

The Relationship between Gender Type in Mentorship and Mentees' Advancement: An Empirical Study in Malaysia

Azman ISMAIL

National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur
azisma08@gmail.com

Michael KHO KHIAN JUI

National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur
mic6699@gmail.com

Norshima ZAINAL SHAH

National Defence University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur
shima@upnm.edu.my

Abstract. *The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between gender type in mentorship and mentees' advancement using 153 usable questionnaires gathered from employees who worked in a public university in East Malaysia, Malaysia. The results of exploratory factor analysis confirmed that the measurement scales used in this study satisfactorily meet the standards of validity and reliability analyses. Next, the outcomes of stepwise regression analysis showed four important findings: firstly, interaction between same-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' career. Secondly, interaction between cross-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' career. Thirdly, interaction between same-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' psychosocial. Fourthly, interaction between cross-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' psychosocial. Further, this result demonstrates that gender type does act as an important antecedent of mentees' career and psychosocial in the mentoring programme model of the organizational sample. In addition, discussion, implications and conclusion are elaborated.*

Keywords: gender type; mentorship; mentees' career and psychosocial; Malaysia.

JEL Codes: M1, M12.

REL Code: 14C.

1. Introduction

According to ancient Greek history, mentoring is first mentioned in the epic story of the Odyssey written by Homer. In this story, Odysseus tells his loyal and experienced friend, Mentor who has great wisdom and trustworthy to teach his son, Telemachus, a mentee or protégé who has less experience about the tips for handling challenging lifestyles before he goes to the Trojan War (Edlind, Haensly, 1985, Merriam, 1993). Based on this story, mentoring is viewed as an important field of education (Johnson et al., 1991) and/or counseling (Gregson, 1994) where mentors are old men who have wisdom and can be trusted to educate young men who have little experience (Johnson et al., 1991, Kram, 1985, Russell, Adams, 1997, Wanguri, 1996). Hence, it has inspired Human Resource Development (HRD) scholars to generally interpret the concept and practise mentoring programmes in line with the development of the current organizational practice (Dennison, 2000, Ismail, Boerhannoedin, Rasip, 2009, Northcott, 2000, Oliver, Aggleton, 2002). In an organizational perspective, mentoring is often seen as an important development method where it establishes a relationship between a manager or someone more experienced with another member who is less experienced. This mentoring relationship if properly carried out, will increase group and/or individuals' potentials to handle successfully particular duties and responsibilities, familiarize with new techniques, and care for all aspects of mentees (Cummings, Worley, 2009, Johnson et al., 1991, Long, 2002).

Mentoring models vary according to different organizational contexts and there is no one best model to fit all organizations. These models have been designed and administered based on differences and uniqueness of an organization in terms of beliefs, orientations, stresses, strengths and weaknesses (Hawkey, 1997, Irving et al., 2003, Ritchie, Conolly, 1993, Ritchie, Genoni, 1999). These factors have strongly affected the implementation of mentoring type in formal and/or informal mentoring activities in organizations (Chao et al., 1992, Ismail, Khian Jui, Abdullah, 2009, Ragins, 1997, 1999, Ragins, Cotton, 1993, 1999). A formal mentoring programme is often viewed as the structured and coordinated relationship between mentor and mentee, using standard norms, continuous action plans, time frame, and particular objectives (Bahniuk, Hill, 1998, Hansford et al., 2003, Noe et al., 2002). Conversely, informal mentoring is often seen as the process and systems of relationship between mentors and mentees to achieve specific, spontaneous and adhoc demands. This mentoring programme is widely implemented to complement and strengthen formal mentoring programmes (Friday, Friday, 2002, Goldstein, Ford, 2002, Ismail et al., 2007).

Recent studies in this area highlight that formal and informal mentoring activities are different in terms of procedure, but they require comfortable relationship between gender type in order to maintain and support mentoring programme strategies and goals (Cummings, Worley, 2009, Okurame, Bologun, 2005, Turban, Dougherty, Lee, 2002, Young, Cady, Foxon, 2006). According to many scholars like Gaskill (1991), Ragins, (1997, 1999), Ragins and Cotton (1993, 1999), Young et al. (2006), and Ismail, Khian Jui and Abdullah (2009), gender type refers to the interaction between same-gender and the interaction between cross-gender in mentorship. Same-gender in mentorship is the interaction between male mentor-male protégé and the interaction between female mentor-female protégé (Allen, Eby, 2004, Hegstad, Wentling, 2005, Lyon et al., 2004). Cross-gender in mentorship is the interaction between male mentor-female protégé and female mentor-male protégé (Allen et al., 2005; Gaskill, 1991; Lyon et al., 2004). The interactions between the same and cross genders in mentoring programmes are often done through building good contacts, exchanging personal and work problems in friendly situations, and supporting individuals' advancement (Baugh, Scandura, 1999, Hansford, Ehrich, 2006, Hansford et al., 2003, Lyon et al., 2004).

