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## Mentors' Perceptions of Negative Mentoring Experiences: Scale Development and Nomological Validation

Lillian T. Eby, Jaime R. Durley, and Sarah C. Evans  
University of Georgia

Belle Rose Ragins  
University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee

Three studies were conducted to develop a psychometrically sound, multidimensional measure of mentors' perceptions of negative experiences with their protégés. In Study 1, items were developed, and content-related validity was established. In Study 2, CFA was used to establish the dimensionality of the new measure. Construct-related (convergent and discriminant) and criterion-related validity evidence were also obtained by using data from matched mentor–protégé dyads. Study 3 replicated the factor structure of the instrument and provided additional validity evidence by using a sample of female academic mentors. The findings are discussed in terms of broadening the scope of mentoring research to consider the mentor's perspective of relationship problems and dyadic processes in mentoring relationships.

*Keywords:* mentoring relationships, mentor, protégé, social exchange, scale development

While typically viewed as a mutually enriching developmental relationship, there is growing recognition that relational problems can exist in mentoring (Feldman, 1999; Scandura, 1998). Most of the existing research on problems in mentoring relationships has examined the protégé perspective and found that some protégés report problems such as personality mismatches, mentor neglect, mentor sabotage, and mentors lacking technical expertise, among other things (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004; Eby, McManus, Simon, & Russell, 2000). While the protégé perspective is important, it is also essential to understand the mentor's perspective on relational problems since individuals can have different reactions to the same relationship, provide different recollections of the same objective relational event, and use different criteria to judge relationship effectiveness (Duck, 1992; Levinger, 1983). In fact, in the only published empirical study to date that focused on the mentor's account of problems in mentoring, Eby and McManus (2004) identified a wide range of problems, many of which were substantively different from those reported by protégés (e.g., protégé unwillingness to learn, ingratitude, deceit, jealousy, and competition).

It is not surprising that mentors and protégés can have different experiences in, and reactions to, mentoring since each person occupies a unique role in the relationship. A mentor is expected to

be a guide, teacher, and coach for a protégé, and the protégé is expected to be an eager learner who is willing to heed his or her mentor's advice (Kram, 1985). Moreover, mentors must strike a careful balance between being supportive of their protégés yet willing to provide constructive criticism. Protégés are expected to show respect and deference to their mentors while also developing an independent professional image. These sometimes competing role expectations can create strain on a mentoring relationship, and the difficulty one experiences managing these role requirements can lead to perceptions of negative mentoring experiences. Such perceptions are important to study since they can fundamentally alter a relationship and may have reverberating effects on work attitudes and well-being (Levinger, 1983; Scandura, 1998). In support of this idea, research from the protégé's perspective finds that perceptions of negative experiences with a mentor relates to a wide range of work, career, relational, and personal outcomes for a protégé (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2004).

The purpose of this research is to develop a psychometrically sound measure of the unique relational challenges experienced by the mentor and investigate how these experiences influence relational processes and outcomes. This will provide a necessary and critical tool to advance research in the area of negative mentoring experiences and provide a more comprehensive and balanced perspective on mentors' experiences in mentoring relationships. Developing a reliable and valid measure of mentors' negative mentoring experiences may also be useful in evaluating the effectiveness of formal mentoring programs. Further, our measure will provide some initial insight into the types of individuals that mentors find difficulty working with as protégés, which may have implications for protégé selection and training.

Three studies were conducted. The first study outlines the development of the instrument and provides content validity evidence. The second study uses data from a matched sample of mentors and protégés to establish construct and criterion-related validity for the instrument developed in Study 1. The third study replicates the factor structure of the newly developed measure and provides additional validity evidence.

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Lillian T. Eby, Jaime R. Durley, and Sarah C. Evans, Department of Psychology, University of Georgia; Belle Rose Ragins, Sheldon B. Lubar School of Business, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

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Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Lillian T. Eby, 228 Psychology Building, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602. E-mail: leby@uga.edu

### Theoretical Foundations

Focusing on mentors' perceptions of negative experiences with protégés requires a discussion of three key points. First, it is important to explain how mentors involved in what are typically viewed as positive and affirming relationships can have negative experiences. Second, we need to clarify how mentors' negative mentoring experiences are conceptually distinct from positive experiences. Finally, it is necessary to illustrate that mentoring relationships are not only better understood by examining negative experiences, but that it is only through understanding negative aspects that we gain a complete and balanced picture of mentoring. Social exchange theory (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) provides a theoretical platform to address these key points.

Social exchange theory has been applied to many different types of relationships, including mentoring (e.g., Eby et al., 2004; Ensher, Thomas, & Murphy, 2001; Young & Perrewé, 2000). This theory is particularly well-suited for understanding mentoring since it is most appropriately applied to moderately intimate relationships as opposed to exchanges between "deeply positive, intimate partners" (Levinger, 1999, p. 42). Like other versions of social exchange theory (e.g., Blau, 1964, Thibaut and Kelley's (1959) social-psychological interpretation of social exchange theory focuses on the exchanges that occur within a relationship and how these exchanges influence affective and behavioral reactions to a relationship. Thibaut and Kelley's version of social exchange theory emphasizes that in all relationships there are not just benefits (i.e., positive experiences) but also costs (i.e., negative experiences). Benefits include material possessions, the receipt of help and support from one's partner, psychological gratification, and positive emotions. Costs include material investments in the relationship, help and support provided to one's partner, emotional energy, and relationship-induced stress (Levinger, 1983, 1999; Rusbult, 1983; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Relationship benefits and costs accrue through the exchange of resources; benefits have a positive effect, whereas costs have a negative effect, on individual reactions, attitudes, and outcomes (Huston & Burgess, 1979).

An important premise of social exchange theory is that negative experiences are distinct aspects of a relationship rather than simply the absence of benefits (Sprecher, 1992; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). This means that an individual can report both positive and negative events in the same relationship (Duck, 1994). For example, a mentor may find a mentoring relationship generally rewarding (a benefit) while also reporting some difficulty relating interpersonally with a protégé (a cost). Alternatively, a mentor may receive positive recognition from others in the organization for his or her mentoring efforts (a benefit) yet report that the protégé occasionally behaves in a jealous and/or competitive manner (a cost). A comparison of negative and positive experiences as reported by mentors highlights this important conceptual distinction. For example, the negative experiences of protégé unwillingness to learn, sabotage, deception, and interpersonal difficulty (Eby & McManus, 2004) are not just the opposite of the positive experiences of generativity, loyalty, enhanced job performance, rewarding personal experience, or recognition by others (Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

Since relationships can be marked by both positive and negative experiences, the extent to which a relationship is viewed as generally positive or negative depends on the balance of costs and benefits (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Mentoring scholars have made

similar claims that mentoring relationships as a whole exist on a continuum with positive relationships anchored on one end and negative relationships anchored on the other end (Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000). While the general quality of a relationship falls along a single continuum, within any given relationship there are specific events or interactions that may be positive or negative (cf. J. B. Miller & Stiver, 1997). This means that in a given mentoring relationship there can be both positive and negative mentoring experiences (Fletcher & Ragins, 2007). It is the accumulation of these distinct positive and negative experiences that leads to an overall affective evaluation of the relationship.

Empirical research has supported the importance of distinguishing between the positive and negative experiences in a mentoring relationship. Research has found that protégés' perceptions of negative experiences with mentors are empirically distinct from their perceptions of positive experiences (Eby et al., 2004). Likewise, from the mentor's perspective, Ragins and Scandura (1999) found that the anticipated costs and benefits of mentoring others were only moderately correlated and that each were unique predictors of mentors' intentions to mentor in the future. Other research has found that relationship costs add unique variance to the prediction of relationship processes and outcomes among romantic partners (Rusbult, 1983) and protégés (Eby et al., 2004). Moreover, there is accumulating evidence that negative relational experiences carry more weight in predicting outcomes than do positive relational experiences (see LaBianca & Brass, 2006), further highlighting the importance of studying negative experiences in mentoring.

