmental function.

*Mentoring and sponsoring may have distinct antecedents.* Another piece of evidence supporting the idea of the distinction between sponsorship and mentorship is that, theoretically, they may have different antecedents. Specifically, sponsorship relationships may be most likely to occur when there is a high level of trust because of the potential risk to the sponsor's reputation if they advocate for a sponsee who

does not perform up to expectations. For instance, sponsors may risk their reputations and be leveraging their own power when advocating for their sponsees to receive positions or assignments (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011; Hewlett et al., 2010). Consequently, if the sponsee does not perform up to standards, it can often reflect poorly on the sponsor. Conversely, if the sponsee performs in accordance with expectations, the sponsor will likely appear favorable in the eyes of powerful people inside the organization (Hewlett, 2013b). In this way, sponsorship is seen as a transaction (Hewlett, 2013b) in which the sponsee performs well and garners respect in the eyes of the sponsor; and in turn, the sponsor rewards the sponsee with nominations.

In contrast, although mentoring relationships likely require a baseline level of trust to be successful, a mentor's behaviors toward a protégé are generally not quite as risky as the hallmark sponsorship functions. For example, there may be little risk in a mentor coaching, advising, or teaching his/her protégé about the organization, especially compared to sponsorship where one is advocating on another's behalf. In a similar vein, mentoring can occur either informally, out of mutual interest or respect, or it may occur formally, in situations where the organization has some sort of input into the structure and functioning of the mentorship. Conversely, sponsorship typically involves a much more organic process, perhaps due to the amount of trust that needs to occur before undertaking a mutually beneficial, yet risky partnership. Therefore, although mentorships can flourish in both formal and informal contexts, it appears most probable that sponsorship is a spontaneous process that is not structured or facilitated with help from the organization, as mentorships often are. One exception may be in

organizations where managers are rewarded for their subordinate's career success, which could be a "formal" influence on sponsoring others.

It is noteworthy that researchers have found mixed support on the benefits of formal, structured mentorships. Specifically, some researchers have found that informal mentorships facilitate more career development behaviors than formal relationships do (Chao et al., 1992; Ragins & Cotton, 1999). In one study, protégés were less likely to report receiving career development from their mentors than protégés in informal mentorships (Bouquillion, Sosik, & Lee, 2005). Although this difference did not exceed chance levels, it may be suggestive of the challenges associated with providing sponsorship in the context of a more structured mentoring program in which dyad members may be less familiar with one another. This could be because formal mentoring relationships are typically constrained by a set duration (e.g., six to twelve months), which may not be ideal for fostering deep trust. Moreover, Friday and colleagues (2004) argue that sponsorship should be considered distinct from other career support behaviors, such as advising and feedback because protégés often report receiving less sponsorship even as they are receiving ample amounts of other types of career support. In summary, the available evidence suggests that sponsorship is a phenomenon that deserves to be conceptualized and captured as a distinct career development behavior if researchers and practitioners are to make progress in understanding how sponsorship is truly playing out at the ground-level in organizations. Sponsorship may also lead to different outcomes than mentoring relationships.

*Mentoring and sponsoring predict distinct outcomes.* A third line of reasoning for why mentoring and sponsorship should be treated as distinct phenomena centers on the types of outcomes that they theoretically should predict. Whereas

researchers and practitioners have typically conceptualized mentoring as having the broader goal of personal development with social and emotional components, sponsorship has a relatively narrow focus on advancement of the sponsee as the primary objective (Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010). Consequently, this translates to precise, actionable advice on the part of the sponsor that is targeted for the specific role/position for which the sponsee is being recommended (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011).

Researchers conducting studies assessing the outcomes of mentorships vary in terms of how they capture the essence of mentor developmental behaviors towards their protégés, and this creates significant challenges for drawing inferences from these studies that will accurately inform practitioners as to how to foster successful developmental relationships in organizations. For example, in one study before filling out the survey about their mentors, protégés were asked to identify someone “in a position of power in your organization who looks out for you or gives you advice or brings your accomplishments to the attention of other people who have power in the organization” (Aryee & Chay, 1994, p. 243). In another study, participants were asked to think of “someone who serves as a sponsor or mentor; someone who looks out for you, or gives you advice” (Koberg, Boss, & Goodman, 1998, p. 63). In both cases, sponsorship and mentorship were conflated. In other studies, participants are asked to report about a mentor who has helped them to understand a challenging subject (Giblin & Lakey, 2010), or who has provided support and feedback about development (Day & Allen, 2004). These definitions omit sponsorship and instead focus on the coaching and feedback dimensions of support. If, across a wide range of mentoring studies, protégés use varying frames of reference when responding to questions assessing the particulars

of the inner workings of their developmental relationships, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about exactly which aspects of those relationships are contributing to desirable outcomes. For example, if researchers wished to isolate the effects of sponsorship (apart from other developmental support) on the likelihood of promotion, this information cannot often be extrapolated from the way that current studies are being conducted. In this study, I am aiming to address this gap by carefully and intentionally isolating sponsorship from the other types of developmental support in order to ascertain its discriminate validity from those dimensions. This represents a first step toward adding to our understanding of the unique antecedents and consequences of sponsorship.

Of the two studies mentioned previously that isolated specific mentoring functions, including sponsorship, Ragins and Cotton (1999) analyzed outcomes. They found that sponsorship and exposure were the only mentor behaviors that predicted compensation, whereas all career development support behaviors predicted satisfaction with the mentor (Ragins & Cotton). This corroborates Ibarra's (1993a) assertion that sponsors provide instrumental benefits whereas mentors can potentially provide both instrumental and expressive benefits. Hewlett (2013b) takes this a step further, arguing that receiving career support in the form of sponsorship is crucial to gaining opportunities for promotion into leadership positions. Hewlett (2013b) describes how employees will seek out and ask for more promotions, pay raises, and high-profile assignments when they have sponsors, and they are more likely to obtain them. Hewlett also found that having a sponsor predicted satisfaction of promotion rate and working mothers' likelihood of remaining in the workforce. Therefore, it is possible that sponsorship is a better

predictor of career progression outcomes, specifically than career support that is manifested in forms other than sponsorship.

*Access to mentors versus sponsors.* In addition to sponsorship and mentorship possibly having distinct antecedents and consequences, there is evidence that groups of people have differing levels of access to sponsors versus mentors (Ibarra, 1993a). If this is indeed the case, then it represents another piece of evidence that mentoring and sponsorship represent separate constellations of behaviors. For example, Ibarra argues that women have a more difficult time obtaining powerful, strategic developmental relationships in organizations and are often outsiders to powerful inner circles. Additionally, Ragins and Cotton (1991) have argued that cross-gender developmental relationships result in more social barriers and consequently are rarer than same-gender relationships. Moreover, sponsors are often high up in organizations and have power (e.g., the power to influence leaders into considering the sponsee for advancement; Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). Finally, men hold the majority of powerful positions inside organizations (84% of corporate officers and 85% members of board of directors were male in the U.S. in 2006; Catalyst, 2007a; Catalyst, 2007b). Therefore, if it is easier to obtain mentorships with members of the same sex as Ragins and Cotton asserted, and men hold a disproportionate number of powerful positions in organizations, it is reasonable to conclude that junior men are experiencing developmental interactions with more powerful individuals who can serve as their sponsors than junior women are. Junior women who wish to advance their careers by forging cross-gender developmental relationships face a unique set of complications (Ragins & Cotton).

One barrier to cross-gender mentorships is the perception of a romantic relationship that is created when two employees of the opposite sex spend time

together inside and outside of work (Ragins & Cotton, 1991). This can deter both men and women from informal mentorships, as they try to avoid their potential mentorship being misconstrued as a sexual or romantic relationship (Ragins, Townsend, Mattis, 1998). In addition, socializing outside of work can in fact increase the probability of romantic associations. A recent blog post by Sylvia Ann Hewlett, based on her qualitative research, outlines a story of a woman VP whose boss regularly socialized with the other VPs (all males) outside of work, but she was rarely invited (Hewlett, 2013c). Although she began to understand the reasons why she was not invited (after enduring feelings of awkwardness while hanging out poolside with all men at an earlier social event), she felt her exclusion sent a clear signal to the other VPs that she was not a part of the inner circle (Hewlett).

Another barrier to cross-gender mentorships is a lack of accessibility that women have to potential male mentors. For example, Ragins and Cotton (1991) suggest women do not have access to some informal settings that potential male mentors regularly attend like men's clubs and certain sporting functions. A final barrier to cross-gender developmental interactions is that people who hold higher-ranked positions in organizations are more likely to be engaged in informal mentorships than those who are in junior positions (Hunt & Michael, 1983). Thus, if men generally hold a large number of high-ranking positions, it will be junior men, rather than women, who will have the best access to powerful mentors.