Interestingly, a further observation of mentoring relationship reveals that interaction between gender type in mentorship may have a significant impact on mentees' advancement, especially career and psychosocial which is one's psychological development in and interaction with a social environment (Okurame, Bologun, 2005, Niehoff, 2006). Many scholars, such as Kram (1985), Kram and Bragar (1991), Baugh and Scandura (1999), Hunt and Michael (1983) and Ragins and Cotton (1999), explain that career is often viewed as helping individuals to acquire the skills and experiences needed to perform current and future jobs, giving advices, increasing the ability of individuals to positively influence others, and protecting individuals' dignities from affected by negative environments. Several scholars like Kram (1985), Noe (1988, 2008), Noe et al. (2002), and Lyon et al. (2004) state that psychosocial is often seen as helping individuals by building confidence, overcoming pressures and strains, assisting their personal life, having their opinions heard and valued, sharing dreams, providing feedback, being aware of contribution to relationship, and teaching with examples. In a mentoring system framework, many scholars think that same-gender in mentorship, cross-gender in mentorship and mentees' psychosocial are distinct constructs, but highly interrelated. For example, the willingness of same-gender and cross-gender to implement comfortable interactional styles in formal and/or informal mentoring programmes (e.g., communication openness and active participation) will provide mutual benefits. As a result, it may lead to an increased mentees'

psychosocial attributes. (Cox, Nkomo, 1991, Ismail et al., 2007, Scandura, 1992, Chao et al., 1992, Ragins, Cotton, 1993, 1999).

Even though numerous studies have been carried out, little is known about the predicting role of gender type in mentoring programme literature (Allen et al., 2005, Scandura, Williams, 2001). Many scholars reveal that gender type in mentorship is less emphasized in previous studies because they have stressed on the characteristics of a mentoring programme and given less attention on the significance of gender perspective in developing mentoring programme models. As a result, findings from such studies have neglected the views of gender in explaining the strength and direction of complex mentoring relationships in dynamic organizations (Allen et al., 2005, Hegstad, Wentling, 2005, Niehoff, 2006, Okurame, Bologun, 2005). Thus, this motivates the researchers to further explore the nature of this relationship.

Purpose of the study

This study was primarily conducted to examine two major relationships: the same gender and the cross-gender relationships. Firstly is the relationship between same-gender in mentorship and mentees' career. Next is the relationship between cross-gender in mentorship and mentees' career. Thirdly is the examination of the relationship between same-gender in mentorship and mentees' psychosocial and lastly, between cross-gender in mentorship and mentees' psychosocial.

Literature review

This section provides theoretical and empirical evidence supporting the relationship between gender type and mentees' psychosocial. Based on this review, a theoretical framework and related hypotheses are proposed.

Relationship between gender type and mentees' advancement

There are several recent studies which used a direct-effect model to investigate general mentoring programmes using different samples, such as the study by Allen and Eby (2004) which has 600 members of a professional women's business association in the US. Other examples of samples are 560 employees in Southeastern healthcare organization (Allen et al., 2005), Fortune 500 companies in US (Hegstad, Wentling, 2005), 510 first-line bank managers (Okurame, Balogun, 2005), and 194 practising veterinarians (Niehoff, 2006). These studies found that the willingness of same-gender and cross-gender to implement comfortable interaction styles in formal and informal mentoring activities (e.g., create a match relationship, no interpersonal communication barriers, cooperation and active participation in decision making) is a major

predictor of mentees' advancement, such as career and psychology (Allen et al., 2005, Hegstad, Wentling, 2005, Okurame, Bologun, 2005, Niehoff, 2006).

These findings are consistent with the notion of organizational behaviour theory, similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, Griffitt, 1973), and attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969). In general, these theories explicitly posit the interaction styles among individuals who have different backgrounds in doing activities that may affect individuals' advancement (Bowlby, 1969, Byrne, Griffitt, 1973, Turban et al., 2002, Young et al., 2006). Specifically, similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, Griffitt, 1973) is often viewed from a social psychology emphasizes more on the integration of similarity, attractiveness, and liking in human relationship (Berscheid, 1994, Sprecher, 1998). The application of this theory in a mentoring programme shows that the ability of mentors and mentees who have different and same gender types to comfortably interact in formal and informal mentoring programmes may lead to increased mentees' advancement, such as career and psychosocial in organizations (Hegstad, Wentling, 2005, Niehoff, 2006, Turban et al., 2002).

The attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) states that our ability to develop and maintain relationships begin at a very early age based on our attachment to a parent or primary caretaker (Ainsworth, et al., 1978). This theory may add to the explanation of why some mentors and mentees may feel more comfortable to keep a professional relationship and develop a personal bond (Young et al., 2006). The application of this theory in a mentoring programme shows that comfortable and active interactions between same and different gender types in formal and informal mentoring activities may lead to improved mentees' advancement, especially career and psychosocial advancement in organizations (Allen et al., 2005, Okurame, Bologun, 2005, Young et al., 2006).

Conceptual framework and research hypotheses

The literature given above is used as a basis to develop a new structural conceptual framework for this study as shown in Figure 1.