### Understanding Mentors' Negative Mentoring Experiences

Mentoring scholars have made important theoretical and empirical inroads into understanding negative experiences in mentoring. Feldman (1999) and Scandura (1998) presented theoretical perspectives on the topic, offering propositions and conceptual models to guide future research. In subsequent empirical research, Eby and colleagues identified the different manifestations of negative mentoring from the protégés' (Eby et al., 2000) and the mentors' (Eby & McManus, 2004) perspectives. In follow-up research, Eby and colleagues developed a psychometrically sound measure of negative experiences from the protégé perspective and linked protégés' negative mentoring experiences to psychological stress and strain, negative work attitudes, and unfavorable attitudes toward the relationship (Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2004). The present research uses this previous research as a springboard for developing a measure of mentors' negative experiences with protégés.

Of particular relevance is Eby and McManus's (2004) deductively generated taxonomy of mentors' negative experiences with protégés. This taxonomy is based on Scandura's (1998) earlier theoretical work and represents the most comprehensive work on the topic. Twelve specific types of perceived negative experiences are included in the taxonomy and represent a broad range of negative experiences with protégés. The 12 specific types of negative experiences in the taxonomy are clustered into three conceptually distinct categories or dimensions. The first category represents *protégé performance problems* and includes protégé performance below expectations, protégé unwillingness to learn, and concerns that the protégé has difficulty at work due to self-destructive behavior (e.g., substance abuse). The second category represents *interpersonal problems* and includes 4 specific types of negative

experiences with protégés: mentor–protégé conflicts, protégé impression management and gamesmanship, protégé submissiveness, and relationship deterioration. The third dimension is *destructive relational patterns*. This includes 5 specific types of negative experiences with protégés: breach of mentor trust, protégé exploitive behavior, protégé sabotage, jealousy and competitiveness, and protégé harassment. These three dimensions of negative relationship experiences are expected to be positively correlated with one another yet empirically distinct. We conducted three studies to develop and validate an instrument to assess mentors' negative experiences with protégés.

### Study 1 Overview

The purpose of Study 1 was to develop a content valid measure of mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences with protégés. A deductive approach was taken, based on Eby and McManus's (2004) taxonomy, just discussed.

#### Study 1 Method

The original transcripts from Eby and McManus (2004) were reviewed by three of the authors to develop operational definitions for each of the 12 specific types of experiences contained within the three broad dimensions of negative mentoring. Next, three subject matter experts independently generated items. Redundant items were discarded and the remaining items were revised to improve item wording, yielding an initial pool of 161 items. Several items for the negative experiences of harassment (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995), sabotage (Ragins & Scandura, 1999), impression management and gamesmanship (Bolino & Turnley, 1999; Kacmar & Ferris, 1991), submissiveness (Ragins & Scandura, 1997), and self-destructive behavior (Eby et al., 2004) were adapted from existing measures.

Content validity was established by using Hinkin and Tracey's (1999) analysis of variance approach. Items were randomly divided into 20 lists, each containing eight or nine items. Four hundred twenty undergraduate students were supplied operational definitions of the 12 types of perceived negative experiences with protégés and a list of items. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which each item fit into each type of negative experience by using a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*none or hardly at all*) to 5 (*completely*). All items were rated 12 times (each participant rated each item on each of the 12 types of experiences), and each item was rated by a total of 21 participants. College students were appropriate for this task since it required only judgments of item content and this sample has the intellectual capacity to read task statements and categorize them into pre-defined categories (Schriesheim, Powers, Scandura, Gardiner, & Lankau, 1993). Once obtained, the ratings were subjected to 161 separate analyses of variance. Duncan multiple-range tests were conducted on items where a significant omnibus *F* statistic was obtained. Post hoc comparisons indicated whether each item had a significantly higher mean rating for the a priori category of negative mentoring for which it was generated than for the other 11 categories. Items that were not significantly differentiated were removed.

### Study 1 Results

#### Content-Related Validity

A total of 47 items (29%) were eliminated based on the analysis of variance results: 6 items from mentor–protégé conflicts, 4 items

from breach of trust, 5 items from relationship deterioration, 8 items from protégé impression management and gamesmanship, 4 items from protégé submissiveness, 6 items from protégé self-destructive behavior, 5 items from protégé performance below expectations, 5 items from protégé unwillingness to learn, and 4 items from protégé sabotage. The 6 remaining items having the highest means in each of the 12 subscales (indicating the best fit with each specific type of negative experience) were retained. Since the Relationship Deterioration subscale contained fewer than 6 items, 8 new items were generated by re-reviewing the original transcripts from Eby and McManus (2004) and generating new items. Then the previously described content validity procedure was conducted on these new items along with 5 "filler" items so that participants were not rating only relationship deterioration items. All of the new relationship deterioration items were retained and the 6 items with the highest mean scores were used. Thus, the final instrument contained a total of 72 items (6 items for each of the 12 specific categories of negative mentoring experiences). These 72 items were used in Study 2 to develop a shorter and more user-friendly measure based on factor analytic results.

### Study 2 Overview

An important step in developing a valid instrument is to propose a nomological network of variables related to the construct of interest (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). This requires the use of various methods and the culmination of evidence (Messick, 1995). The process starts with the formulation of hypotheses relating the focal construct to other theoretically related constructs (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). In the sections that follow, we describe efforts designed to build such a nomological network for mentors' negative mentoring experiences with protégés by using social exchange theory as a theoretical foundation.

#### Criterion-Related Validity

Criterion-related validity examines associations between perceptions of negative mentoring experiences and theoretically relevant outcomes. Social exchange theory predicts that negative experiences in a relationship influence relationship sustainability (Levinger, 1979; Sprecher, 1992). As the costs associated with participation in a relationship increase, the relationship becomes less viable and is more likely to dissolve. Eby et al. (2004) found support for this idea; as protégés' negative mentoring experiences with mentors increased, so did their intentions to leave the relationship. Therefore, we expect to find the same effect with mentors. Moreover, even though individuals can have somewhat different views on the same relationship, we expect that mentors' reports of negative experiences will be symptomatic of problems in the mentoring relationship as a whole. Therefore, we also expect cross-over effects such that mentors' reports of mentoring problems will be related to their protégés' intentions to leave the relationship. This leads us to predict the following:

*Hypothesis 1:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be positively related to their own intentions to leave the mentoring relationship.

*Hypothesis 2:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be positively related to their protégés' intentions to leave the mentoring relationship.

Social exchange theory has also been applied to the study of stressful interpersonal encounters. Schaufeli (2006) discussed how imbalanced or unpleasant social exchanges with customers, patients, or co-workers can induce burnout. Also in line with social exchange theory, Halbesleben and Bowler (2007) discussed how individuals can experience burnout in situations where there is an inadequate return on individual investments. Several studies demonstrated that employees who routinely put more into relationships with others than they receive report higher burnout (Bakker, Schaufeli, Sixma, Bosveld, & van Dierendonck, 2000; Schaufeli, van Dierendonck, & van Gorp, 1996). These findings can be applied to mentoring relationships. In a mentoring relationship, the mentor is expected to impart guidance, advice, and wisdom, and a protégé is expected to reciprocate by heeding advice, demonstrating genuine appreciation, and exerting effort toward self-improvement (Kram, 1985; Young & Perrewé, 2000). A mentor is likely to report higher burnout in situations where the protégé is perceived as not reciprocating or behaving in a way that makes it difficult for the mentor to provide guidance and support. This leads us to predict the following:

*Hypothesis 3:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be positively related to their own burnout.

Another way to demonstrate criterion-related validity is to examine the relationship between mentors' reports of negative mentoring experiences and their protégés' reports of mentoring received. Social exchange theory predicts that when the costs of a relationship increase, the individual experiencing the cost will reduce his or her input into the relationship as a way to restore equity (Sprecher, 1992). Since what mentors give to the relationship is career-related and psychosocial mentoring support (Ensher et al., 2001; Young & Perrewé, 2000), criterion-related validity can be demonstrated if support is found for the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their protégés' reports of mentoring received.

### *Convergent and Discriminant Validity*

A second type of validity evidence involves demonstrating that a construct is related to theoretically relevant constructs (convergent validity) but is distinct from other constructs (discriminant validity). Social exchange theory suggests that mentors' negative experiences will relate to perceptions of the mentoring relationship. Two perceptions that are key constructs in social exchange theory are relationship satisfaction and perceptions of fair exchange. Social exchange theory predicts that as the costs associated with a relationship increase, individuals will report that their relationship is of lower quality and is marked by an imbalanced exchange (Levinger, 1983; Sprecher, 1992; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Again, since mentoring is a dyadic relationship and mentors' reports of relational problems are likely to be indicative of an imbalanced and potentially troubled relationship, we expect that the protégé's assessment of relational quality and fair exchange will also be predicted by the mentor's report of negative experiences. Thus, we predict the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 5:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their own reports of relational quality.