Unlike sponsorship, one does not need to hold power in the organization to provide others with traditionally-classified mentoring function, such as friendship, support, coaching, and counseling. Some research suggests there are no gender differences in obtaining mentors (Dreher & Ash, 1990; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990), but there are gender differences in access to sponsors (Ibarra, 1993a), which lends

support to the notion sponsorship and mentoring are different constructs and should be treated as such. In summary, the evidence suggests that men and women have differential access to powerful people in the organization who could serve as sponsors, and this is seen as a critical prerequisite for women to be able to advance into higher ranking positions (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011).

Sponsorship is an especially important topic because some groups are less likely to receive it, including women, minorities, and sub-groups within a given profession, such as male nurses. The sponsorship issues faced by women serves as an example of the issues at play.

*The critical role of sponsorship: An example from women's careers.*

Possessing a large amount of social capital in the form of rich developmental networks is argued to be essential for women to advance within organizations (Hunt, Laroche, Blake-Beard, Chin, Arroyave, & Scully, 2009; Ibarra, Kilduff, & Tsai, 2005; O'Neil, Hopkins, & Bilimoria, 2008), and at the same time women are cited as having less powerful networks in organizations than men (Hunt et al., 2009; Ibarra, 1993a). One explanation is that men hold the majority of powerful positions inside organizations (Schmitt, Spoor, Danaher, & Branscombe, 2005), and social networks regulate inclusion of members and often accept members with similar social characteristics (Ibarra et al., 2005). This results in organizational networks being segregated, and "leaves women out of important connections and conversations" (O'Neil et al., 2008, p. 733). In addition, same-gender friendships often produce more benefits for the members in the friendship (Ibarra, 1993a). Therefore, if women are more likely to form friendships with other women in organizations, they may be limiting the power and strength of their network. In sum, one of the networking barriers for women is that there are often a small amount of women



present in the upper reaches of organizations (Ibarra et al., 1993; Hunt et al., 2009) and these powerful networks can be intentionally or unintentionally exclusive, accepting only similar others.

Ninety-one percent of female executives reported that they currently or previously had a mentor (Ragins et al., 1998). These female executives also reported that at least one senior male played a critical role in the advancement in their careers (Ragins et al.). However, if women are able to add high-profile males to their developmental network, they may be more likely to be sponsored and promoted. Eventually this could result in more women role models who hold high-profile positions in organizations, who can then serve as mentors and sponsors to junior women. In fact, women report feeling obligated to mentor other women, in organizations once they advance (Ragins et al.). In summary, sponsorship is essential for advancement and due to certain social barriers, women may have differential access to sponsorship than men. This may limit their opportunities for advancement, creating special challenges for women who wish to occupy places of leadership in organizations.

Identifying the underlying mechanisms of sponsorship will be important not only to women, but also to minority groups that face challenges that having powerful sponsors can potentially solve, as well as men who lack sponsorship in organizations. As mentioned previously, a sponsor's level of trust in a potential sponsee may be a critical deciding factor that determines how far the sponsor will go in advocating for that person. In the next sections of this paper, I will address how the trust-building process paves the way for increased sponsorship behaviors.

### **Searching for Sponsorship: The Role of Trust**

A lack of exposure to powerful people and networks inside organizations may

be preventing women from developing trust with these individuals, which is a prerequisite for a sponsor to engage in the risky behavior of advocating for a sponsee (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011; Hewlett et al., 2011). In this section, I will propose that because of the very nature of the trust-building process within a particular dyad, it requires the investment of time spent with one another across various contexts.

Trust is a concept that thinkers from different fields including social science, economics, and moral philosophy, have theorized to be foundationally important to relationships (Barber, 1983). In fact, it has been stated that trust is an essential facet of social life (Luhmann, 1979). This is because without it, one would not be able to exercise caution in a situation that was untrustworthy (Luhmann). With trust, people are able to choose to bestow trust to others and decide what situations are trustworthy, which is necessary to be able to navigate the complex world (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Luhmann). This section will describe the construct of trust in detail, including: (a) how trust is built through expectations between individuals, (b) how trust is built through voluntary actions, (c) the two elements of trust—*affect- and cognition-based trust*, and (d) how trust leads to sponsorship.

**Expectations between individuals determine trust.** Trust is comprised of expectations in social relationships (Barber, 1983). Specifically, trust is built if expectations are met, whereas mistrust results if expectations are not met. Expectations are defined as “meanings actors attribute to themselves and others as they make choices about which actions and reactions are rationally effective and emotionally and morally appropriate” (Barber, 1983, p. 9). According to social exchange theory, these expectations are set up in a relationship where both parties are expected to contribute to the good of the relationship (Blau, 1964). Trust is then

developed over time as a result of multiple experiences of met expectations (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). At a very high level, trust is essentially believing that these expectations will be met (Barber) and that people will act in a manner that is consistent with their personality, or at least the personality they present to others (Luhmann, 1979). However, sometimes trust is not just solely about expectations—it is also about the incentive to be trustworthy (Hardin, 2001). Many people in interpersonal relationships are incentivized to display trust due to the future value of maintaining that relationship (Hardin, 2001).

**Voluntary actions build trust.** One important element to building interpersonal trust is that the positive actions an individual displays are believed to be voluntary (Hardin, 2001). For example, it may be insufficient for an individual to build trust with his/her manager by simply completing daily job duties. This is because subordinates are already expected by their managers to complete these normal duties as a part of their jobs, and instead must display extra-role activities or go above and beyond (Luhmann, 1979). It is quite possible that sponsees build trust through performing extra-role activities both in and outside the work setting. For example, qualitative research reports indicate that sponsees should be self-directed and assume responsibility (Hewlett et al., 2011) as well as be trusted that personal feelings shared with them will be kept confidential (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). McAllister's (1995) conceptualization of trust aligns with these reports of trust in sponsorship relationships, which contains two elements of trust—cognition- and affective-based trust. McAllister (1995) describes cognition-based trust as including elements of dependability and reliability, and affect-based trust as including emotional bonds in relationships.

**Cognition- and affect-based trust.** The theory for McAllister's (1995) dichotomy of trust was based on previous research by Rempel and colleagues (1985) and Johnson-George and Swap (1982). Johnson-George and Swap (1982) found similar dimensions of trust, which they labeled reliableness and emotional trust. Rempel and colleagues (1985) found three major dimensions of trust similar to McAllister (1985), which they called dependability, reliability, and faith. Reliableness (Johnson-George & Swap; Rempel et al.) and dependability (Rempel et al.) informed McAllister's (1985) definition of cognition-based trust and for the purposes of this paper will be referred to as cognition-based trust from this point forward. Similarly, emotional trust (Johnson-George & Swap) and faith (Rempel et al.) informed McAllister's (1995) definition of affect-based trust and will be referred to as affect-based trust from this point forward.

As mentioned previously, trust allows for one to discern relationships with others as trustworthy or not (Lewis & Weigert, 1985). This is often based on cognitions—people trust others based on some sort of evidence or reasoning (Lewis & Weigert; McAllister, 1995). For example, trust may be instilled in someone who often completes high-quality work on time or is never late. This first type of trust represents cognition-based trust and includes elements such as responsibility, dependability, competence, and reliability (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; McAllister, 1995; Rempel et al., 1985).

The second dimension of trust is affect-based trust (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982; McAllister, 1995; Rempel et al., 1985). Affect-based trust is formed based on an emotional bond between two individuals (Lewis & Weigert, 1985) where they genuinely care about the well-being of each other (Rempel et al.). For example, one aspect of affect-based trust is an individual keeping confidences that are shared with

them (Johnson-George & Swap). Individuals with high affect-based trust believe that others are looking out for their best interests.

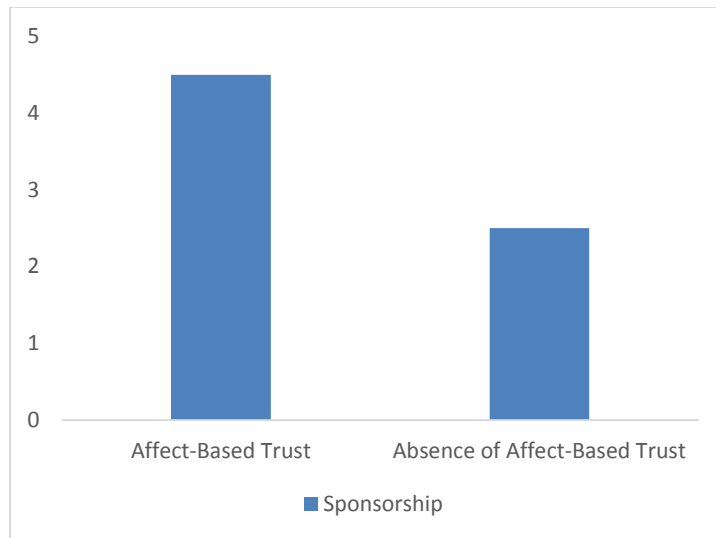
**Affect- and cognition-based trust in sponsorship.** Trust is present in relationships where there is potential for situations to arise where one or both parties could betray trust (Luhmann, 1979). In other words, in a relationship, there first has to be a reason that trust is necessary (Luhmann), and people in the relationship are essentially putting themselves at risk (Rempel et al., 1985). In sponsorship relationships, trust is inherently necessary due to the risky nature of advocating on someone's behalf, who in the end, may not perform up to expectations (Hewlett et al., 2011). Trust can also help determine how much risk someone is willing to take on an individual (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007). Thus, both cognition-based trust and affect-based trust may need to be present for the most effective sponsorship relationships. For example, Foust-Cummings and colleagues (2011) reported their participants (both sponsors and sponsees) cited trust being necessary in terms of sharing confidential information, which is an aspect of affect-based trust (Johnson-George & Swap, 1982). This is because sponsees have to remain vulnerable and disclose information about their weaknesses, and sponsors must keep the sponsee's interest at the forefront, searching for opportunities for them to build up their areas of weakness (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). Affect-based trust is also related to affiliative citizenship behavior, which includes behaviors such as taking a personal interest in an individual, completing favors for that individual, and being willing to help them even if there is a personal cost (McAllister et al., 1995). These are similar to the actions that are often taken in sponsorship relationships. Previous research has also indicated the amount of affect-based trust a mentor has in a protégé leads to higher quality developmental

interactions in the dyad (Wang, Tomlinson, & Noe, 2010).