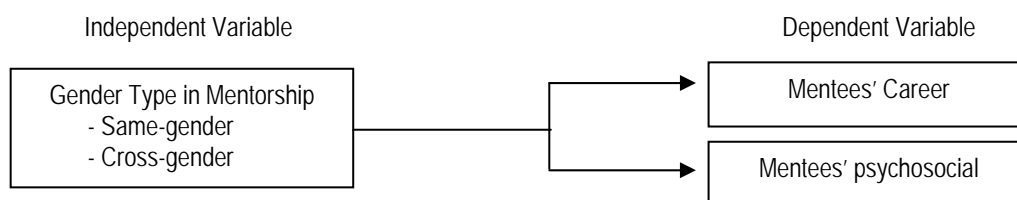


Figure 1. Relationship between gender type in mentorship and mentees' advancement

Based on the framework, it seems reasonable to assume that the willingness of same-gender and cross-gender types to comfortably interact in mentorship may positively influence mentees' advancement in a public university in Sarawak, Malaysia (EMUNIVERSITY) employees as this practice has influenced Western employees. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that:

H1: Same-gender positively related with mentees' career;

H2: Cross-gender positively related with mentees' career;

H3: Same-gender positively related with mentees' psychosocial;

H4: Cross-gender positively related with mentees' psychosocial.

Methodology

Research design

This study used a cross-sectional research design that allowed the researchers to integrate literature review, in-depth interviews, pilot study and survey questionnaires as the main procedures to gather data for this study. As supported by many researchers, the use of such methods may gather accurate and less bias data (Cresswell, 1998, Sekaran, 2000) and it allows the researcher to create differences among variables being studied. At the initial stage of data collection, in-depth interviews were first conducted involving four experienced employees, namely two from the human resource department and two from the academic sector of the target public university in Sarawak, Malaysia (EMUNIVERSITY). The candidates were selected based on a purposive sampling technique where each of them has more than seven years of working experience. The information gathered from interviews showed that the studied organization had consistently and continuously implemented a formal mentoring programme since 1993. This mentoring programme was implemented to support the organization's vision, that is, to become an exemplary university of an internationally acknowledged stature and a scholarly institution of choice through human capital development programmes, for example this formal mentoring programme. For confidential reasons, the name of the organization is kept anonymous.

A mentoring programme is implemented at both non-academic and academic divisions in the studied organization. In order to understand the nature of this mentoring programme, the in-depth interviews were conducted involving two members of the human resource staffs and two from the academic staff during and before the pilot study. Information gathered from the interviews show that mentors are management employees and senior employees whereas mentees are supporting staff and junior staff. Interviews between mentors and mentees are often done through formal and/or informal group discussions

(i.e., department/teamwork meetings) and/or individual discussions (i.e., individual assignment, counseling and performance appraisal).

A majority of employees perceived that same-gender and cross-gender groups are willing to use comfortable interaction styles (i.e., communication openness and participation style) in planning and implementing organizational functions, such as human resource, finance, academic programmes and physical facilities. As a result, it may enhance mentees' career and psychosocial in the organization. Although the nature of this relationship is interesting, little is known about the predicting role of gender type in the mentoring programme model of the organization because of the scarcity of research literature in this country (Khian Jui, 2008).

The information gathered from such employees was refined, categorized and compared with the related literature review. The outcomes of the triangulated information were used as a guideline to develop the content of survey questionnaires for a pilot study. Next, a pilot study was conducted by discussing pilot questionnaires with four employees who worked in the organization. Finally, the information gathered from the literature, the in-depth interviews and the pilot study were considered to verify the content and format of questionnaires for an actual survey. Back translation technique was used to translate the content of questionnaires in Malay and English in order to increase the validity and reliability of the instrument (Van Maanen, 1983).

Measures

The survey questionnaire has three sections. The first section, same gender type in mentorship had seven items and cross gender type in mentorship had seven items that were modified from mentoring programme literature (Gaskill, 1991, Okurame, Bologun, 2005, Ragins, McFarlin, 1990, Young, Cady, Foxon, 2006). The second section, mentees' career had 5 items that were modified from career development literature (Allen, Eby, 2004, Hegstad, Wentling, 2005, Levesque et al., 2005, Ragins et al., 2000). Finally the last section, mentees' psychosocial had five items that were modified from psychosocial literature (Allen, Eby, 2004, Allen et al., 2005, Levesque et al., 2005; Niehoff, 2006, Noe, 1988, 2008). These items were measured using a seven-item scale ranging from "very strongly disagree/dissatisfied" (1) to "very strongly agree/satisfied" (7). The demographic variables were used as controlling variables because this study focused on employees' attitudes.