*Hypothesis 6:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their protégés' reports of relational quality.

*Hypothesis 7:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their own perceptions of a fair exchange in the relationship.

*Hypothesis 8:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their protégés' perceptions of a fair exchange in the relationship.

Another type of construct validity evidence involves demonstrating that a construct is conceptually distinct from other related constructs (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). For example, mentors' reports of negative experiences with protégés should not simply reflect low job satisfaction or a workplace characterized by dissatisfying social relationships. Moreover, it is important to rule out the possibility that the report of negative experiences reflects nothing more than a mentor's tendency to view the world around him or her in a negative light (i.e., mentor negative affect). Rather, negative mentoring experiences are conceptualized as a unique type of workplace stressor associated with a particular relational exchange (Eby et al., 2004). Therefore, the following predictions offer evidence of the discriminant validity of the measure:

*Hypothesis 9:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be distinct from general job satisfaction.

*Hypothesis 10:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be distinct from dissatisfying social relationships at work in general.

*Hypothesis 11:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be distinct from negative affect.

Finally, it is important to demonstrate that mentors' perceptions of negative experiences are distinct from their perceptions of positive experiences. Mentors' positive experiences can be broadly classified into instrumental benefits and relational benefits (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2006). Instrumental benefits include enhancement of the mentor's own job performance by mentoring others and recognition by others in the organization for their mentoring efforts. Relational benefits include a sense of satisfaction or generativity in helping protégés grow and the development of a loyal base of support within the organization. Discriminant validity can be demonstrated if negative experiences are distinct from positive mentoring experiences and if negative experiences have exploratory power over positive experiences and relationship processes in predicting mentor and protégé outcomes. This leads to a final set of predictions:

*Hypothesis 12:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be distinct from mentors' reports of instrumental and relational benefits.

*Hypothesis 13:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be a unique predictor of mentor and protégé outcomes.

### Study 2 Method

#### Participants and Procedure

A survey packet was sent to 2,501 employees, 1,552 from a large Southeastern university and 949 employees from a large Midwestern university. Employees in salaried jobs with professional titles (e.g., director, manager) were targeted since mentors tend to be white-collar, managerial, or professional. Since student-faculty mentorships may be qualitatively different, individuals classified as assistant professors, associate professors, full professors, and instructors were excluded. Survey packets contained a cover letter, mentor survey, and return envelope, along with a sealed envelope for the mentor to pass on to his or her protégé. The protégé's sealed envelope contained a cover letter, protégé survey, and return envelope. Potential participants were told that the present study was designed to learn more about the advantages and disadvantages of workplace mentoring. Following Dillman's (2000) suggestion, employees were contacted multiple times both before and after receiving the survey.

Those initially targeted (potential mentors) were instructed to return a completed survey if they were mentors but to either discard or return an unanswered survey if they were not mentors. Six hundred and fifty-nine individuals either returned a completed or an unanswered mentor survey, yielding a general response rate of 26%. This is a conservative estimate of the response rate because we could not target mentors in advance, and many participants probably discarded surveys if they did not have experience as a mentor. To identify individuals with experience as a mentor, the following question was asked (adapted from Ragins & Cotton, 1999, p. 535):

One type of work relationship is a mentoring relationship. A mentor is generally defined as a higher ranking, influential individual in the protégé's work environment who has advanced experience and knowledge and is committed to providing upward mobility and support in the protégé's career. A protégé may or may not be in the mentor's department or unit, and s/he may not be your immediate subordinate. Have you ever had a protégé? (yes or no)

Two hundred and thirty-four individuals indicated experience as a mentor. The average age of mentors was 45.8 years ( $SD = 10.2$ ); 64% were men, and 36% were women; more than 4% were Asian, more than 6% were African American, more than 89% were White, and less than 1% identified as Other. In terms of the highest education level received, 32% reported a bachelor's degree, 47% reported a master's degree, and the remaining 21% reported a doctorate or equivalent. Respondents had worked in their job an average of 7.7 years and for their organization an average of 11.7 years. There was substantial variability in reported salaries with the average being \$58,377. Respondents represented a wide range of job types (e.g., administrative unit head, manager, administrative associate, and technical/paraprofessional) and were employed in academic, administrative, and athletic units on campus. Fifty-eight percent of the mentors reported that their mentoring relationship was currently

on-going. The average reported length of the mentoring relationship was 25.3 months, and 72% reported being in informal relationships.

Eighty-nine completed protégé surveys were obtained, of which 80 matched mentor-protégé pairs were identified for testing Hypotheses 4, 6, 8, and 13. Since only mentors would have passed on surveys to protégés, we calculated protégé response rate by using the completed mentor surveys as the denominator. Thus, the protégé response rate was 38% (89/234). The average age of protégés was 33.5 years ( $SD = 10.9$ ); 74% were women, and 26% were men. All were college educated (54% bachelor's degree, 34% master's degree, 12% doctorate or equivalent) and had worked in their respective jobs for 3.8 years and at their respective universities for 5.4 years.

#### Mentor Measures

Coefficients alpha for the mentor measures were above .70 and appear on the diagonal of Table 1. Perceived negative mentoring experiences were measured with a shortened 36-item version of the instrument developed in Study 1 (the procedure used to shorten the measure is discussed below). Intentions to leave the relationship were measured with Eby et al.'s (2004) 3-item measure and were completed only by the subsample of mentors currently in a mentoring relationship ( $n = 124$ ; e.g., "I intend to exit this mentoring relationship in the near future"). Burnout was measured by the 9-item Emotional Exhaustion subscale of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (e.g., "I feel used up at the end of the workday"; Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). Relational quality was measured by Allen and Eby's (2003) 4-item measure (e.g., "My protégé and I enjoy a high-quality relationship"). Perceived fair exchange was measured by 3 items from Eby et al.'s (2004) measure (e.g., "I am putting more into the relationship than I am getting in return" [reverse scored]). General job satisfaction was measured with Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh's (1979) 3-item scale (e.g., "All in all I like my job"), and satisfaction with social relationships at work was measured by Quinn and Staine's (1979) 3-item measure (e.g., "The people I work with are friendly"). Negative affect was measured with Watson, Clark, and Tellegen's (1988) 10-item measure, which asks how one typically feels on a daily basis and uses adjective markers (e.g., upset, irritable). Positive mentoring experiences with protégés were measured with a modified version of Ragins and Scandura's (1999) measure. Items were worded so that mentors responded to the questions thinking about their current or most recent mentorship rather than about anticipated benefits. This measure contains items that focus on instrumental mentoring benefits (i.e., improved job performance through mentoring [6 items], recognition by others for mentoring [3 items]) and relational mentoring benefits (i.e., mentoring as a rewarding experience [7 items], development of a loyal base of support [2 items], and generativity from mentoring others [3 items]). All mentor measures except those for burnout and negative affect were measured with a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strong agree*) Likert-type measure with higher scores indicating higher levels of the construct (e.g., higher quality, stronger intentions). Burnout was rated on a 0 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*) scale. A frequency-based measure was used for negative affect which ranged from 1 (*almost never*) to 5 (*almost always*).