Cognition-based trust in someone is developed when s/he is seen as dependable and reliable, which is important in establishing a sponsorship relationship, due to the risk the sponsor takes when putting his/her name on the line for a sponsee. Sponsors have to believe that sponsees will try their hardest to be successful in the positions for which they recommend them, whereas sponsees have to believe that the sponsor recommended them for a position based on their career-goals and not primarily for reasons of self-interest (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011).

In sum, trust is the element that allows people to take these risks in relationships (McAllister, 1995). Trust is built in sponsorship relationships when the sponsee is successful at proving his/her ability to take on responsibilities. This cognition-based trust is viewed as a foundation for sponsorship—it is almost obvious that the sponsee must be dependable if a sponsor is going to risk his/her own reputation for him or her. Therefore, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a greater willingness to sponsor an individual under affect-based trust compared to the absence of affect-based trust. See Figure 1 below for a graphical representation of the expected results.



*Figure 1.* Pattern of means expected for Hypothesis 1.

I will explore one potential factor that positively impacts affect-based trust and that is the extent to which the sponsor and sponsee spend time together outside of the workplace. In doing so, I hope to shed light on how the affect-based trust-building process transpires through informal social interaction and how this may differentially play out for junior men versus junior women who desire to be sponsored.

### **Developing Trust: Outside of Work Socialization**

An element that has been theorized to lead to affect-based trust is a relationship that is personally chosen versus role-prescribed (McAllister, 1995). In addition, affect-based trust is likely to develop in relationships that involve frequent interaction (McAllister, 1995). Socializing outside of work may occur in relationships where the members interact frequently and personally choose to socialize with each other. Given that trust is more likely to be fostered when actions are seen as voluntary and originate completely from the individual (Luhmann, 1979), wanting to spend discretionary time with a potential sponsor outside of the workplace may help build trust because these actions are outside the normal day-to-

day work activities. For example, Six and Sorge (2008) found that when organizations sponsor social gatherings, trust is increased between individuals. Socializing outside of daily work tasks may allow individuals to build deeper bonds and trust that they may not have an opportunity to cultivate otherwise. This section will describe: (a) how outside of work socialization increases affect-based trust and (b) potential gender differences in socializing outside of work.

Trust commonly develops in two stages. First, cognition-based trust is established when a person demonstrates reliability and dependability (Wang et al., 2010). Then, some relationships progress further and develop affect-based trust based on strong emotional bonds (Wang et al., 2010). In general, the frequency of interpersonal exchanges facilitates the building of relationships (Wu, Hsu, & Yeh, 2007) and affect-based trust in particular (McAllister, 1995). This happens especially in intimate interactions (Wu et al., 2007). Socializing outside of work provides one avenue for individuals to interact frequently in a more intimate setting than work.

Developing friendships with people at work has been shown to be related to both individual and organizational outcomes. For example, friendships at work have been shown to reduce stress and increase benefits for the individuals that develop friendships (Berman, West, & Richter, 2002). In addition, perceived friendship opportunities at work are related to organizational commitment and lower turnover (Riordan & Griffeth, 1995). Therefore, it appears developing friendships or socializing with others from the workplace is an important aspect of work for the individual. This paper aims to examine if socializing outside of work will lead to higher levels of affect-based trust and sponsorship. .

Hypothesis 2: Outside of work socialization will cause an increase in affect-



based trust which, in turn, will positively impact sponsorship. See Figure 2 below for a model representation.

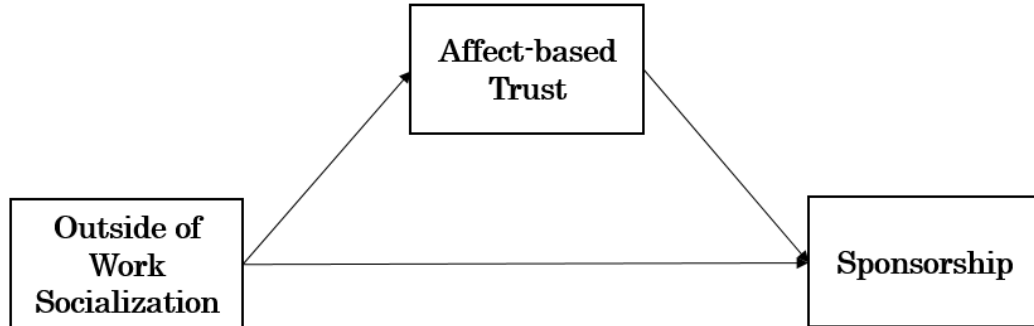


Figure 2. Graphical depiction for Hypothesis 2- mediation model.

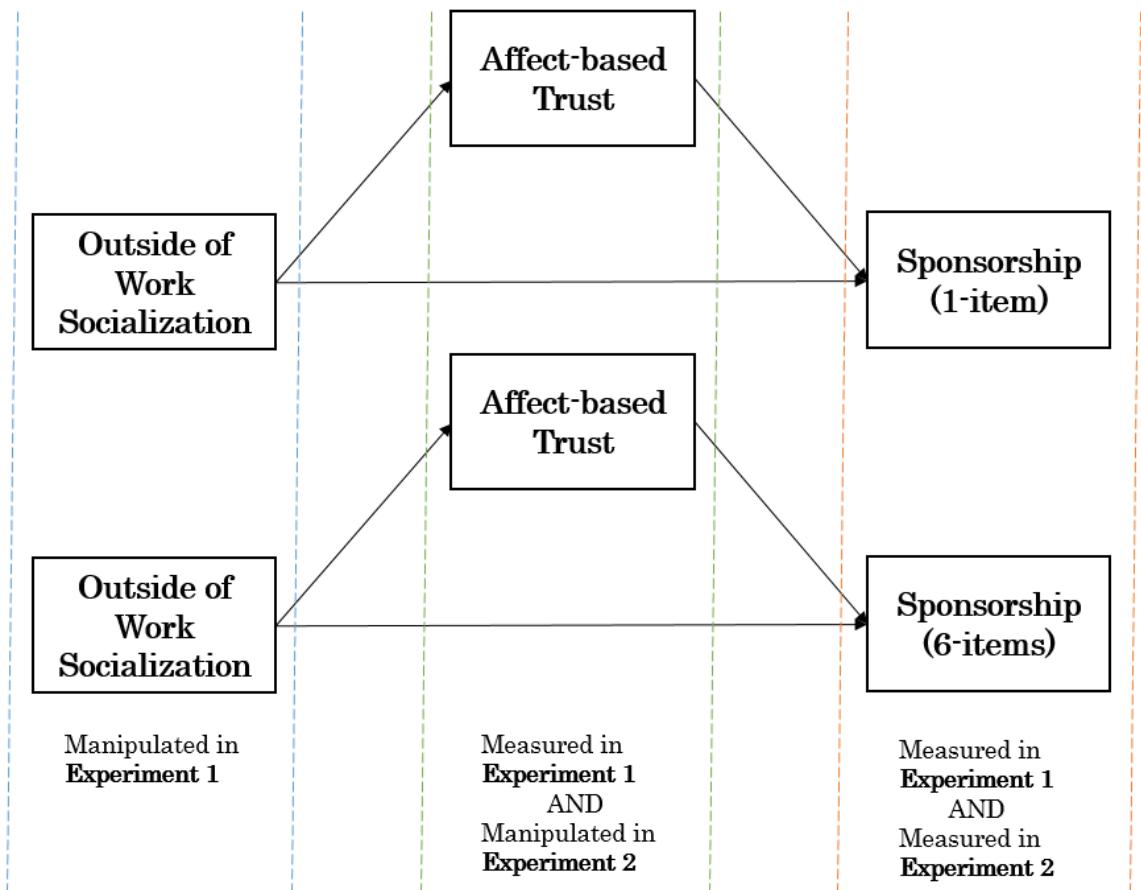


Figure 3. Representation of constructs in two mediation models, and their respective experiments

## CHAPTER 2 Method

### General Method: Participants and Sampling

Five hundred six participants were recruited for this study. Inclusion criteria were that individuals had to be at least 18 years of age and to reside in the United States. Participants were recruited through a posting on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MT) web platform. MT is an open, online marketplace where various work tasks are offered to individuals who may choose to complete them for a small amount of money (i.e., \$.05 -\$.10 for five to ten minute tasks; Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011). Most MT users work full-time in an occupation outside of MT (Mason & Suri, 2011), and report using MT for enjoyment (Buhrmester et al). In the current investigation, after providing informed consent, participants completed a 10 minute survey in exchange for \$0.50 compensation.