Unit of analysis and sample

The unit of analysis for this study was 1456 employees who work in one public university in Sarawak, Malaysia. During the data collection, the human

resource (HR) manager did not provide the list of registered employees and did not allow the researchers to directly distribute survey questionnaires to employees who worked in the organization. After considering this situation, a quota sampling was used to determine the number of samples based on the duration of study and budget constraints, which is 200 employees. Besides that, a convenient sampling technique was chosen to distribute the survey questionnaires to employees because the researchers could not choose the respondents randomly. Therefore, 200 survey questionnaires were distributed to employees who were willing to answer the survey questionnaires through contact persons (i.e. assistant HR manager, supervisors and/or heads of department/unit) in the organization. Out of the 200 questionnaires, 153 usable questionnaires were returned to the researchers, yielding a response rate of 76.5 percent. The survey questionnaires were answered by participants based on their consent and on a voluntary basis. The number of this sample exceeds the minimum sample of 30 participants as required by probability sampling technique, showing that it can be analyzed using inferential statistics (Sekaran, 2000, Leedy, Ormrod, 2005).

Data analysis

A statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 15.0 was used to analyze the questionnaire data. Firstly, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to assess the validity and reliability of measurement scales (Hair et al., 1998, Nunally, Bernstein, 1994). Relying on the guidelines set up by these statisticians, a factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation was first done for all items that represented each research variable, and this was followed by other tests, that is, Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin Test (KMO), Bartlett's test of sphericity, eigenvalue, variance explained and Cronbach alpha. The value of factor analysis for all items that represented each research variable was 0.5 or more, indicating the items met the acceptable standard of validity analysis. All research variables exceeded the acceptable standard of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin's value of 0.6 and were significant in Bartlett's test of sphericity, showing the measure of sampling adequacy for each variable was acceptable. All research variables had eigenvalues larger than 1, signifying the variables met the acceptable standard of validity analysis (Hair et al., 1998). All research variables exceeded the acceptable standard of reliability analysis of 0.70, indicating the variables met the acceptable standard of reliability analysis (Nunally, Bernstein, 1994). Variables that meet the acceptable standard of validity and reliability analyzes will be used in testing hypotheses. Secondly, Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were conducted to determine the co linearity problem and the usefulness of the data set. Finally,

Stepwise regression analysis was used to assess the direct relationship between variables as well as show the causal relationship and the nature of relationship between variables. Stepwise regression can accurately quantify the magnitude and direction of many independent variables and one dependent variable (Aiken et al., 1991, Berenson, Levine, 1992, Foster et al., 1998).

Findings

Sample profile

Table 1 shows that the majority respondents were female (57.5 percent), male supervisors (56.9 percent), aged between 21 to 30 years (46.4 percent), STPM/diploma holders (33.3 percent), staff who served less than five years (54.9 percent), non-academic staff (58.2 percent), and employees who worked in academic department (53.6 percent).

Table 1

Respondent characteristics (N=153)		
<u>Gender (%)</u>	<u>Age (%)</u>	<u>Length of Service (%)</u>
Male=42.5	21 to 30 years old=46.4	0 to 5 years=54.9
Female=57.5	31 to 40 years old=39.2	6 to 10 years=22.2
	41 to 50 years old=9.8	11 to 15 years=13.7
	More than 51 years old=4.6	More than 16 years=9.2
<u>Supervisor's Gender (%)</u>	<u>Academic Qualification (%)</u>	<u>Position (%)</u>
Male=56.9	PMR=0.7	Academic Staff=41.8
Female=29.4	SPM=22.9	Non-Academic Staff=58.2
Male and Female=13.7 (More than one Supervisor)	STPM/Diploma=33.3	
	Degree/Bachelor=15.0	<u>Division (%)</u>
	Master Degree=18.3	Academic Department=53.6
	PhD/Doctor of Philosophy=9.8	Non-Academic Department=46.4

Note:

PMR : Lower Certificate of Education

SPM/MCE : Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia/ Malaysia Certificate of Education

STPM : Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia/ Higher School Certificate

Exploratory factor analysis

Table 2 and Table 3 show the results of validity and reliability analysis for measurement scales. These statistical analyses confirmed that the measurement scales met the acceptable standard of validity and reliability analyses.

Table 2

Item validity					
Variable	Item	Component			
		1	2	3	4
Same gender	1. Increase relationships with key persons in the organization			.79	
	2. Achieve work objectives, career goals, and recognition			.72	
	3. Enhance contact with senior executives			.86	
	4. Increase work performance			.82	
	5. Be proposed for promotion			.74	
	6. Become a role model for others by setting good attitude, value and behavior			.82	
	7. Enhance enjoyable informal work exchange and other outside experiences			.91	
Cross-gender	1. Increase relationships with key persons in the organization	.78			
	2. Achieve work objectives, career goals, and recognition	.84			
	3. Enhance contact with senior executives	.81			
	4. Increase work performance	.89			
	5. Be propose for promotion	.86			
	6. Become a role model for others by setting good attitude, value and behavior	.90			
	7. Enhance enjoyable informal work exchange and other outside experiences	.90			
Career	1. My immediate boss/supervisor provided specific guidance for achieving my career goals				.76
	2. My immediate boss/supervisor gave me assignments that prepare me for a higher position				.62
	3. My immediate boss/supervisor suggested specific strategies to accomplish work objectives				.58
	4. My immediate boss/supervisor reduced work risks that could threaten the possibility of advancement				.63
	5. My immediate boss/supervisor exchanged experiences with me to improve job problems in the workplace				.69
Psychosocial	1. My immediate boss/supervisor act as a good role model for me		.77		
	2. My immediate boss/supervisor encouraged me to try new ways of behaving in doing my job		.57		
	3. I respect and admire my immediate boss/supervisor		.84		
	4. I agree with my immediate boss's/supervisor's attitudes and values		.84		
	5. My immediate boss/supervisor helped me meet new colleagues		.63		