Table 1  
Correlation Matrix: Study 2

Item or variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Protégé performance problems	.93								
2. Interpersonal problems	.78**	.93							
3. Destructive relational patterns	.81**	.85**	.94						
4. Mentor intentions to leave the relationship	.51**	.48**	.51**	.83					
5. Protégé intentions to leave the relationship	.28**	.26**	.28**	.38**	.83				
6. Mentor burnout	.13	.21**	.17**	.05	.15	.89			
7. Protégé receipt of career-related mentoring	-.37**	-.42**	-.47**	-.10	-.17	-.07	.92		
8. Protégé receipt of psychosocial mentoring	-.29**	-.43**	-.36**	-.04	-.38**	-.11	.64**	.91	
9. Mentor instrumental benefits	-.11	-.11	-.13	-.07	-.02	-.18**	.31**	.17	.85
10. Mentor relational benefits	-.43**	-.45**	-.46**	-.38**	-.04	-.05	.06	-.03	.17**
11. Mentor relationship quality	-.56**	-.61**	-.57**	-.46**	-.35**	-.16**	.40**	.40**	.20**
12. Protégé relationship quality	-.46**	-.51**	-.49**	-.11	-.33**	-.17**	.74**	.74**	.15
13. Mentor fair exchange	-.61**	-.63**	-.61**	-.47**	-.13	-.14**	.30**	.30**	.22**
14. Protégé fair exchange	-.31**	-.35**	-.34**	-.03	-.30**	-.25	.58**	.59**	.06
15. Mentor job satisfaction	-.22**	-.23**	-.24**	-.06	-.13	-.37	.15	.08	.23**
16. Mentor satisfaction with social relationships	-.29**	-.26**	-.25**	-.02	-.28**	-.23**	.29**	.26**	.21**
17. Mentor negative affect	.09	.20**	.23**	.05	.29**	.44**	-.30**	-.31**	-.03
<i>M</i>	1.56	1.64	1.53	1.69	1.56	2.24	3.66	3.76	1.88
<i>SD</i>	.61	.62	.55	.73	.58	1.31	.64	.59	.75

	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Protégé performance problems								
2. Interpersonal problems								
3. Destructive relational patterns								
4. Mentor burnout								
5. Mentor intentions to leave the relationship								
6. Protégé intentions to leave the relationship								
7. Protégé receipt of career-related mentoring								
8. Protégé receipt of psychosocial mentoring								
9. Mentor instrumental benefits								
10. Mentor relational benefits	.85							
11. Mentor relationship quality	.39**	.87						
12. Protégé relationship quality	.09	.50**	.87					
13. Mentor fair exchange	.54**	.61**	.36**	.75				
14. Protégé fair exchange	.10	.31**	.62**	.27**	.72			
15. Mentor job satisfaction	.09	.18**	.20	.27**	.05	.90		
16. Mentor satisfaction with social relationships	.18**	.19**	.36**	.29**	.21	.49**	.79	
17. Mentor negative affect	-.02	-.17**	-.30**	-.13**	-.25**	-.17**	-.12	.84
<i>M</i>	3.03	4.03	4.07	3.87	4.02	4.09	3.99	1.85
<i>SD</i>	.53	.61	.60	.66	.58	.71	.68	.52

Note. *N* ranges 180–213 for mentor (125–134 for correlations with relationship turnover intentions) and 72–80 for protégé. Reliabilities appear in italics on the diagonal.

\*\*  $p < .05$ .

Protégé Measures

All protégé measures were also scaled on a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) scale. Given the design of the study, all protégés were currently in a mentoring relationship. Intentions to leave the relationship were measured with Eby et al.'s (2004) scale described above. Career-related mentoring received was measured with 15 items representing sponsorship, coaching, protection, challenge, and exposure (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Psychosocial mentoring received was measured with 15 items representing acceptance and confirmation, friendship, social, role modeling, and counseling (Ragins & McFarlin, 1990). Relational quality was measured with Allen and Eby's (2003) 4-item measure, and perceived fair exchange was measured with 3 items from Eby et al.'s (2004) measure described above. Coefficients alpha are all above .70 and appear on the diagonal of Table 1.

Study 2 Results

Final Item Selection

A multistep confirmatory factor analytic (CFA) approach was taken to develop the instrument. The goal was to select a smaller subset of items from the 72 developed in Study 1 in order to create a shorter and more user-friendly instrument. Recall that the three broad dimensions of negative mentoring (protégé performance problems, interpersonal problems, destructive relational patterns) comprise 12 more specific types of negative experiences. Therefore, we first estimated a 12-factor measurement model in order to pick the best items in each of the 12 categories. This ensured that content validity was not compromised by shortening the instrument. The covariance matrix was used as input, and the parameters were obtained by using maximum likelihood estimation as sug-

gested by Chou and Bentler (1995). Although the  $\chi^2$  was significant,  $\chi^2(494) = 1,415.75, p < .01$ , the 12-factor measurement model fit the data well (comparative fit index [CFI] = .96, non-normed fit index [NNFI] = .96, root-mean-square residual [RMSR] = .03). All parameter estimates were within acceptable range, and no standardized factor loadings or factor correlations exceeded 1.0. Moreover, *t* values for all items were significant, and the standardized factor loadings ranged from .70 to .98. To create the shortened instrument, the 3 items with the largest completely standardized factor loading were selected from each of the 12 categories. This yielded the 36-item measure of negative mentoring experiences shown in the Appendix (9 items for Protégé Performance Problems, 12 items for Interpersonal Problems, 15 items for Destructive Relational Patterns).

*Confirming the Dimensionality of the New Measure*

In the second step, a CFA was conducted on the shortened, 36-item measure. Since Eby and McManus’s (2004) taxonomy finds that mentors’ negative mentoring experiences can be grouped into the three broad dimensions, at this step we specified a three-factor measurement model consisting of Protégé Performance Problems, Interpersonal Problems, and Destructive Relational Patterns. A partial disaggregation approach was used where 3-item composites (parcels) were created for each of the three a priori dimensions (Bagozzi & Heatherton, 1994). This yielded three parcels for Protégé Performance Problems, four parcels for Interpersonal Problems, and five parcels for Destructive Relational Patterns. We randomly assigned items to subscale parcels based on Landis, Beal, and Tesluk’s (2000) recommendation. Although the chi square was significant,  $\chi^2(51) = 214.00, p < .01$ , the other fit indices indicated acceptable fit (CFI = .95, NNFI = .94, RMSR = .01). The standardized factor loadings for the three-factor model appear in Table 2.

We also examined several alternative CFA models. This included comparing the a priori three-factor model (Model A) with a one-factor model where all items loaded on a single factor (Model B) and the three alternative two-factor models. The first alternative two-factor model (Model C1) specified items for Interpersonal Problems and Destructive Relational Patterns on one

factor and items for Protégé Performance Problems on a second factor. The second alternative two-factor model (Model C2) specified items for Protégé Performance Problems and Destructive Relational Patterns on one factor and items for Interpersonal Problems on a second factor. The final alternative two-factor model (Model C3) specified items for Interpersonal Problems and Protégé Performance Problems on one factor and items for Destructive Relational Patterns on a second factor. The results of these nested model comparisons appear in Table 3 and illustrate that the a priori three-factor model fit the data significantly better than did any of the alternative models. This provides strong construct validity evidence. Items on each of the three factors were averaged to create subscales for Protégé Performance Problems, Interpersonal Problems, and Destructive Relational Patterns.

*Criterion-Related Validity*

Hypotheses 1 and 2 concerned intentions to leave the mentoring relationship. Since these predictions were applicable only to those currently in a mentorship, correlations were computed with a subsample of participants (mentor *n* = 124; protégé *n* = 80). Both of these hypotheses were supported; both mentor (Hypothesis 1) and protégé (Hypothesis 2) intentions to leave the relationship were significantly correlated with all three dimensions of negative mentoring experiences (see Table 1). Hypothesis 3 was partially supported. The negative experiences of interpersonal problems and destructive relational patterns were significantly related to mentor burnout, whereas protégé performance problems were not. Supporting Hypothesis 4, all three dimensions of negative mentoring were significantly and negatively correlated with protégé reports of career-related and psychosocial mentoring received.

The correlations in Table 1 also provide convergent and discriminant validity evidence. With respect to convergent validity, Hypothesis 5 and 6 were supported. Both mentor and protégé perceptions of relationship quality were significantly negatively correlated with all three dimensions of negative mentoring experiences. Supporting Hypotheses 7 and 8, both mentor and protégé reports of fair exchange in the relationship were significantly negatively correlated with all three dimensions of negative mentoring experiences. With respect to discriminant validity, Hypotheses 9, 10, and 11 were supported. The correlations between the three dimensions of negative mentoring experiences and general job satisfaction were small to medium in magnitude (Cohen, 1988), ranging from  $-.22$  to  $-.24$  and sharing between 4% and 6% of the variance with negative mentoring. The correlations between the three dimensions of negative mentoring and satisfaction with social relationships were likewise small to medium, ranging in magnitude from  $-.25$  to  $-.29$  and sharing between 6% and 8% of the variance with negative mentoring. The correlations between the three dimensions of negative mentoring and mentor negative affect were likewise small to medium, ranging in magnitude from  $.09$  to  $.23$  and sharing between <1% and 5% of the variance with negative mentoring.