Of the 506 participants, 10 cases had duplicate IP addresses; so each case was removed from the final sample. One participant left the informed consent blank, and three indicated they were not from the United States. Therefore, the final sample size was 492. This exceeds the sample size recommendations for a mediation analysis of 196 from Fritz and MacKinnon (2007). Of the 492 participants, approximately 35% were female and the average age was 31.6 ( $SD = 9.72$ ).

### Design

Stone-Romero and Rosopa (2011) explain that the best way to strengthen the causal inferences resulting from a test of mediation is to conduct two experiments. In the first, the IV is manipulated; and its effect on the mediator is observed. Next, in the second study the mediator is manipulated and its impact on the DV is observed. Therefore, in the current investigation; two studies were employed, each

with two experimental conditions.

In the first experiment, outside of work socialization was manipulated through a vignette read by the participants (see Appendix A). The two conditions were: (a) a potential sponsee who socializes outside of work and (b) a potential sponsee who does not socialize outside of work. In the second experiment, affect-based trust was manipulated in a vignette that was presented to participants. The two conditions were: (a) a potential sponsee who displays both cognition-based trust and affect-based trust, and (b) a potential sponsee who displays cognition-based trust but does not display affect-based trust.

### **Procedure**

Between the two experiments there were four conditions: two for the manipulation of the IV (outside of work socialization) and two for the manipulation of the mediator (affect-based trust). First, participants were randomly assigned to one of these four conditions via a special function in the survey platform Qualtrics®. Then, they read a scenario portrayed in a vignette (described below) that pertained to the specific condition to which they were assigned and answered a series of questions.

Participants were asked to imagine the story was happening to them and to answer the questions as to how they would behave in the situation. The gender-neutral name of the sponsee was uniform across all experiments and conditions. I employed the name “Pat”, as previous research has identified this to be one of the most gender neutral names (Van Fleet & Atwater, 1997). The constructs and their designations as “manipulated” versus “measured” are provided below in Table 3.

Table 3  
*Experiment Manipulations and Measures*

	Experiment 1 Manipulations	Measures	Experiment 2 Manipulations	Measures
Condition A	Outside of Work Socialization	Trust Sponsorship Mentoring	Affect-Based Trust	Sponsorship Mentoring
Condition B	Absence of Outside of Work Socialization	Trust Sponsorship Mentoring	Absence of Affect-Based Trust	Sponsorship Mentoring

### Experiment 1

In the first experiment, the vignettes for both conditions described an individual named Pat with whom the participant socializes at work, and this was held constant across conditions. In the description, Pat and the participant also saw each other outside of work (e.g., grabbing lunch or coffee outside of work), in Condition A only. In Experiment 1, there were 124 participants in Condition A and 117 participants in Condition B.

#### Measures.

**Trust.** McAllister's (1995) 11-item measure was utilized to measure affect-based trust and cognition-based trust. A sample item used to assess affect-based trust was, "I can talk freely to this individual about difficulties I am having at work and know that (s)he will want to listen." A sample item used to assess cognition-based trust was, "This person approaches his/her job with professionalism and dedication." Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the items on a scale of 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

This measure was developed using a sample of 194 managers and professionals who reported on dyadic work relationships (McAllister, 1995). This

was done after an initial exploratory factor analysis McAllister completed on MBA and undergraduate students to determine the 11 strongest-loading items.

Cronbach's alphas for McAllister's confirmatory test of the trust measure were .91 for cognition-based trust and .89 for affect-based trust. McAllister determined there was good fit for the two-factor model of affect-based and cognition-based trust after conducting a confirmatory factor analysis. The reliability for this scale as measured by Cronbach's alpha in this study was .86 for affect-based trust and .76 for cognition-based trust.

*Sponsorship.* Because there are currently no measures specifically designed to measure sponsorship as a separate function from mentoring, two measures were employed to capture the likelihood of the participant sponsoring the fictitious individual. In the first one, participants were provided a current definition of sponsorship that is stated below, and then asked to indicate the probability that they would sponsor the fictitious individual in the scenario. For the second measure, items were pulled from a current mentoring measure that had been previously developed to assess sponsorship and exposure. For the first measure, participants were presented with a definition of sponsorship that read:

“A sponsor is someone who takes a personal interest in someone and supports his/her advancement inside an organization. This may be done through advocating on the person's behalf, or by fighting for them to be promoted. This may also be done through recommending and advocating for this person to receive a highly visible assignment given by other leaders.”

They were then asked how likely they were to sponsor the individual in the vignette on a sliding scale from 0 (*very unlikely*) to 100 (*very likely*). In addition, six

questions were taken from the sponsorship and exposure sections of Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) Mentor Role Instrument (MRI). Participants were asked how likely they would be to do the following for the individual in the vignette, and a scale from 1 (*very unlikely*) to 7 (*very likely*) was used. A sample item read, "How likely would you be to use your influence in the organization for Pat's benefit?"

In its development process, the MRI was field tested with 181 protégés who were employees of three research and development firms in Southeastern United States (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). The observed reliability estimates of the subscales of sponsorship and exposure were  $\alpha = .81$  and  $.80$ , respectively. The MRI has also been validated in contexts outside of research and development organizations. For example, psychometric properties were assessed in the academic medical setting and the 11 sub-dimensions were established through confirmatory factor analysis (Dilmore, Rubio, Cohen, Seltzer, Switzer, Bryce et al., 2011). In addition, concurrent validity has been evidenced in previous research by strong correlations between the MRI and both mentoring satisfaction and mentoring effectiveness (Dilmore et al., 2011), Cronbach's alpha obtained in this experiment was  $.95$ .

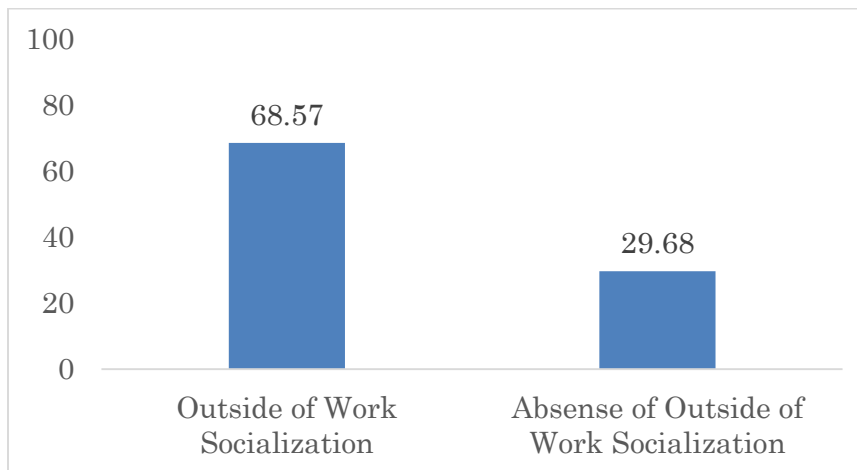
***Mentoring.*** The likelihood of the participant providing mentoring functions to the fictitious individual in the vignette was assessed using the nine-item Mentoring Function Questionnaire (MFQ-9; Castro, Scandura, & Ragins, 2004). Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each question on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), and a sample item read, "It would be my goal for Pat to model their behavior after me".

Because Castro and colleagues (2004) did not find adequate model fit (CFI =  $.90$ ) for the MFQ-15, they reduced the number of items to 9. Then they re-assessed

the validity of the newly formed MFQ-9, which obtained adequate model fit (CFI = .95). This new measure attained adequate reliability ( $\alpha = .91$ ; Castro et al., 2004), and I obtained this same estimate in Experiment 1.

***Outside of Work Socialization Manipulation Check.*** The question “To what extent do you socialize with Pat outside of work?” was used as a manipulation check. This question was answered on a sliding scale from 0 (*none at all*) to 100 (*a very great extent*).

A *t* test was conducted, and results indicated participants in the outside of work socialization condition responded that they had indeed felt that they had socialized more often than those who were in the control condition,  $t(239) = -13.76$ ,  $p < .001$  indicating the manipulation was taken as intended. The means were 68.57 for the outside of work socialization condition and 29.68 for the absence of outside of work socialization condition, on a 100-point scale. See Figure 3 below for a graphical representation.