Table 3

The validity and reliability analyses for measurement scales

Measure	Items	Factor Loadings	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Eigenvalue	Variance Explained	Cronbach Alpha (α)
Same gender	7	.72 to .91	.92	937.10	5.23	74.73	.94
Cross gender	7	.78 to .90	.89	831.10	4.68	78.01	.95
Career	5	.58 to .76	.85	739.90	4.57	65.30	.91
Psychosocial	5	.57 to .84	.87	503.39	3.65	73.06	.91

Analysis of the constructs

Table 4 shows the results of Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics. Mean scores for all variables are between 4.8 and 5.2, signifying the levels of mentees' psychosocial, same-gender, and cross-gender ranging from high (4.0) to highest level (7.0). The correlation coefficients for the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender), and the relationship between the dependent variable (i.e., mentees' career and psychosocial) were less than 0.90, indicating the data were not affected by any serious co-linearity problem (Hair et al., 1998).

Table 4

Pearson correlation analysis and descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Pearson Correlation Analysis			
			1	2	3	4
1. Same-gender	4.8	1.1	1			
2. Cross-gender	4.9	1.1	.59**	1		
3. Career	5.0	1.1	.55**	.55**	1	
4. Psychosocial	5.2	1.1	.56**	.46**	.72**	1

Note: Significant at * $p < 0.01$

Outcomes of testing hypotheses 1 and 2

Table 5 shows that demographic variables were entered in Step 1 and then followed by entering independent variable (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender) in Step 2. Mentees' psychosocial was used as the dependent variable. An examination of multi co-linearity in the coefficients table shows that the tolerance value for the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender) and the dependent variables (i.e., mentees' career) were 0.88 and 0.95, respectively. These tolerance values were more than the established tolerance value of .20 (as a rule of thumb), indicating the variables were not affected by multi co linearity problems (Fox, 1991, Tabachnick et al., 2001).

Table 5

Result for stepwise regression analysis

Variables	Dependent Variable (Mentees' Career)	
	Step 1	Step 2
<u>Control variables</u>		
Gender	.08	.21**
Supervisor's gender	.14	.06
Age	-.26*	-.13
Academic qualification	-.02	.11
Length of services	.21	.10
Position	-.01	-.05
Division	-.07	.01
<u>Independent variable</u>		
Same-gender		.35***
Cross-gender		.37***
R ²	.07	.44
Adjusted R ²	.02	.41
R ² change	.07	.37
F	1.52	12.56***
F change R ²	1.52	47.77***

Note: Significant at *.05; **.01; ***.001 .

Table 5 shows the results of hypothesis testing in Step 2. Firstly, same-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' career ($\beta=0.35$, $p<0.001$), therefore H1 was supported. Secondly, cross-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' career ($\beta=0.37$, $p<0.001$), therefore H2 was supported. In terms of explanatory power, the inclusion of gender type in the Step 2 had explained 44 percent of the variance in dependent variable. This result confirms that same-gender and cross-gender in mentorship are important antecedents of mentees' psychosocial in the studied organization.

Outcomes of testing hypotheses 3 and 4

Table 6 shows that demographic variables were entered in Step 1 and then followed by entering independent variable (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender) in Step 2. Mentees' psychosocial was used as the dependent variable. An examination of multi- co-linearity in the coefficients table shows that the tolerance value for the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., same-gender and cross-gender) and the dependent variable (i.e., mentees' psychosocial) were 0.88 and 0.95, respectively. These tolerance values were more than the established tolerance value of .20 (as a rule of thumb), indicating the variables were not affected by multi co linearity problems (Fox, 1991, Tabachnick et al., 2001).

Table 6

Variables	Dependent variable (Mentees' psychosocial)	
	Step 1	Step 2
<u>Control variables</u>		
Gender	.08	.20**
Supervisor's gender	.13	.04
Age	-.31**	-.18
Academic qualification	-.00	.12
Length of services	.27*	.14
Position	.015	-.01
Division	-.109	-.05
<u>Independent variable</u>		
Same-gender		.45***
Cross-gender		.22**
R ²	.08	.40
Adjusted R ²	.04	.36
R ² change	.07	.32
F	1.78	10.68***
F change R ²	1.78	38.57***

Note: Significant at *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001.

Table 6 shows the results of hypothesis testing in Step 2. Firstly, same-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' psychosocial ($\beta=0.45$, $p<0.001$), therefore H3 was supported. Secondly, cross-gender positively and significantly correlated with mentees' psychosocial ($\beta=0.22$, $p<0.001$), therefore H4 was supported. In terms of explanatory power, the inclusion of gender type in the Step 2 had explained 40 percent of the variance in dependent variable. This result confirms that same-gender and cross-gender in mentorship are important antecedents of mentees' psychosocial in the studied organization.