To test the hypothesis that mentors’ perceived negative mentoring experiences are conceptually distinct from perceived positive mentoring experiences, two second-order CFAs were conducted. The first second-order CFA specified two latent higher order factors, with one factor representing negative mentoring and the other factor representing positive mentoring. The first-order fac-

Table 2  
*Standardized Factor Loadings for Item Parcels: Study 2*

Item parcel	PPP	IP	DRP
PPP Parcel 1	.96		
PPP Parcel 2	.93		
PPP Parcel 3	.95		
IP Parcel 1		.93	
IP Parcel 2		.89	
IP Parcel 3		.93	
IP Parcel 4		.91	
DRP Parcel 1			.95
DRP Parcel 2			.90
DRP Parcel 3			.90
DRP Parcel 4			.91
DRP Parcel 5			.93

*Note.* PPP = Protégé Performance Problems; IP = Interpersonal Problems; DRP = Destructive Relational Patterns.



Table 3  
Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Study 2

Model	Description	CFI	NNFI	RMSR	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$
Model A	A priori three-factor (Performance, Interpersonal, Destructive)	.95	.94	.01	214.00	51		
Model B	One-factor (Performance + Interpersonal + Destructive)	.80	.76	.02	765.01	54	551.01**	3
Model C1	Two-factor (Interpersonal + Destructive, Performance)	.90	.87	.02	415.38	53	201.38**	2
Model C2	Two-factor (Performance + Destructive, Interpersonal)	.84	.81	.02	606.31	53	392.31**	2
Model C3	Two-factor (Interpersonal + Performance, Destructive)	.86	.82	.02	556.66	53	342.66**	2

Note. Performance = Protégé Performance Problems; Interpersonal = Interpersonal Problems; Destructive = Destructive Relational Patterns; CFI = comparative fit index; NNFI = non-normed fit index; RMSR = root-mean-square residual;  $\Delta\chi^2$  = change in chi square between the alternative model (Model B, Model C1, Model C2, Model C3) and the a priori model (Model A);  $\Delta df$  = change in degrees of freedom between alternative model (Model B, Model C1, Model C2, Model C3) and the a priori model (Model A).

\*\*  $p < .05$ .

tors for negative mentoring were Protégé Performance Problems, Interpersonal Problems, and Destructive Relational Patterns. The first-order factors for positive mentoring were Instrumental Benefits and Relational Benefits. As discussed previously, a partial disaggregation approach was employed. The two-factor model provided a good fit to the data. While the chi square was significant,  $\chi^2(129) = 338.36, p < .01$ , other fit indices indicated good model fit (CFI = .96, NNFI = .95, RMSR = .02; Hu & Bentler, 1999). The estimated factor loadings of the first-order factors on the second-order factors are shown in Table 4. We also conducted an alternative second-order CFA specifying one latent factor representing overall mentoring. In this model, the five first-order factors were Protégé Performance Problems, Interpersonal Problems, Destructive Relational Patterns, Instrumental Benefits, and Relational Benefits. The fit for this model was lower (CFI = .94, NNFI = .93, RMSR = .03),  $\chi^2(130) = 406.30, p < .01$ ; and the change in chi square indicated that the second-order two-factor model fit the data significantly better than did the alternative one-factor model,  $\Delta\chi^2(1) = 67.94, p < .01$ . Taken together, this provides support for Hypothesis 12.

A final approach to demonstrate discriminant validity involved examining whether perceived negative mentoring experiences add variance to the prediction of mentor and protégé outcomes over and above positive mentoring, mentor and protégé perceptions of relationship quality, and mentor and protégé perceptions of relationship fairness. Hierarchical multiple regression was used to test this hypothesis. In Step 1, positive mentoring experiences (instrumental and relational benefits), mentor relationship quality, pro-

tégé relationship quality, mentor fair exchange, and protégé fair exchange were added as a set. In Step 2, negative mentoring experiences were added, and the change in  $R^2$  was examined for significance. Since both mentor and protégé variables were used in the regression analyses, matched data were used in these computations ( $n$  range = 75–77 due to missing data). The results are shown in Table 5 (for mentor outcomes) and Table 6 (for protégé outcomes). Negative mentoring added significant and unique variance to the prediction of mentor burnout,  $\Delta F(3, 65) = 7.49, \Delta R^2 = .23, p < .01$ ; and mentor intentions to leave the relationship,  $\Delta F(3, 65) = 3.33, \Delta R^2 = .08, p < .05$ .<sup>1</sup> In contrast, negative mentoring did not add significant and unique variance to the prediction of protégé intentions to leave the relationship, career-related mentoring, or psychosocial mentoring. Taken together, these results provide mixed support for Hypothesis 13.<sup>2</sup>

*Post hoc path analysis.* Although mentors' negative experiences were not a unique predictor of protégé intentions to leave the relationship and mentoring received, there may be an indirect relationship between mentors' reports of negative mentoring and protégé outcomes. As predicted by social exchange theory, as a mentor's perception of problems in the relationship increase, his or

Table 4  
Standardized Estimates of Relations of First-Order Latent Variables on Second-Order Latent Variables for Negative and Positive Mentoring

First-order factors	Second-order latent variables	
	Negative mentoring	Positive mentoring
Protégé Performance Problems	.80	
Interpersonal Problems	.95	
Destructive Relational Patterns	.94	
Instrumental Benefits		.73
Relational Benefits		.96

<sup>1</sup> While the change in  $R^2$  was significant, indicating that negative mentoring experiences as a set add incremental variance to the prediction of both mentor burnout and mentor intentions to leave the relationship, the negative beta weights associated with destructive relational patterns (for burnout) as well as protégé performance problems and interpersonal problems (for intentions to leave the relationship) suggest suppressor effects (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). This is not unexpected since suppression is relatively common in complex regression models with intercorrelated variables. When the hierarchical regressions were re-run by entering only one negative experience at a time, suppression effects were no longer detected, and the same pattern of effects was found for incremental validity.

<sup>2</sup> Regression models were also re-estimated for mentor burnout, mentor intentions to leave the relationship, protégé intentions to leave the relationship, and protégé receipt of career-related and psychosocial mentoring, including mentor negative affect in Step 1 as a control variable. The beta weights for mentor negative affect were nonsignificant in all regression models except the one predicting mentor burnout ( $\beta = .23, p < .01$ ). More importantly, the inclusion of mentor negative affect in Step 1 did not influence the incremental variance accounted for when the substantive variables of negative experiences were included in Step 2. Moreover, the significance of the beta weights associated with mentor negative experiences remained unchanged with the inclusion of mentor negative affect.

Table 5  
*Discriminant Validity (DV) Evidence for Mentor Outcomes: Study 2*

Variable	DV	
	Mentor burnout	Mentor intentions to leave the relationship
	Step 1 (mentor benefits)	
Mentor instrumental benefits	-.07	.15
Mentor relational benefits	-.02	-.25***
Mentor relationship quality	.05	-.44***
Protégé relationship quality	-.06	.10
Mentor fair exchange	.11	-.10
Protégé fair exchange	-.24**	.11
<i>F</i>	1.01 ( <i>dfs</i> = 6, 79)	5.22** ( <i>dfs</i> = 6, 75)
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.08	.31
	Step 2 (add negative experiences)	
Protégé performance problems	.24	-.30**
Interpersonal problems	.72***	-.06
Destructive relational patterns	-.61***	.57***
$\Delta F$	7.49** ( <i>dfs</i> = 3, 65)	3.33 ( <i>dfs</i> = 3, 65)
$\Delta R^2$	.23	.08
Total <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.31	.39

Note. Standardized betas are from each step of the regression sequence.