*Figure 4.* Mean scores of outside of work socialization manipulation check in Experiment, 1 on a 100-pt scale.

## **Experiment 2**

See Table 3 above for a list of manipulations and measures used for this

experiment. The vignette described an individual named Pat, who displays cognition-based trust (is dependable and reliable) across both conditions. In the vignette for Experiment 2, affect-based trust was manipulated. In Condition A, the potential sponsee was depicted as an individual who demonstrates evidence of high levels of affect-based trust (e.g., being able to exchange confidences). In Experiment 2, there were 126 participants in Condition A and 125 participants in Condition B.

### **Measures.**

***Sponsorship.*** To capture the likelihood of the participant sponsoring the fictitious individual, I employed the same two measures as Experiment 1 (a definition-based measure of sponsorship, and sponsorship and exposure items taken from Ragins and McFarlin's (1990) MRI. The reliability for this scale in Experiment 2 as measured by Cronbach's was .95.

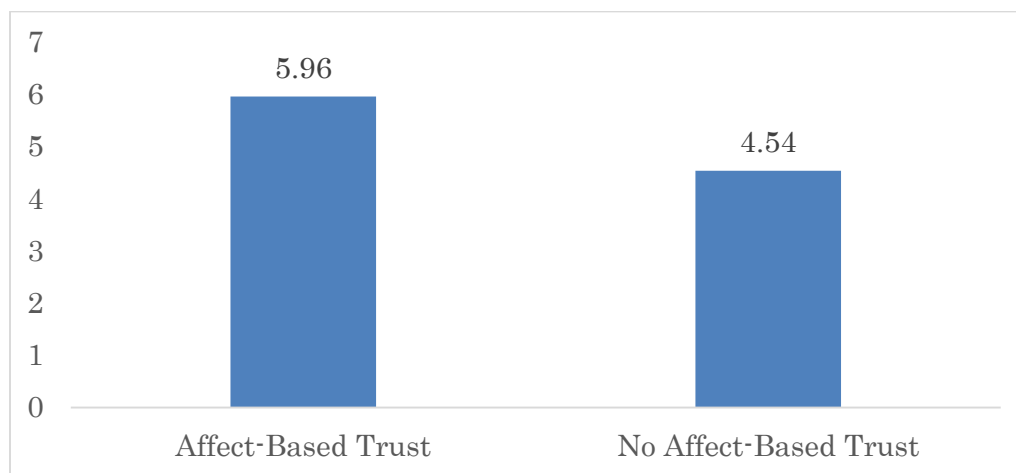
***Mentoring.*** The mentoring measure from Experiment 1 was also employed in Experiment 2—the nine-item Mentoring Function Questionnaire (MFQ-9; Castro et al., 2004). The reliability for this scale in Experiment 2 as measured by Cronbach's alpha was .88.

***Trust Manipulation Check.*** McAllister's (1995) 11-item measure from Experiment 1 was utilized in Experiment 2 as a manipulation check to ensure participants took the manipulation of affect-based trust as intended. The reliability for this scale in Experiment 2 as measured by Cronbach's alpha was .92 for affect-based trust and .77 for cognition-based trust.

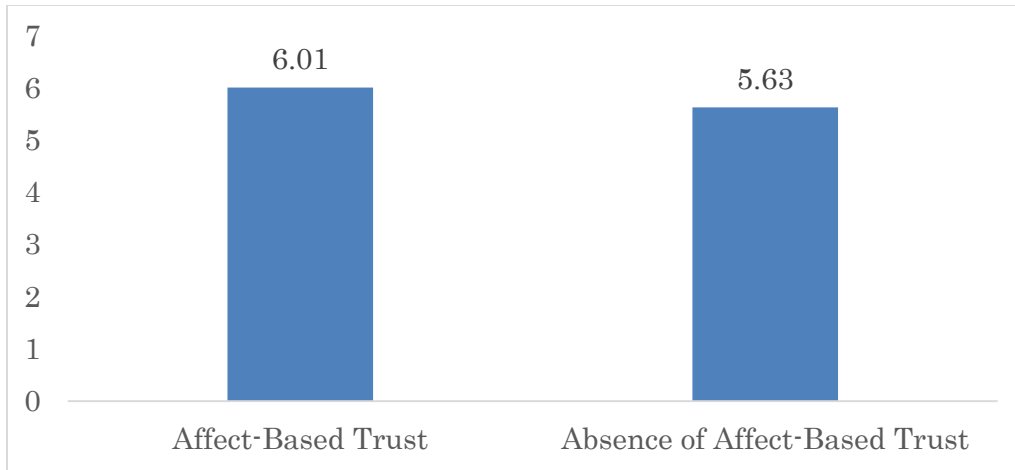
A *t* test was conducted and results indicated participants in the affect-based trust condition responded higher to the manipulation check (using McAllister's 1995 affect-based trust scale) than participants in the absence of affect-based trust condition,  $t(249) = 11.75, p < .001$ . The means for affect-based trust were 5.96 for



the affect-based trust condition and 4.54 in the non-affect based trust condition. A final  $t$ -test was conducted to ensure that I did not also manipulate cognition-based trust. Results indicated a significant difference between the trust conditions, using McAllister's (1995) cognition-based trust scale,  $t(249) = 3.51, p = .001$ . The mean for cognition-based trust was 6.01 in the affect-based trust condition and 5.63 in the non-affect based trust condition. This may indicate there were two causal mechanisms manipulated in the affect-based trust condition (Bullock, Green, & Ha, 2010), namely both affect-based trust and cognition-based trust. Aside from the differences in cognition-based trust, the evidence suggests that manipulations functioned as intended across participants. See Figures 4 and 5 below for visual representations of the manipulation checks.



*Figure 5.* Mean scores of affect-based trust in Experiment 2, on a 7-pt scale.



*Figure 6.* Mean scores of cognition-based trust in the Affect-Based Trust condition and the Absence of Affect-Based Trust condition, on a 7-pt scale.

### CHAPTER 3 Results

Before collecting data to test the hypotheses, a pilot test was conducted. This is necessary in a dual-experimental design in order to determine the suitability of the manipulations (Stone-Romero & Rosopa, 2011).

#### **Preliminary Analyses: Results of Pilot**

Before the primary hypotheses tests were carried out, pilot data were collected from 77 participants through a survey posting on Amazon.com.'s Mechanical Turk (28.6% female). The pilot was consistent with the methods described above, in that identical experiments and measures were used with the exception of the mentoring measure, which was left out. Experiment 1 consisted of 41 participants, 19 in the absence of outside of work socialization condition and 22 in the outside of work socialization condition. Experiment 2 consisted of 36 participants, 18 in each trust condition. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions.

In research designs in which a mediator is manipulated, it is important to ensure that only the intended mediator was altered, and no other potential mediators. This provides evidence that there is only one causal mechanism that explains the relationship between the IV and DV (Bullock, Green, & Ha, 2010). Therefore, a *t*-test was conducted and results indicated participants in the outside of work socialization condition responded higher to the manipulation check (asking how likely they are to socialize with the person outside of work) than participants in the absence of outside of work socialization,  $t(31.02) = -3.27, p = .003$ . Similarly, a *t*-test was conducted for the affect-based trust manipulation, and participants in the trust condition reported significantly higher levels of trust than those in the absence

of affect-based trust condition,  $t(34) = -2.28, p = .029$ . Finally, I investigated mean differences of cognition-based trust across both groups to ensure it was held constant, and there were no significant differences  $t(34) = -.32, p = .75$ . In sum, the evidence from the pilot study suggested the manipulations functioned as intended across participants.

### **Primary Analyses: Tests of Hypotheses**

After the pilot study was completed, data from 492 participants were collected and examined. Preliminary steps were taken to check the quality of the data obtained through Amazon's Mechanical Turk.

An item-level missingness analysis revealed that 0.26% of values were missing. In checking Little's MCAR test, I found the data were not missing completely at random, therefore indicating multiple imputation would be appropriate. To handle missing data I utilized the SPSS multiple imputation procedure to generate five imputation data sets with 100 iterations. I used item-level imputation including all items from the following scales: (a) outside of work socialization manipulation check, (b) trust, (c) mentoring, and (d) sponsorship. Multiple imputation was performed on each experiment's dataset separately. One imputed data set was randomly selected for each experiment on which all subsequent analyses were run.