Discussion and implications

Findings of this study confirm that gender type is an important determinant of mentees' career and psychosocial in the studied organization. In the context of this study, formal and informal mentoring programmes are properly done according to the university's policy and procedures. The majority of employees perceive that interaction styles between same-gender and cross-gender in mentoring programmes are done comfortably and actively. Consequently, it may lead to an increased mentees' career and psychosocial in the organization.

The implications of this study can be divided into three categories: theoretical contribution, robustness of research methodology and practical contribution. In terms of theoretical contribution, the findings of this study show that interaction between same-gender and cross-gender in mentoring programmes will create caring and comfortable environments to discuss, seek

clarification, and encourage sharing knowledge and experiences, as well as make decisions for improving job performance and solving work problems. As a result, it may lead to an enhanced mentees' career and psychosocial in the organization. This result is consistent with studies by Allen, Day, Lentz (2005), Hegstad, Wentling (2005), Okurame, Bologun (2005), Niehoff, (2006). This study supports and recognises the importance of gender's perspective as stated in mentorship literature mostly published in Western countries.

With respect to the robustness of research methodology, the survey questionnaires used in this study met the acceptable standards of validity and reliability analyses. Thus, it results in the production of accurate and reliable findings.

In terms of practical contributions, the findings of this study can be used as guidelines by management to improve the implementation of mentoring programmes in organizations. In order to achieve such objectives management needs to implement some improvement efforts. Firstly, update learning content and method. For example, continuous training programmes should focus on up to date knowledge, relevant skills and good moral values. If this training programme is properly implemented it can upgrade the capability of same-gender and cross-gender to use comfortable interactional styles in handling the mentees' needs expectations and demands. Second, encourage communication openness style. For example, mentees should be allowed to provide suggestions, comments and take part in planning and managing mentoring activities. If this aspect is appropriately implemented it will increase mentees' perceptions of fairness, satisfaction, commitment, trust and appreciation about the programmes. Third, diversify mentoring activities. For example, mentoring activities should be diversified to cater mentees' needs and preferences, such as sports and retreats. Readiness of mentors and mentees to commit with such activities beyond office hours and outside the office may strengthen brotherhood, accountability and motivation in the workplace. By considering these suggestions, an organization may motivate mentors and mentees to put great effort in order to maintain and increase organizational competitiveness in an era of global competition.

Conclusion

This study proposed a conceptual framework based on the mentoring research literature. The measurement scales used in this study satisfactorily met the standards of validity and reliability analyses. The outcomes of stepwise regression analysis confirmed that gender type in mentorship did act as an important predictor of mentees' career and psychosocial in the studied organization. This result has supported and extended mentoring research literature mostly published in Western organizational settings. Therefore, current

research and practice within mentoring programme models need to consider gender type in mentorship as a crucial aspect of organizational mentoring programme where the willingness of same-gender and cross gender to properly use comfortable interactional styles (e.g., communication openness and active involvement) in mentoring programmes may strongly induce positive subsequent mentee outcomes (e.g., career, satisfaction, commitment, performance, trust, and good moral values). Thus, these positive outcomes may motivate mentees to sustain and attain organizational strategic visions, missions and objectives.

The conclusions drawn from this study should consider the following limitations. First, a cross-sectional research design used to gather data at one time within the period of study might not capture the developmental issues or causal connections between variables of interest. Second, this study does not specify the relationship between specific indicators for the independent variable and dependent variable. Third, the outcomes of multiple regression analysis have only focused on the level of performance variation explained by the regression equations (Tabachnick et al., 2001), but there are still a number of unexplained factors that need to be incorporated to identify the causal relationship among variables and their relative explanatory power. Finally, the sample for this study was taken from one public organization that allowed the researchers to gather data via survey questionnaires. These limitations may decrease the ability to generalize the results of this study to other organizational settings.

The conceptual and methodological limitations of this study should be considered when designing future research. First, several organizational and personal characteristics should be further explored, as this may provide meaningful perspectives for understanding how individual similarities and differences affect the mentoring programme within an organization. Second, other research designs (e.g., longitudinal studies) should be used to collect data and describe the patterns of change and the direction and magnitude of causal relationships between variables of interest. Third, to fully understand the effect of gender type in mentoring programmes on mentees' career and psychosocial, more organizations need to be used in future study. Fourth, other specific theoretical constructs of gender type, such as gender ethnic, gender age, gender position and gender culture to be considered because it has widely been recognized as an important link between mentoring programme and mentees' psychosocial (Gaskill, 1991, Ismail, Boerhannoedin, Rasip, 2009, Levesque et al., 2005, Turban et al., 1994, Young et al., 2006). Finally, other mentee outcomes of gender type in mentoring programme (e.g., leadership, motivation to learn, transfer of learning and performance) should be considered given their prominence in mentoring research literature (Cumming, Worley, 2009, Goldstein, Ford, 2002, Ismail, Khian Jui, Abdullah, 2009, Noe, 2008). The importance of these issues needs to be further elaborated in future study.