\*\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

her protégé may report that the relationship is of lower quality and view the relationship as less fair. In turn, perceptions of relationship quality and fairness may predict both protégé intentions to leave the relationship and mentoring received. To examine this possibility, a path analysis was conducted. This involved a series of ordinary least squares regressions to obtain standardized beta weights for each path shown in Figure 1. The results of the path analysis illustrate that when holding mentor's perceptions of positive experiences with protégés constant, mentors' reports of protégé performance problems ( $\beta = -.22, p < .10$ ) and interpersonal problems ( $\beta = -.27, p < .05$ ) predicted protégés' perceptions of relationship quality. No significant effects were found for mentor negative experiences and protégé perceptions of relationship fairness. In terms of predicting protégé intentions to exit the relationship, only protégé perceptions of relationship quality were significant ( $\beta = -.24, p < .05$ ). Protégé perceptions of relationship quality also predicted the receipt of career-related ( $\beta = .62, p < .01$ ) and psychosocial ( $\beta = .62, p < .01$ ) mentoring. In addition, protégé perceptions of fair exchange were significantly related to the receipt of both career-related ( $\beta = .20, p < .05$ ) and psychosocial ( $\beta = .20, p < .05$ ) mentoring. These results indicate that while direct effects were not found between mentor negative experiences and protégé outcomes, mentors' negative experiences did predict protégé perceptions of relationship quality, which then related to protégé outcomes. This suggests that mentors' negative experiences may be important to examine in studies interested in understanding protégé perceptions of relational quality with mentors.

*Assessment of common method bias.* Because the newly developed measure is a self-report instrument, we examined the extent to which common method bias may have influenced our findings by using the procedures outlined by Widaman (1985) and recommended by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). We specified two additional CFA models. The first CFA

model specified a measurement model that included all single-source study measures. The second CFA model specified the same measurement model and added an uncorrelated method factor. This allowed us to examine if the measurement + method model provided a better fit to the data than did the measurement-only model as well as to compare the proportion of variance attributable to trait (measurement) variance versus that attributable to method variance. The measurement model fit the data significantly better than did the measurement + method model,  $\Delta\chi^2(30) = 1,361.60, p < .01$ . Moreover, the proportion of variance attributable to trait (measurement) variance was substantially higher than that associated with method variance (36% vs. 8%, respectively).

### Study 3 Overview

An important step in any scale development effort involves replication with an independent sample of participants. Study 3 was designed with this objective in mind. Data were collected from a sample of female faculty members serving as mentors to graduate students. This provides a strong context for replication because it allows us to examine whether the factor structure associated with the newly developed instrument holds up in a different mentoring context. We also obtained additional validity evidence in Study 3. Since social exchange theory is based on the premise that relationship costs influence relationship satisfaction, we explored several relational process perceptions in Study 3 to provide further validity evidence. There are numerous characteristics of highly satisfying, close relationships. In Study 3, we examine three such characteristics: relational depth, relationship quality, and interpersonal comfort (Hinde, 1981; Levinger, 1983). Relational depth indicates how significant someone is perceived to be in the other person's life such that there is a sense of dependency and closeness (Pierce, Sarason, & Sarason, 1991). Relationship quality refers to a more global assessment of relationship effectiveness

Table 6  
Discriminant Validity (DV) Evidence for Protégé Outcomes: Study 2

Variable	DV		
	Protégé intentions to leave the relationship	Protégé career-related mentoring	Protégé psychosocial mentoring
	Step 1 (mentor benefits)		
Mentor instrumental benefits	.08	.23***	.08
Mentor relational benefits	.01	-.06	-.15*
Mentor relationship quality	-.30***	-.03	.03
Protégé relationship quality	-.23**	.56***	.58***
Mentor fair exchange	.15	.05	.06
Protégé fair exchange	-.14	.21***	.20***
<i>F</i>	3.23*** ( <i>dfs</i> = 6, 76)	17.53*** ( <i>dfs</i> = 6, 79)	16.41*** ( <i>dfs</i> = 6, 78)
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.22	.59	.58
	Step 2 (add negative experiences)		
Protégé performance problems	-.16	-.08	.19
Interpersonal problems	-.12	-.04	-.13
Destructive relational patterns	.33**	-.02	-.10
$\Delta F$	.73 ( <i>dfs</i> = 3, 65)	-.27 ( <i>dfs</i> = 3, 67)	.64 ( <i>dfs</i> = 3, 66)
$\Delta R^2$	.02	.00	.01
Total <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.24	.59	.59

Note. Standardized betas are from each step of the regression sequence.  
\*  $p < .10$ . \*\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

(Allen & Eby, 2003). Interpersonal comfort reflects the extent of perceived trust and communication openness in the relationship (Allen, Day, & Lentz, 2005). Since negative experiences in relationships are associated with lower relationship satisfaction, construct validity evidence can be found with the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 14:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their own reports of relationship depth.

*Hypothesis 15:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their own reports of relationship quality.

*Hypothesis 16:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be negatively related to their own reports of interpersonal comfort in the mentoring relationship.

Finally, we aimed to replicate the findings from Study 2 by re-examining the relationship between mentors' reports of nega-

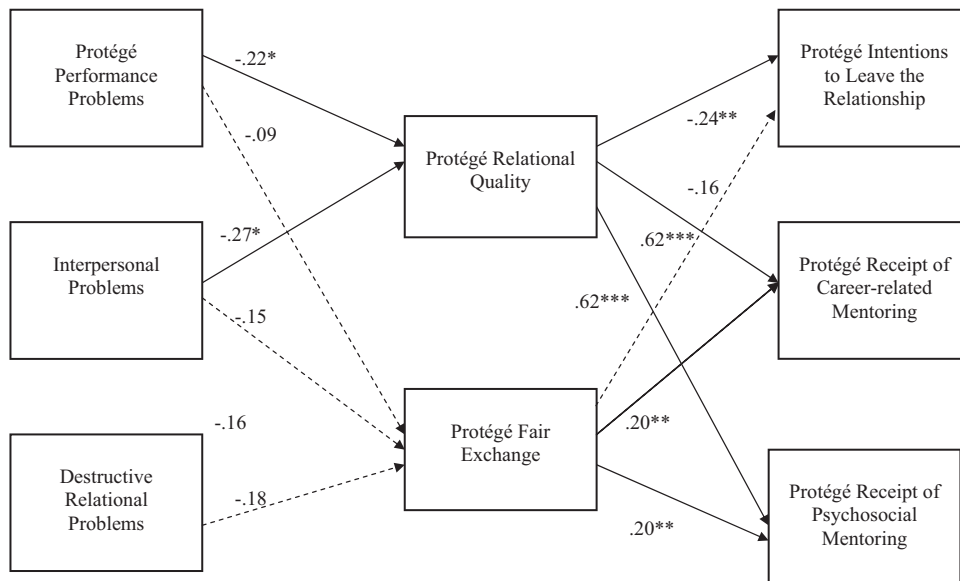


Figure 1. Study 2 path analysis results for protégés. Nonsignificant paths are indicated by a dashed line. Instrumental and relational benefits for mentors held constant in predicting protégé perceptions of relationship quality and fair exchange. \*  $p < .10$ . \*\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*\*  $p < .01$ .

tive experiences and their intentions to exit the mentoring relationship. This led to the final prediction:

*Hypothesis 17:* Mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences will be positively related to their own reports of intentions to leave the mentoring relationship.

*Study 3 Method*

*Participants and Procedure*

Female faculty members working in Research I universities were solicited for participation (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2004). Within the universities, 13 fields of study were targeted for having a high probability of mentoring relationships between faculty and graduate students. These fields of study were recognized as granting more than 900 doctoral degrees in 2004: agricultural science/natural resources, biology, business management, chemistry, computer science, economics, engineering, English, health sciences, history, mathematics, physics and astronomy, and psychology (Hoffer et al., 2005). Within 141 universities, 1 female faculty member was randomly selected from the online directory for each of the 13 fields of study offered at each school.

A Web-based survey was used to collect the data for Study 3. A total of 1,500 faculty members were contacted through personalized e-mails. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and directed to the survey Web site. After 1 week, each individual was sent a reminder e-mail. To ensure that participants reported on mentoring relationships and not simply student advising relationships, the following definition of mentoring was provided, based on Kram's (1985) work:

A faculty mentor is typically defined as a higher ranking, influential individual who has advanced experience and knowledge about the graduate student protégé's field of study and is committed to providing developmental career and personal support to that protégé. A faculty advisor or major professor is not a 'mentor' unless a mentoring-type relationship develops between the faculty member and graduate student that fits the above description. Likewise, a graduate student does not have to be formally assigned to you in order for a mentoring relationship to develop.

Participants were instructed to complete the survey only if they had experience as a mentor on the basis of this definition. Mentors

were asked to randomly select one current or former protégé and to respond to all survey items with respect to that protégé.