### **Checking Assumptions**

The assumptions underlying mediation analysis are: (a) homogeneity of variance, (b) no interaction between the independent variable and the mediator, (c) reliable measures are used, and (d) there is no misspecification of causal order, causal direction, and that there are no unmeasured mediators that are causing the observed effect (MacKinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007). The first assumption was

tested by Levene's test of homogeneity of variance. In the first experiment, the homogeneity of variance was checked for affect-based trust between the two conditions. Results indicated there was no violation of the Levene's test,  $2.97, p = .09$ . In the second experiment, the homogeneity of variance was checked for sponsorship between the two conditions. Results indicated there was a violation of the Levene's test,  $5.77, p = .017$  for sponsorship (6-items) but no violation for sponsorship (1-item),  $.00, p = .95$ . The second assumption was checked by using multiple regression to determine if there was an interaction effect between outside of work socialization and trust on sponsorship. Results indicated no significant interactions for either sponsorship scale used in the analysis:  $\beta = .00, p = .97$  for sponsorship (6-items) scale, and  $\beta = -.09, p = .10$  for sponsorship (1-item). The third assumption was tested by calculating Cronbach's alpha for each measure. These alphas were at acceptable levels, and are reported above in the measures section and in the correlation tables (Table 4, Table 5).

Steps were taken to increase the likelihood that the model would be properly specified through the design of the current study (two experiments using random assignment, manipulating both the independent variable and mediator separately). This is because the causal order and direction of variables are controlled in the experimental design, and random assignment reasonably rules out confounds (Cohen et al., 2003).

### **Affect-Based Trust and Sponsorship**

Correlations are presented below in Table 4 for Experiment 1 and Table 5 for Experiment 2. Hypothesis 1 stated developers will be more likely to sponsor individuals in the affect-based trust condition. To assess Hypothesis 1, sponsorship means from Experiment 2 were compared between the trust conditions. As

expected, potential developers were more likely to sponsor individuals in the affect-based trust condition than the absence of affect-based trust condition [ $t(234.27) = 4.35, p < .001$ ]. Therefore Hypothesis 1 was supported, as potential developers were more likely to sponsor when affect-based trust was present.

Table 4  
*Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Estimates, and Study Variable Intercorrelations for Experiment 1.*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Outside of Work Socialization	0.49	0.50	--							
2. Mentoring	4.85	0.97	.32	(.91)						
3. Sponsorship (1)	70.93	17.19	.33	.53	--					
4. Sponsorship (6)	5.44	0.87	.27	.57	.75	(.95)				
5. Affect Trust	5.13	0.88	.36	.61	.56	.60	(.86)			
6. Cognition Trust	5.19	0.78	.18	.38	.47	.59	.52	(.76)		
7. Gender	0.35	.48	.08	-.04	.02	-.06	.01	.07	--	
8. Year Born	1982.45	9.44	-.02	.19	-.01	.06	.07	.11	-.11	--

*Note.*  $N = 241$ . Correlations above .17 are significant at the  $p < .01$  level. Outside of work socialization is a dummy-coded variable (0 = absence of socialization; 1 = socialization). Sponsorship (6) is the 6-item sponsorship measure. Sponsorship (1) is the 1-item sponsorship measure. Gender is a dummy-coded variable (0 = male; 1 = female).

Table 5  
*Descriptive Statistics, Reliability Estimates, and Study Variable Intercorrelations for Experiment 2.*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Affect-Based Trust	0.50	0.50	--							
2. Mentoring	4.90	0.97	.29	(.88)						
3. Sponsorship (1)	79.34	18.27	.19	.47	--					
4. Sponsorship (6)	5.74	0.91	.27	.63	.77	(.95)				
5. Affect Trust	5.25	1.19	.60	.65	.45	.61	(.92)			
6. Cognition Trust	5.82	0.88	.22	.28	.46	.58	.49	(.77)		
7. Gender	0.35	.48	.01	-.06	.10	.02	.05	.06	--	
8. Year Born	1982.34	10.00	-.10	.03	-.10	-.15	-.04	-.10	-.13	--

*Note.*  $N = 251$ . Correlations larger than .18 are significant at the  $p < .01$  level and correlations larger than .12 are significant at the  $p < .05$  level. Affect-based trust is dummy-coded: 0 = absence of affect-based trust; 1 = presence of affect-based trust. Sponsorship (6) is the 6-item sponsorship measure. Sponsorship (1) is the 1-item sponsorship measure. Gender is dummy-coded: 0 = male; 1 = female.

### Test of Mediation

In Hypothesis 2, I predicted that outside of work socialization increases affect-based trust which, in turn, results in an increased willingness to sponsor. Testing for mediation in a two-experiment study involves the independent variable being manipulated in the first experiment while measuring the mediator and dependent variable. This establishes causality for the 'a' path, from the IV to the mediator. In a second experiment, the causality for the 'b' path is established by manipulating the mediator (Stone-Romero & Rosopa, 2008). To check for this pattern of results, I first regressed the observed mediator (affect-based trust) on the outside of work socialization condition in Experiment 1. Results indicated that the 'a' path was significant,  $\beta = .36$ ,  $t = 5.87$ ,  $p < .001$ . This shows that when placing individuals in the after-work socialization condition over the absence of after-work socialization condition, it will likely produce .62 unit change in affect-based trust, on a 7-point scale. Second, sponsorship (6-items) was regressed on the conditions of Experiment 2 (presence versus absence of affect-based trust). Results indicated a significant direct effect,  $\beta = .27$ ,  $t = 4.35$ ,  $p < .001$ . Sponsorship (1-item) was also regressed on the conditions of Experiment 2 (presence versus absence of affect-based trust). Results indicated a significant direct effect,  $\beta = .19$ ,  $t = 3.04$ ,  $p = .003$ . This shows that when placing individuals in the affect-based trust condition over the absence of affect-based trust condition, it will likely produce a .49 unit change in sponsorship (6-items) on a 7-point scale and a 6.9 unit change in sponsorship (1-item) on a 100-point scale.

To properly estimate the indirect effect in mediation with a two-experiment design, the 'a' and 'b' paths are multiplied together and then a Sobel test is employed to determine its significance. However, before this step, it is important to ensure

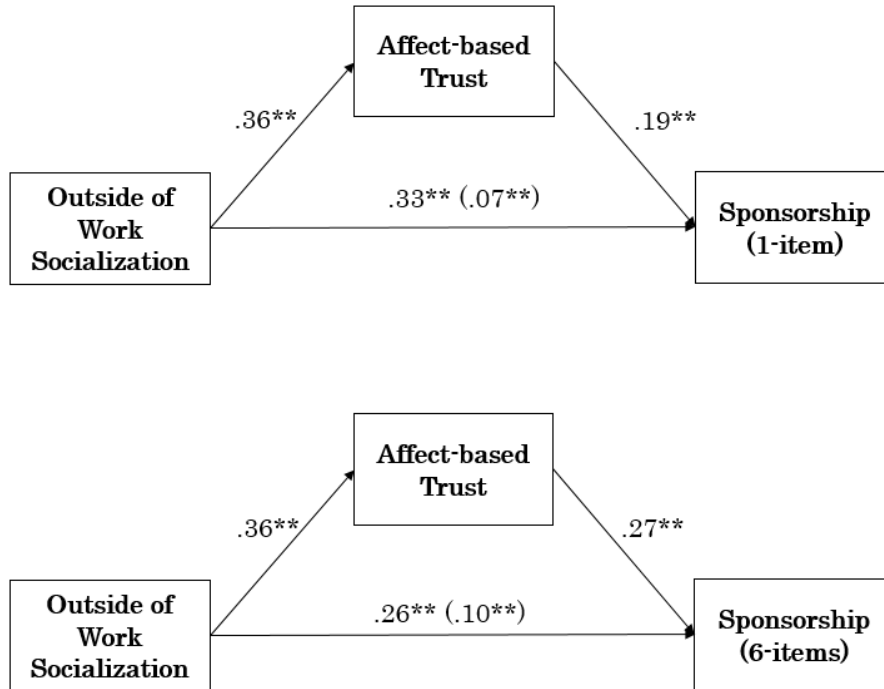
that the distribution of the observed mediator in Experiment 1 is similar to the distribution of the manipulated mediator in Experiment 2 (Stone-Romero & Rosopa, 2011). This is because it is often the case that the manipulated mediator's variance (as approximated by the manipulation check in the second study) will be smaller than the observed mediator in the first experiment. Overall, this range restriction leads to a downward estimate of the b path, thereby increasing Type II error. Stone Romero and Rosopa argue that it is best to incrementally tweak the manipulation of the mediator for the second study until its distribution matches the distribution for the observed mediator in the first study. If this is not successful or possible, then they recommend a post-hoc application of a correction for range restriction to obtain a b path estimate that would be closer to the population value.

Interestingly, in the current study the manipulated mediator in the second experiment demonstrated greater variability than the observed mediator in Experiment 1. Therefore, in this study, range restriction on the 'a' path is more likely than on the 'b' path. An official check of the equivalence of these two distributions using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test revealed that the distributions were unequal ( $D = 1.90, p = .001$ ). Because the 'a' path was solidly significant ( $\beta = .36, t = 5.87, p < .001$ ), I am not concerned about the matter of range restriction as it affects Type II rather than Type I error. The estimate of the 'a' path in Experiment 1 is likely a downward estimate that is, nevertheless, significant. Thus, because the results are conservative and still significant, I did not apply a correction for range restriction.