References

- Aiken, L.S., West, S.G., and Reno, R.R. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*, Newsbury Park, California: SAGE Publications, Inc
- Ainsworth, M.D.S., Blehar, M., Waters, E., Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment*, Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Allen, T.D., Eby, L.T., "Factors related to mentor reports of mentoring functions provided: Gender and relational characteristics", *Sex Roles*, 50, 2004, pp. 129-139
- Allen, T.D., Day, R., Lentz, E., "The role of interpersonal comfort in mentoring relationships", *Journal of Career Development*, 31, 2005, pp. 155-169
- Bahniuk, M.H., Hill, S.K., "Promoting career success through mentoring", *Review of Business*, 19, 1998, pp. 4-7
- Baugh, S.G., Scandura, T.A., "The effect of multiple mentors on protégé attitudes the work setting", *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, 14, 1999, pp. 503-522
- Berenson, L.M., Levine, D.M. (1992). *Basic business statistics: Concepts and applications*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Englewood Cliffs
- Berscheid, E., "Interpersonal relationships", *Annual Review of Psychology*, 45, 1994, pp. 79-129
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*, New York: Basic Books
- Byrne, D., Griffitt, W., "Interpersonal attraction", *Annual Review of Psychology*, 24, 1973, pp. 317-336
- Chao, G.T., Walz, P.M., Gardner, P.D., "Formal and informal mentorships: A comparison on mentoring functions and contrast with non mentored counterparts", *Personnel Psychology*, 45, 1992, pp. 619-636
- Cox, T.H., Nkomo, S.M., "A race and gender-group analysis of the early career experience of MBAs", *Work and Occupations*, 13, 1991, pp. 431-46
- Cresswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*, London: SAGE publications
- Cummings, T.G., Worley, C.G. (2009). *Organization Development & Change* (9th ed.), Masan: South-Western Cengage Learning
- Dennison, S. (2000). *A win-win peer mentoring guidebook: A practical manual for designing and managing a mentoring program*, Clemson, SC: National Dropout Prevention Center.
- Edlind, E.P., Haensly, P.A., "Gifts of mentorship", *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 29, 1985, pp. 55-60
- Foster, D.P., Stine, B., Waterman, R. (1998). *Business analysis using regression: A casebook*, Springer-Verlag
- Fox, J. (1991). *Regression diagnostics*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Friday, E., Friday, S.S., "Formal mentoring: Is there a strategic fit?", *Management Decision*, 40, 2002, pp. 152-157
- Gaskill, L.R., "Same-sex and cross-sex mentoring of female protégés: A comparative analysis", *Career Development Quarterly*, 40, 1991, pp. 48-64
- Goldstein, I.L., Ford, J.K. (2002). *Training in organizations*, Wadsworth: Thomson Learning
- Gregson, K., "Mentoring", *Employee Counseling Today*, 6, 1994, pp. 26-7
- Hair, J.F., Anderson, R.E., Tatham, R.L., Black, W.C. (1998). *Multivariate Data Analysis* (5th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall International
- Hansford, B., Tennent, L., Ehrich, L., "Educational mentoring: Is it worth the effort?", *Educational Research & Perspectives*, 30, 2003, pp. 42-75
- Hawkey, K., "Roles, responsibilities, and relationships in mentoring: A literature review and agenda for research", *Journal of Teacher Education*, 48(5), 1997, pp. 325-335