Thirty-two e-mails were returned, indicating the e-mail account was not active. Fifty-one individuals responded that they had never been a mentor, and 1 faculty member replied that he was not female. Four hundred thirty-nine surveys were completed by female mentors yielding a response rate of 31%. This estimate is conservative because the survey targeted mentors, but the portion of the participant pool that chose not to respond likely contained non-mentors.

The majority of the mentors were in tenure-track positions (98%). Average age was 45.2 years (*SD* = 9.78), and mentors had taught at their current university for an average of 9.3 years (*SD* = 9.80). Most mentors selected a current protégé when responding to survey items (87%). Mentoring relationships tended to be informal (90%) and had been ongoing for 34 months (*SD* = 27.9), on average.

*Mentor Measures*

Perceived negative mentoring experiences were measured with the 36-item scale developed in Study 2. In addition, relationship comfort was measured with Allen et al.'s (2005) 3-item measure. Relationship quality was measured with Allen and Eby's (2003) 5-item measure. Relationship depth was measured with Pierce et al.'s (1991) 8-item measure. Intentions to leave the relationship were measured with Eby et al.'s (2004) 3-item measure. One item displayed a low item-total correlation and was subsequently removed. Coefficients alpha for these measures are shown in Table 7.

*Study 3 Results*

A CFA was conducted to replicate the factor structure of the perceived negative mentoring experiences measures. As in Study 2, the covariance matrix was used as input, and the parameters were obtained by using maximum likelihood estimation. Again we used a partial disaggregation approach where randomly assigned three-item parcels were created for each of the three a priori dimensions of perceived negative mentoring experiences (protégé performance problems, interpersonal problems, destructive relational patterns). Table 8 presents the fit statistics associated with the three-factor a priori measurement model (Model A), along with the alternative nested models that were tested in Study 2. As shown

Table 7  
*Correlation Matrix: Study 3*

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Protégé performance problems	<i>.89</i>						
2. Interpersonal problems	<i>.75**</i>	<i>.89</i>					
3. Destructive relational patterns	<i>.58**</i>	<i>.66**</i>	<i>.87</i>				
4. Relationship depth	<i>-.36**</i>	<i>-.29**</i>	<i>-.35**</i>	<i>.86</i>			
5. Relationship quality	<i>-.61**</i>	<i>-.57**</i>	<i>-.45**</i>	<i>.59**</i>	<i>.92</i>		
6. Interpersonal comfort	<i>-.36**</i>	<i>-.36**</i>	<i>-.41**</i>	<i>.64**</i>	<i>.60**</i>	<i>.75</i>	
7. Intentions to leave the relationship	<i>.52**</i>	<i>.46**</i>	<i>.45**</i>	<i>-.31**</i>	<i>-.44**</i>	<i>-.29**</i>	<i>.67</i>
<i>M</i>	1.43	1.60	1.36	3.36	4.06	3.57	1.47
<i>SD</i>	.53	.56	.36	.80	.65	.84	.62

Note. Reliabilities appear in italics on the diagonal.  
\*\* *p* < .05.

Table 8  
Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Study 3

Model	Description	CFI	NNFI	RMSR	$\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	$\Delta df$
Model A	A priori three-factor (Performance, Interpersonal, Destructive)	.96	.95	.01	138.74	51		
Model B	One-factor model (Performance + Interpersonal + Destructive)	.76	.70	.02	603.44	54	464.7**	3
Model C1	Two-factor model (Interpersonal + Destructive, Performance)	.85	.81	.02	393.77	53	255.03**	2
Model C2	Two-factor model (Performance + Destructive, Interpersonal)	.84	.81	.02	606.31	53	467.57**	2
Model C3	Two-factor model (Interpersonal + Performance, Destructive)	.87	.84	.02	340.98	53	202.24**	2

Note. Performance = Protégé Performance Problems; Interpersonal = Interpersonal Problems; Destructive = Destructive Relational Patterns; CFI = comparative fit index; NNFI = non-normed fit index; RMSR = root-mean-square residual;  $\Delta\chi^2$  = change in chi square between the alternative model (Model B, Model C1, Model C2, Model C3) and the a priori model (Model A);  $\Delta df$  = change in degrees of freedom between alternative model (Model B, Model C1, Model C2, Model C3) and the a priori model (Model A).

\*\*  $p < .05$ .

in Table 8, the a priori three-factor model (Model A) fit the data well (CFI = .96, NNFI = .95, RMSR = .01), even though the  $\chi^2$  was significant,  $\chi^2(51) = 138.74$ ,  $p < .01$ . Moreover, the a priori three-factor model fit the data significantly better than did any of the alternative models (see Table 8). This provides strong cross-validation evidence for the new measure. Items on each of the three factors were averaged to create subscales for the subscales of Protégé Performance Problems, Interpersonal Problems, and Destructive Relational Patterns.

Zero-order correlations associated with Study 3 variables are shown in Table 7. Full support was found for the Study 3 hypotheses. As expected, all three types of negative mentoring experiences were significantly and negatively related to relationship depth (Hypothesis 14), relationship quality (Hypothesis 15), and interpersonal comfort (Hypothesis 16), and were positively related to mentor intentions to leave the relationship (Hypothesis 17). This provides additional construct validity support for the construct of mentors' negative mentoring experiences.

### General Discussion

The purpose of this research was to develop (Study 1 and Study 2) and replicate (Study 3) a psychometrically sound instrument measuring mentors' perceptions of negative experiences with protégés. The results of the three studies find strong support for the validity of the newly developed instrument and provide a foundation for future empirical work on the topic of mentoring problems in general as well as mentors' problems with protégés more specifically.

Three general conclusions can be reached. First, mentors' perceptions of negative experiences with protégés represent a multidimensional construct that is conceptually distinct from positive experiences. Three distinct types of negative experiences with protégés were found: protégé performance problems, interpersonal problems, and destructive relational patterns. On the basis of the results of the CFA and the conceptual differences between these three types of negative experiences, we recommend that these three scales be used separately in subsequent research rather than combined into one overall measure. Second, mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences were related to both mentor and

protégé perceptions of relationship processes and outcomes. Third, mentors' negative experiences with protégés added incremental validity to the prediction of mentor outcomes, and we identified several antecedents of protégé perceptions of relationship quality.

### *The Role of Mentors' Negative Experiences in Mentoring Relationships*

Mentors' perceptions of negative experiences were related to both mentor and protégé perceptions of relationship quality and fair exchange. This follows from social exchange theory as well as research on other types of close relationships such as friendships and romantic partnerships (see Levinger, 1983, and Sprecher, 1992). Also consistent with social exchange theory, we found that one way mentors may respond to problems with protégés is to provide less career-related and psychosocial support to them. Moreover, as relational costs increase, both individuals were more likely to contemplate exiting the relationship. Interestingly, mentors' negative experiences with protégés did not demonstrate incremental validity in predicting protégé outcomes even though a significant correlation was found between these constructs. One explanation is the relatively small sample size of dyads and, as a consequence, the relatively low statistical power associated with the test of this hypothesis. Another explanation is that there are indirect, rather than direct, effects. The results of the post hoc path analysis lend some support to this possibility, yet there are probably additional mediating mechanisms linking mentor reports of negative experiences to protégés outcomes. For example, mentors' negative experiences may reduce the amount of time they invest in the relationship, which in turn may lead to unmet expectations on the part of protégés. As protégés report not having their relational expectations met, they may express stronger intentions to leave the mentorship. Moderators may also be operating such that a mentor's negative experience with a protégé is more strongly related to the protégé's intention to leave the relationship if the protégé also reports having problems with the mentor.

### *Agenda for Future Research*

The results of this research open numerous new avenues for future research. Additional research is needed which examines

how mentors' negative mentoring experiences relate to their work outcomes. For example, since we found that negative experiences are related to mentor burnout, an important question is whether the burnout brought on by negative mentoring experiences predicts mentor work attitudes, job performance, or other health complaints as we find for workers in general (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). We might also explore whether positive experiences with protégés can offset some of the effects that negative experiences have on mentor outcomes. This is important since all relationships have both positive and negative features (Duck, 1994), yet research to date has examined either the positive (e.g., Allen et al., 2005; Allen & Eby, 2003) or the negative (e.g., Eby & Allen, 2002; Eby et al., 2000) aspects of mentoring. Research is also needed that examines the relative importance of positive and negative mentoring in predicting outcomes given the finding that negative interpersonal exchanges are often more predictive than are positive ones (see LaBianca & Brass, 2006).

