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Prior Mentoring and Computer-Mediated Experiences Influence on Willingness to Engage in E-Mentoring

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MENTORING AND CMC EXPERIENCES ON WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE IN E-MENTORING

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Perspectives of mentoring

- Images of a mentor?
- Characteristics of good mentor?
- Characteristics of a bad mentor?
- Outcomes from a mentoring program?
- Outcomes from an e-mentoring program?
  - In theory, provides opportunities for mentoring that would not be possible in face-to-face setting
Challenges in e-mentoring research

- Research has difficulties in keeping pace with the rapid implementation of mentoring/e-mentoring programs (Clutterbuck, 2007)
  - Several types of mentoring exist (e.g., peer (McManus & Russell, 2007); group (Ensher & Murphy, 2005); e-mentoring (Ensher & Murphy, 2007)

- Internet technology changes rapidly (e.g., consider the “face” of Facebook five years ago; Remember those mobile phones on Seinfeld in the 90’s)
Positive prior mentoring experiences will increase the likelihood of participating in e-mentoring programs.

Positive prior experiences with CMC will increase the likelihood of participating in e-mentoring programs.

The type of CMC that is used will influence the nature of the e-mentoring relationship.
Three Theoretical Perspectives

- Social Exchange
- Social Presence
- Power
Mentoring relationship should provide benefits to both the mentor and protégé

Eby, 2007: Investment model (Mentors and proteges determine whether the relationship is worth the investment)

Prior mentoring is a predominant factor in predicting future willingness (Allen, 2007)
Level at which social cues are perceived

For example, you send an e-mail to someone asking to meet. The person responds "OK". Name the ways someone could perceive that response.

F2F is considered the "gold standard" (Harms, 2005)

Issues with social presence can cause relationship to rapidly deteriorate ("Flaming" - insulting comments)
Power

What images come to mind when you consider power?
- Power is neutral (Darder, 1996) depends on how used
  - Johnson-Bailey and Cervero (2004): Mentor providing credibility to protégé within the academic community
- Influence both social exchange and social presence
Study

- Electronic survey to pre- and in-service teachers
- Prior experiences with mentoring (e.g., rate your prior mentoring experiences on a scale of 1-5)
- Prior experiences with CMC (e.g., comfort level with using various technologies)
- Willingness to participate in e-mentoring
Findings (Hypothesis 1)

- Positive prior mentoring experiences will increase the likelihood of participating in e-mentoring programs.
  - Mean 1.3 units higher, $p < 0.05$ (prior mentoring experiences) for those willing to participate in e-mentoring
  - Pre-service teachers were more likely to be willing to be e-proteges than in-service teachers, $p < 0.05$
Findings (Hypothesis 2)

- Positive prior experiences with CMC will increase the likelihood of participating in e-mentoring programs.
  - Comfort level using instant messaging was higher for those willing to participate in e-mentoring (M 3.9 vs. 2.8, p < 0.01)
  - Comfort level using chat rooms higher for those willing to participate in e-mentoring (M 2.5 vs. 1.7, p < 0.05)
  - Those willing to be e-mentors rec’d 4.9 fewer e-mails/day
Findings (Hypothesis 3)

- The type of CMC that is used will influence the nature of the e-mentoring relationship.
  - Two groups emerged factor analysis
    - Comfortable using various technologies (e-mail, chat rooms and discussion boards)
    - Pre-service teachers comfortable using IM, chat rooms, but less comfortable with e-mail
- Impact of emerging technologies
  - Video teleconferencing had lowest mean comfort level, but high mean scores on perceived usefulness and willingness to learn more about
Implications

- What are the characteristics of the participants?
  - How they like to use CMC?
  - What are they seeking from the relationship?
- Impact of emerging technologies
  - How to implement to improve mentoring relationship (beyond just being “cool”)?
  - How to train participants in using these technologies to meet the objectives?
How is mentoring used at your institution?

- Goals?
- Implications of using e-mentoring?
- How would you implement e-mentoring?