- Hegstad, C.D., Wentling, R.M., "Organizational antecedents and moderators that impact on the effectiveness of exemplary formal mentoring programs in fortune 500 companies in the United States", *Human Resource Development International*, 8, 2005, pp. 467-487
- Hunt, D.M., Michael, C., "Mentoring a career training and developing tool", *Academy of Management Review*, 8, 1983 pp. 475-85
- Irving, E.S., Moore, W.D., Hamilton, R.J., "Mentoring for high ability school students", *Education and Training*, 45, 2003, pp. 100-109
- Ismail, A., Abu Bakar, R., Abg Abdullah, S.N.M., Maja, A., Guatleng, C.O., & Abdullah, M.M. Peranan Program Mentoring Dalam Pembangunan Pelajar: Satu Kajian Di Sebuah Universiti Awam Di Malaysia Timur. This paper was published in the proceeding of ASEMAL5, 18-19 August 2007, The Legend Hotel, Kuala Lumpur
- Ismail, A., Boerhannoedin, A., Rasip, O. (2009). The mediating effect of same-gender in the relationship between mentoring program and individuals' psychosocial, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 1(8), 49-68
- Ismail, A., Khian Jui, M.K. Abdullah, M.M., "Formal Mentoring, Gender Type in Mentorship and Individuals' Psychosocial: A Moderating Model Approach", *Pakistan Journal of Commerce & Social Sciences*, 3, 2009, pp. 10-24
- Johnson, S.K., Geroy, G.D., Griego, O.V., "The mentoring model theory: dimensions in mentoring protocols", *Career Development International*, 4, 1991, pp. 384-391
- Khian Jui, M.K., "The relationship between mentoring types and individuals' advancement: Gender differences in mentorship as a moderator", *Unpublished Final Year Project Report*, 2008, Kota Samarahan: Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Malaysia
- Kram, K.E. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*, Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman
- Kram, K.E., Bragar, M.C. (1992). *Development through mentoring: a strategic approach*. In Montross, D., & Shinkman, C. (Eds.), *Career Development: Theory and Practice*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA, pp. 221-254
- Leedy, P.D., Ormrod, J.E. (2005). *Practical research: Planning and design*, Pearson Education Ltd
- Levesque, L.L., O'Neill, R.M., Nelson, T., Dumas, C., "Sex differences in the perceived importance of mentoring functions", *Career Development International*, 10, 2005, pp. 429-443
- Lyon, J.M., Farrington, P., Westbrook, J., "Mentoring of scientists and engineers: A Comparison of gender", *Engineering Management Journal*, 16, 2004, pp. 17-25
- Merriam, S., "Mentors and proteges: A critical review of the literature", *Adult Education Quarterly*, 33, 1993, pp. 161-73
- Niehoff, B.P., "Personality predictors of participant as a mentor", *Career Development International*, 11, 2006, pp. 321-333
- Noe, R.A., "An investigation of the determinants of successful assigned mentoring relationships", *Personnel Psychology*, 41, 1988, pp. 457-479
- Noe, R.A. (2008). *Employee training and development* (4th ed.), Boston: McGraw-Hill
- Noe, R.A., Greenberger, D.B., Wang, S. (2002). *Mentoring: What we know and where we might go*, New York: Elsevier Science
- Northcott, N., "Mentoring in nursing", *Nursing Management*, 7, 2000, pp. 30-2
- Nunally, J.C., Bernstein, I.H. (1994). *Psychometric Theory*, New York: McGraw Hill.
- Okurame, D.E., Balogun, S.K., "Role of informal mentoring in the career success of first-line bank managers", *Career Development International*, 10, 2005, pp. 512-521
- Oliver C., Aggleton, P. (2002). *Mentoring For Professional Development in Health Promotion: A Review of Issues Raised by Recent Research*, Institute of Education, UK. University of London. 102, pp. 30-38

- Ragins, B.R., "Diversified mentoring relationships in organizations: A power perspective", *Academy of Management Review*, 22, 1997, pp. 482-521
- Ragins, B.R. (1999). *Gender and mentoring relationships*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Ragins, B.R., Cotton, J.L., "Gender and willingness to mentor in organizations", *Journal of Management*, 19, 1993, pp. 97-111
- Ragins, B.R., Cotton, J.L., "Mentor functions and outcomes: A comparison of men and women in formal and informal mentoring relationships", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84, 1999, pp. 529-550
- Ragins, B.R., McFarlin, D.B., "Perceptions of mentor roles in cross-gender mentoring relationships", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 37, 1990, pp. 321-339
- Ragins, B.R., Cotton, J.L., Miller, J.S., "Marginal mentoring: The effects of type of mentor, quality of relationship, and program design on work and career outcomes", *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, 2000, pp. 1177-1194
- Ritchie, A., Genoni, P., "Mentoring in professional associations: Continuing professional development for librarians", *Health Libraries Review*, 16, 1999, pp. 216-225
- Ritchie, N., Connolly, M., "Mentoring in public sector management: Confronting accountability and control", *Management Education and Development*, 24, 1993, pp. 253-71
- Russell, J.E.A., Adams, D.M., "The changing nature of mentoring in organizations: An introduction to the special issue on mentoring in organizations", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 51, 1997, pp. 1-14
- Scandura, T.A., "Mentorship and career mobility: An empirical investigation", *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 13, 1992 pp. 169-174
- Scandura, T.A., Williams, E.A., "An investigation of the moderating effects of gender on the relationships between mentorship initiation and protégé perceptions of mentoring functions", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 59, 2001, pp. 342-363
- Sekaran, U. (2000). *Research methods for business: A skill building approach*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc
- Sprecher, S., "Insiders' perspectives on reasons for attraction to a close other", *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 61, 1998, pp. 287-300
- Tabachnick, B.G., Barbara, G., Fidell, L.S. (2001). *Using multivariate statistics*, Sydney: Allyn & Bacon
- Turban, D.B., Dougherty, T.W., "Role of protégé personality in receipt of mentoring and career success", *Academy of Management Journal*, 37, 1994, pp. 688-702
- Turban, D.B., Dougherty, T.W., Lee, F.K., "Gender, race and perceived similarity effects in developmental relationships: The moderating role of relationship duration", *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 61, 2002, pp. 240-262
- Van Maanen, J. (1983). *Qualitative Methodology*. Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications
- Wanguri, D.M., "Diversity, perceptions of equity, and communicative openness in the workplace", *The Journal of Business Communication*, 33, 1996, pp. 443-57
- Young, A.M., Cady, S., Foxon, M.J., "Demystifying gender type in mentoring: Theoretical perspectives and challenges for future research on gender and mentoring", *Human Resource Development Review*, 5, 2006, pp. 148-175