Dyadic research could examine how protégés' reports of problems with mentors relate to mentors' reports of problems with protégés. For instance, mentor neglect (see Eby et al., 2000) might be a coping mechanism used by a mentor to deal with a protégé who has performance problems. Alternatively, a mentor's report of interpersonal problems with a protégé may be a symptom of other problems in the relationship, such as a protégé's report of manipulative behavior by his or her mentor (see Eby et al., 2000). Examining dyadic effects such as these will help us develop theories to better understand the complex relational dynamics associated with mentoring and the impact that relational experiences can have on both mentors and protégés.

Another avenue for future research is examining the antecedents of mentors' reports of negative experiences with protégés. It may be that protégé characteristics such as personality predict mentor reports of problems with protégés (e.g., mentors might be more likely to report protégé performance problems if the protégé is lower on conscientiousness). Likewise, dyadic variables such as surface-level or deep-level diversity may predict mentors' reports of interpersonal problems with protégés. Contextual variables such as how much the organization supports mentoring activities (Eby, Lockwood, & Butts, 2006) and whether the mentoring relationship is formal or informal (Eby et al., 2004) may also influence the likelihood that mentors perceive problems with protégés. Also needed is research examining the psychological mechanisms driving mentors' reports of problems with protégés. For example, mentors may report more negative experiences with protégés when they are unsure of their own ability to provide effective mentoring, a relatively common concern voiced by mentors (Eby & Lockwood, 2005).

### *Implications for Practice*

The results of this research have practical implications for the recruitment, selection, and training of both mentors and protégés. Informing would-be mentors about potential problems may help them to make more educated decisions about who to mentor and what to expect in mentoring relationships. This should increase the likelihood of successful mentor-protégé matches. Likewise, informing protégés that mentors are likely to expect them to be receptive to feedback, willing to learn, and easy to get along with interpersonally may increase their awareness of appropriate behav-

ior in a mentoring relationship and may lead protégés to engage in effective self-monitoring. It may also be useful to discuss patterns of relating that may be viewed as destructive by mentors, such as acting competitively toward the mentor, violating the mentor's trust, or behaving arrogantly. This should increase the chance that the mentor and protégé develop an effective relationship. Discussing potential problems during mentoring training may help both mentors and protégés set more realistic expectations for the mentorship, which can enhance relationship effectiveness (Young & Perrewé, 2000). Further, the finding that some types of negative experiences are associated with mentor burnout suggests that training on topics such as effectively handling conflict and stress management may be useful for mentors.

### *Limitations*

The use of cross-sectional data does not allow us to make cause-and-effect inferences. While reverse causality is unlikely for some effects (e.g., intentions to leave the mentorship are not likely to be predictors of negative experiences), reverse causality is possible for other relationships (e.g., negative mentoring may be a consequence of relationship quality). In fact, reciprocal relationships may exist. The use of perceptual data raises concerns about common method and whether or not perceptions reflect actual protégé behavior. In terms of common method bias, in Study 2 data were collected from both mentors and protégés. This reduces the threat of common method bias and provides an important methodological advance over much of the existing research on mentoring. We also note that the mean absolute value of the single-source correlations was only slightly higher than that of the multisource correlations (.33 and .25, respectively, see Table 1). Finally, we found that the measurement model fit the data significantly better than did the measurement + method model, and the amount of variance accounted for by the method factor was small in comparison with the variance accounted for by trait (measurement) factors. Taken together, this provides some assurance that our findings are not simply due to common method bias. In terms of measuring mentor perceptions and not actual protégé behaviors, we acknowledge that the mentor's perceptions of a protégé may not reflect actual protégé behavior. Relationship scholars acknowledge this issue but contend that it is an individual's perception of his or her partner that drives future relational exchanges and predicts the course of a relationship (Hinde, 1981).

Another concern may be the fact that some of the study participants were referring to a previous mentoring relationship which may lead to retrospective recall bias. Although retrospective survey data are often criticized for lacking validity, this is not the case if the measures used are reliable and valid, informants are knowledgeable, the questions asked are specific and do not refer to the distant past, and individuals are motivated to respond accurately by assuring confidentiality and explaining the usefulness of the research to participants (C. C. Miller, Cardinal, & Glick, 1997). All of these conditions are met here. We also compared the responses of mentors in a current relationship versus those of mentors reporting on a past relationship and found no significant differences in the pattern of effects.

The relatively low response rate for Study 2 may also be viewed as a limitation. While we were not able to directly compare study participants with participants in the original sample who were sent

surveys, the demographic and job-related background of participants is consistent with what one would expect in a university setting (e.g., most participants were from either academic or administrative units on campus; most worked in units with <50 employees; a wide range of professional job titles were represented). Moreover, our sample of mentors is similar to existing research in terms of mentor age, sex, race, and organizational tenure. The mentors in Study 2 are somewhat more educated and report higher job tenure than do mentors in previous research, although this is expected due to the university setting.<sup>3</sup> It is also difficult to know if there is response bias given our relatively low response rate. It may be that individuals were more likely to respond to the survey if they were in a satisfying relationship. Alternatively, individuals may have been more likely to complete the survey if they had negative experiences with a protégé. It is not possible to know which of these scenarios is more likely. However, the stated purpose of the study was to understand the “advantages and disadvantages of mentoring relationships” so it seems likely that participants were not cued in any particular way. Finally, we based our measure on the taxonomy developed by Eby and McManus (2004). While this is the most comprehensive taxonomy of mentors' perceptions of negative mentoring experiences, it is possible that our measure does not cover every single type of problem that mentors might experience.

In conclusion, there is a growing recognition that mentoring relationships may involve perceptions of both negative and positive experiences. Therefore, it is important to assess both relational costs and benefits in mentoring research in order to gain a complete picture of these influential developmental relationships. By developing and validating a measure of perceived negative mentoring experiences from the mentor's perspective, the present study offers an important foundation for future research on the dynamics and full range of processes in mentoring relationships.

<sup>3</sup> A full report of these comparative analyses is available from Lillian T. Eby.

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## Appendix

## Brief Measure of Negative Mentoring Experiences

*Protégé Performance Problems*

1. My protégé does not do high quality work.
2. My protégé has performance problems on the job.
3. My protégé performance does not meet my expectations.
4. My protégé does not seem willing to learn.
5. My protégé does not seem interested in learning better ways of doing things.
6. My protégé is reluctant to change his/her behavior in response to feedback.
7. I worry that my protégé has a substance abuse problem.
8. I suspect that my protégé is involved in some self-destructive behavior.
9. I wonder if my protégé has some dependency problems (e.g., alcohol, drugs, gambling).

*Interpersonal Problems*

1. My protégé and I have difficulty interacting.
2. This protégé and I have conflicting personalities.
3. Our relationship suffers because of interpersonal conflicts.
4. I feel that our relationship is not as satisfying as it used to be.
5. I feel that my protégé is no longer as loyal to me as he/she once was.
6. Our mentoring relationship is going downhill.
7. My protégé uses flattery to make me like him/her more.<sup>A1</sup>
8. My protégé often “kisses up” to superiors.
9. My protégé engages in political game-playing.
10. My protégé is too reliant on me for work-related advice.
11. My protégé is too dependent on our mentoring relationship.<sup>A2</sup>
12. My protégé has trouble doing things without a lot of guidance from me.

*Destructive Relational Patterns*

1. My protégé lets his/her personal goals take priority over the interests of others.
2. My protégé has a self-serving attitude.
3. My protégé acts like he/she is better than others.
4. My protégé has misled me.
5. My protégé sometimes distorts the truth.
6. My protégé has deceived me.
7. My protégé tries to damage my reputation at work.
8. My protégé tries to sabotage me at work.
9. My protégé attempts to “get back” at me.
10. My protégé gives me unwanted sexual attention.<sup>A3</sup>
11. My protégé tells racially offensive stories or jokes.
12. My protégé tells crude racial remarks, either publicly or privately.
13. I sense that my protégé is jealous of my success.
14. My protégé is jealous of my work accomplishments.
15. My protégé seems to resent my success at work.

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<sup>A1</sup> Adapted from Bolino and Turnley (1999).

<sup>A2</sup> Adapted from Ragins and Scandura (1997).

<sup>A3</sup> For Destructive Relational Patterns, Items 10–12: adapted from Fitzgerald et al. (1995).

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