Finally, the Sobel test was conducted to determine the significance of the indirect effect. For sponsorship (1-item), the Sobel test was significant ( $z = 2.70, p = .007$ ), indicating a significant indirect effect. For sponsorship (6-item), the Sobel test



was also significant, ( $z = 3.48, p < .001$ ). See Figure 6 below for visual representations of the mediation results. In sum, the indirect effect was significant for both measures of sponsorship, yielding full support for Hypothesis 2.



*Figure 7.* Evaluation of affect-based trust as a mediator between outside of work socialization and sponsorship. Relationships between variables expressed as standardized regression coefficients. The standardized coefficient in parentheses between outside of work socialization and sponsorship represents the indirect effect. \*\*  $p < .01$ .

## CHAPTER 4 Discussion

### Summary of Results

Taken together, the results suggest that developers' willingness to sponsor varies depending on the level of trust that is present. For example, as predicted, potential developers were more likely to sponsor individuals that they trusted, compared to situations in which affect-based trust is absent. Moreover, the results suggested that socializing outside of work influences willingness to sponsor through the development of trust.

It is noteworthy that two sponsorship measures were employed for this study, one based on a current definition of sponsorship, and one based on sponsorship items from existing mentoring scales, but a similar pattern of results was observed across the two measures of sponsorship.

### Implications

This study demonstrated that socialization outside of work leads to affect-based trust which, in turn, leads to sponsorship. It has been theorized that trust is an important element necessary to obtain sponsorship (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011), and this study lends evidence to this. The literature on trust states interaction frequency allows affect-based trust to develop (McAllister, 1995), and the results are consistent with the notion that socializing outside of work provides an opportunity to increase affect-based trust in a relationship. Therefore, it may be beneficial for individuals to take advantage of opportunities to become better acquainted with colleagues outside the work context in appropriate ways. Perhaps seeing an individual in various contexts (e.g., over dinner, with his/her spouse or children) can provide a more holistic view of the individual and increase

interpersonal comfort, self-disclosure, and build the friendship.

**Exploring potential biases in sponsorship.** Although in this research endeavor I examined specific antecedents of sponsorship, it cannot be concluded that these antecedents (e.g., outside of work socialization) is the only factor that leads to sponsorship. It is important to examine the potential implications of developers giving sponsorship preference to individuals with whom they develop relationships outside of work. It is quite possible that this practice could cause many qualified individuals to be excluded from sponsorship opportunities. For example, individuals who have priorities for non-work hours (e.g., exercise, friendships, family, etc.), or who have disabilities that prohibit them from socializing outside of work may be missing out on cultivating important relationships with potential sponsors.

There is also evidence demonstrating that individuals are more attracted to similar others, and are more likely to choose to socialize with individuals who are similar to them (Billig & Tajfel, 1973; Brewer & Silver, 1978; Byrne & Nelson, 1965; Johnson, 1989). If powerful organizational leaders are socializing predominantly with individuals similar to themselves, and eventually choosing to sponsor those individuals, then sponsorship outcomes (e.g., salary, promotions) will repeatedly be offered to those whose characteristics mirror the ones of those who have traditionally held the positions of power. Over time, this reinforces homogeneous leadership structures that could potentially exclude minority group members (Ibarra, 2003b).

The results of this study have important implications for people who are in a position to make sponsorship decisions, because it may not be obvious to them that they are choosing to sponsor individuals that are similar to them and who they socialize with outside of work. Therefore, this research uncovers potential biases

that may exert powerful influences over succession planning processes and how power structures are developed and maintained over time. In summary, the findings of this study point to both potential opportunities and challenges associated with fostering relationships outside of the work context.

**Women's career path example revisited.** As mentioned previously, sponsorship may be a critical element for a woman to progress through an organization's hierarchy. However, it is possible there could be gender differences in the nature and frequency of socializing outside of work with a high-powered sponsor. One potential reason for this is because men have more opportunities to sponsor others due to holding more powerful positions than women. For example, 19.2% of board seats across S&P 500 companies were held by women in 2014, and 14.3% of Executive Officers were women in 2013 (Catalyst 2015, Catalyst 2013). It might be uncomfortable for men to socialize outside of work with potential women sponsees in some cases. This could be because others may misconstrue the relationship if they are meeting alone together (Hewlett, 2013c; Ragins, Townsend, Mattis, 1998). As more women move into managerial roles, it similarly may be difficult for women in leadership positions to socialize with male colleagues. This has also been discussed as a potential barrier in mentoring relationships (Ragins et al., 1998; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Ragins and McFarlin found that men tended to socialize outside of work more often than women. In addition, they found individuals in cross-gender mentorships were less likely to attend outside of work social activities compared to same-gender mentorships (Ragins & McFarlin). These authors noted that trusting relationships may occur in cross-gender partnerships, but these are usually limited to the work setting (Ragins & McFarlin). As mentioned above, cross-gender partnerships in the work setting may be safer for the individuals in the relationship,

as it may be less likely to be misconstrued by others as a romantic relationship (Ragins & McFarlin), and sexual harassment may be less likely to occur. The challenge is for developers to find ways to navigate cross-gender mentorships appropriately or find other ways to develop trust (as discussed below). For example, Sheryl Sandberg describes an executive at Goldman Sachs that would only mentor individuals (both male and female) over breakfast and lunch in order to avoid potential gender-mixed scenarios that could be misconstrued, such as a dinner meetings (Sandberg, 2013).

When an imbalance exists in an organization's power structure where one demographic group holds more power than another, the tendency to socialize with similar others can perpetuate this imbalance (Ibarra et al., 2005). This can also lead to the development of "functionally differentiated" networks, where one network is used to gain access to resources and task information (often through the high-powered group), and one network is used for social support (often through groups of individuals who are similar in gender or race; Ibarra 1993b). These types of networks could lead to a lack of sponsorship opportunities with high-powered individuals, as the development of affect-based trust may be limited in networks restricted solely to task and resource information. The current challenges of obtaining sponsorship with high-powered individuals may exist today for women, but it is possible that when equal numbers are reached in the upper-echelons of organizations, there will be similar numbers of men and women sponsored if individuals continue to choose same-gender dyads. Likewise, there may be professions (e.g., nursing) where women dominate and outside of work socialization is more likely to exclude men. Choosing same-gender dyads in and of itself is not necessarily a negative thing, but if men hold more power than women in

organizations (or vice versa), choosing same-gender dyads will likely perpetuate the imbalance in work roles and functions where men dominate.

This idea was termed homosocial reproduction by Kanter (1977), and can apply to any sub-group in an organization whose members do not hold powerful positions. For example, minorities have been historically underrepresented at many levels of corporate leadership—particularly in the most powerful positions, such as “C-level” positions, and are less likely to be holders of multiple board seats (McDonald & Westphal, 2013). Minorities often have difficulty accessing the groups in charge for powerful mentoring and sponsorship relationships (Hunt et al., 2009).

People often choose to trust based on a list of identifiable characteristics (e.g., interests, capability, frequent communication; Hurley, 2006). However, one study found Latinas and African-American women were less likely to disclose personal details at work, likely due to experiencing workplace exclusion (Catalyst, 2006). Therefore, it could be that a cycle is occurring where some minority groups are not obtaining sponsorship relationships due to a lack of trust for individuals inside the organization, which may stem from being excluded from the workplace. It is important for sponsors to consider that these dynamics may be at play inside the workplace, and not exclude certain groups when building trust with others. One way that cross-cultural dyads can built trust is to view cultural differences as opportunities to learn more about each other, themselves, and the world (Ely, Meyerson, & Davidson, 2006).

In summary, there are many sub-groups that can be left out of important sponsorship relationships that are built outside of work. Women and minorities are some examples of sub-groups that may lack access to powerful sponsors, but there are other groups that could be impacted as well. For example, individuals with non-

work priorities (e.g., children, hobbies) may not have time to socialize outside of work. In addition, single women without children sometimes feel excluded from being invited to outside of work activities by coworkers with families (Hewlett et al., 2010). People with disabilities may also be excluded both inside and outside of work (Kitchin, 1998). It is important for sponsors to be thoughtful about these capable groups of individuals that they could be unknowingly leaving out through not being able to socialize with them outside of work.

**Other antecedents of affect-based trust: Implications for sponsees.** If it is appropriate to do so, it may be beneficial to socialize with colleagues outside of work for activities such as dinner, company events, or meeting for coffee. Making more opportunities to build trust and rapport in a context other than work may lead to positive outcomes like friendship, support, or even mentorship and sponsorship.

Even though this research found outside of work socialization leads to affect-based trust, which leads to sponsorship, socializing outside of work is likely not the only mechanism that increases affect-based trust. Affect-based trust can be developed under conditions of frequent interaction (McAllister, 1995; Wu et al., 2007), which could also take place inside the workplace. This research found sponsorship was more likely to occur in the outside of work socialization condition, but still occurred more often than mentoring in conditions where socialization was constrained to the workplace. Therefore, groups of individuals dissimilar to powerful sponsors may still be sponsored, just perhaps less frequently than individuals similar to powerful sponsors.

Trust can also be developed under conditions of frequent cooperation (Lewicki, Tomlinson, & Gillespie, 2006). This type of interaction can occur at the workplace, especially in conditions where an individual has chances to help or

cooperate with a potential sponsor. In addition, trust develops as individuals have different types of experiences together, such as overcoming difficult challenges or opportunities together (Lewicki, McAllister, & Bies, 1998). Trust is also build when individuals are consistent, and their previous actions are congruent with their current ones (Sinetar, 1988). Although socializing outside of work can provide one type of diverse experience, there are likely many avenues to obtaining diverse experiences inside the workplace with a potential sponsor. Future research could examine these other potential antecedents to affect-based trust (e.g., cooperation, diverse experiences), and compare and contrast them with socializing outside of work to determine what activities have the largest impact on affect-based trust.

**Making responsible sponsorship choices as a developer.** As noted above, the tendency for developers to sponsor individuals with whom they socialize with outside of work could have negative consequences, particularly if developers are unaware of the potential pitfalls regarding their roles as sponsors. Therefore, it is important to examine some ways in which developers can make sponsorship decisions in a fair, effective manner. Five factors that sponsors could consider when making sponsorship decisions are: (a) if they (the sponsor) are ready to sponsor, (b) whether the sponsee wishes to be sponsored, (c) if cognition-based trust is present, (d) which sponsee would be an appropriate fit for the position, and (e) which sponsee's interests would align the most to the position.

First, it is important that the sponsor understands the potential benefits and consequences to sponsoring a certain individual. If a sponsor recommends an individual for a position and s/he fails to perform up to the standards required of the position, the sponsor may not be trusted for future recommendations by others. On the other hand, the sponsee may perform very well, and the sponsor benefits by



earning trust and credibility from other powerful individuals. Second, it is also important that the potential sponsee wishes to advance or have greater opportunities within the organization. This is an important conversation to have prior to recommending someone for a position, as the individual may conclude that he/she is content in his/her current position and wish to stay.

Third, cognition-based trust is important to establish before sponsoring an individual (Foust-Cummings et al., 2011). This is because of the risky nature of sponsorship (Hewlett et al., 2011), where an individual is recommended for promotions or advancement. It is important to establish that the individual is reliable, dependable, and has performed well in the past before supporting his/her advancement, because it is risky for everyone involved if the sponsee is recommended without establishing this type of trust. It could be harmful to individuals to be promoted when they are in over their heads and are not likely to succeed. In addition, it may reflect poorly on the sponsor if they recommend someone before they are ready to take on a new position if this person does not perform well in the new position. Moreover, the sponsee could potentially harm others in the new position if s/he is unqualified or not trustworthy.

Two more factors that would be important to consider when sponsoring someone are: (a) whether a person's skills and experiences fit well with the position, and (b) whether the position aligns well with the employee's interests. These two aspects of person-job fit are called demands-abilities fit and supplies-values fit (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Demands-abilities fit is a match between the job and an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities. A sponsor can examine the past performance of an employee to determine whether or not his/her skills would translate well to the new position. For example, if a new open position

has an emphasis on managing others, and one of the potential sponsees has been successful in managing others in the past, perhaps they would succeed in the position more than an individual who has had trouble managing others in the past (but is otherwise a great performer).

Supplies-values fit involves whether the job meets an employee's needs, interests, or preferences (Edwards, 1991). For example, a potential sponsor may know two individuals that are stellar performers, and both would succeed in a given position that is open to fill. However, perhaps the position aligns with one of the individual's career aspirations more so than the other. Or, the position may be a better fit for an individual for other reasons, such as the culture of the team or other personal preferences like travel or work flexibility. Person-job fit is important to consider because it is related to many positive outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, coworker and supervisor satisfaction, and is negatively related to strain and intention to quit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

In the case that an individual is not ready to be sponsored, due to performance or fit issues, the developer can offer mentoring or coaching instead. For example, an individual may benefit from constructive feedback about his/her performance and have an opportunity to improve and be considered for sponsorship at a later time. As another example, perhaps an individual would benefit more from exploring potential career avenues with a mentor before advancing into a particular position.

In sum, due to the potentially negative consequences of choosing to sponsor an individual based on comfort level due to socializing outside of work, it is important to consider other factors (performance and fit related) that can provide additional guidance for developers in sponsorship decisions. A fruitful avenue for

future research would be to empirically determine which criteria that can be used to guide effective sponsorship decisions. For example, researchers could attempt to identify behaviors that a sponsee can demonstrate that will positively predict success in a sponsorship relationship.

### **Limitations**

Although the study has several strengths and many elements that contributed to our understanding of sponsorship, there are limitations that must be addressed. First, participants rated cognition-based trust higher in both the presence and absence of affect-based trust, even though cognition-trust was intended to be held constant across conditions (i.e., the wording for cognition-based trust was exactly the same across both conditions). Therefore, it could be possible there was a halo-effect present. For example, when the individual in the vignette was portrayed as a very trusting person, participants rated both the affect- and cognition-based trust higher than the participants in the condition where only cognition-based trust was present. Future research could determine the relative importance of cognition-based trust and affect-based trust to sponsorship relationships to determine if one is perhaps more important for that relationship to occur. In addition, future research could independently examine affect-based trust and its relationship to sponsorship, and leave cognition-based trust out of the vignette completely.

Another limitation inherent to this type of experimental design is the restriction of extrapolating results to the workplace setting. Trade-offs are necessary between internal and external validity when utilizing experimental designs (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002). One design cannot completely solve for both internal and external validity problems, and it is important to examine these relationships in multiple studies over time to obtain evidence of internal and

external validity. As Mook (1983) describes, it may not always be a researcher's intention to try to predict what happens in a real-life setting, but rather may be trying to test the fundamental prediction itself. Due to the lack of empirical studies on sponsorship, I wanted to first examine if the relationships between outside of work socialization, trust, and sponsorship existed. An experimental design with random assignment was a way to determine this. To try to increase the external validity for this study, participants were required to have held a job at some point, as sponsorship relationships occur in the organizational context. A next step in future research could be to conduct a survey study that examines the prevalence of these relationships in a workplace setting.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, I sought to explore the factors that influence the willingness to sponsor another person. The results indicated sponsorship occurred at different frequencies—that is, developers were more willing to sponsor when affect-based trust was present. Results also indicated socializing outside of work leads to affect-based trust which, in turn, leads to sponsorship. However, choosing to sponsor individuals based on socializing outside of work can have negative consequences to many people, including those who do not wish to socialize outside of work for any number of reasons. Instead, sponsorship decisions can be made using other criteria such as: (a) the readiness of the individual, (b) his/her fit with an open position, and (c) likelihood of success in the position. In conclusion, this study contributes to the current literature by: (a) demonstrating the discriminate validity of for the behaviors associated with mentorship and sponsorship, (b) highlighting the importance of building trust in sponsorship relationships, and (c) alerting developers to potential biases they may have when making important sponsorship decisions. It

is my hope that these findings will provide helpful guidance for both developers and their sponsees as they seek to enrich their interpersonal interactions and make valuable contributions to their organizations and careers.

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**APPENDIX A: Experiment 1 Vignettes**

## Condition A

Pat is a co-worker whom you often see around the office. The two of you frequently spend time together outside of work, grabbing lunch or coffee together throughout the week. Pat has recently been assigned to help you with a project and the two of you met during lunch to start planning the project. Today you stopped by Pat's desk. You decided to continue your conversation about the project that night at your favorite local bar.

## Condition B

Pat is a co-worker whom you often see around the office. Pat has recently been assigned to help you with a project and the two of you met during work last week to start planning the project. Today you stopped by Pat's desk. You continued your conversation with Pat about the project you are working on that you had started the other day after a work meeting.

**APPENDIX B: Experiment 2 Vignettes**

## Condition A

Pat is a co-worker of yours who is very professional and dedicated to their job. You are familiar with Pat's work history and given their track record, you have no reason to doubt their competence. You know Pat is careful with their work and you can rely on Pat. In fact, your other co-workers see this in Pat as well and think Pat is trustworthy. Even those who are not Pat's close friends trust and respect Pat.

## Condition B

Pat is a co-worker of yours who is very professional and dedicated to their job. You are familiar with Pat's work history and given their track record, you have no reason to doubt their competence. You know Pat is careful with their work and you can rely on Pat. In fact, your other co-workers see this in Pat as well and think Pat is trustworthy. Even those who are not Pat's close friends trust and respect Pat. You can talk freely with Pat about any difficulties you are having and know Pat will listen. In the past you have shared your personal problems with Pat, who responded in a thoughtful manner with great advice. If one of you were transferred to a new job, you would both feel a sense of loss. Overall, you both have made considerable emotional investments in your working relationship.