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Protégé anxiety attachment and feedback in mentoring relationships

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ABSTRACT

A model focused on protégé anxious attachment and feedback in mentoring relationships was tested with a sample of matched doctoral student protégés and their faculty mentors. Results show that protégé anxious attachment was associated with less feedback seeking and less feedback acceptance. Protégé feedback acceptance was associated with both the quality and frequency of feedback provided by the mentor. Frequency, but not quality of mentor feedback, was associated with protégé scholarly productivity. Results underscore the value of focusing on specific behavioral aspects of the mentoring process.

Anxiety attachment and feedback in mentoring relationships

Feedback between mentors and protégés is a critical component of mentoring relationships. The importance of feedback to the individual learning and development process has long been emphasized (McCauley & Hezlett, 2002). Protégés expect feedback from their mentor and use that feedback to help improve personal performance (Mullen, 1994). Mentors desire protégés who are open and receptive to the feedback provided by them (Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). Given the critical role of feedback in mentoring relationships, it is surprising that feedback variables have largely been ignored in the research literature. The current study advances the mentoring literature by testing feedback variables based on one specific type of developmental relationship, doctoral advisor–student relationships.

Our study makes several contributions to the mentoring literature. First, we examine anxious attachment style as a key individual difference variable implicated in the feedback process. This provides a theoretical foundation for the study while also answering the call for research that examines individual differences that contribute to mentoring processes (Turban & Lee, 2007). Second, our focus on feedback provides a concrete behavioral focus for examining effective mentoring. The investigation of specific mentoring behaviors has been overshadowed by the emphasis placed on the career and psychosocial mentoring functions framework developed over 20 years ago (Kram, 1985). Although the investigation of career and psychosocial mentoring functions has resulted in a wealth of accumulated knowledge that has advanced the mentoring literature, almost exclusive reliance on this framework for studying what occurs within mentoring relationships has detracted from honing in on specific mentoring behaviors. By conducting research that targets finer-grained aspects of the functions that mentors provide, such as feedback, we may garner a more comprehensive understanding of effective mentoring. Third, we examine productivity as our dependent variable. The mentoring literature is dominated by research examining career success outcomes such as salary, or affective outcomes such as job satisfaction (see Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004 for a meta-analytic review). Yet mentoring relationships are often touted as a means of improving performance. Mentor feedback should directly contribute to this outcome. Thus, this study adds to the few that have examined performance outcomes (e.g., Paglis, Green, & Bauer, 2006).

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Theoretical background and hypotheses development

Attachment theory provides a theoretical platform for understanding feedback within mentoring relationships. The basic tenet of attachment theory is that we form relatively stable attachment styles in early childhood based on interactions with our primary caregiver (Bowlby, 1969). One's working attachment model influences reactions to relational events, creating "systematic patterns of expectations, needs, emotions, emotion regulation strategies and social behavior" (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002, p. 134). Those with a secure attachment are comfortable with intimacy and autonomy. Secure attachment is a life span need, thus, these attachment styles continue to influence our relational styles in adulthood (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

As an interpersonal relationship, mentorships can serve attachment functions (e.g., Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002; Wang, Noe, Wang, & Greenberger, 2009). As noted by Noe et al., attachment theory may provide insight into how prior interpersonal relational experiences shape the way that protégés approach mentoring relationships. This may be especially true in student–faculty mentoring relationships given that the faculty member often serves a parental-type role.

Current attachment theory suggests that there are two adult attachment dimensions, anxiety and avoidance (e.g., Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998). The anxiety dimension is associated with a negative model of the self (Brennan et al., 1998). Because the purpose of the present study was to investigate feedback within the mentoring relationship, which poses a threat to the self, we focused on the anxiety dimension. Individuals with greater attachment-related anxiety are preoccupied with thoughts about relationships and the need for approval. They are often worried about whether their partner is available, responsive, and attentive.

Based on theory and research from the feedback literature, there are reasons to expect that individuals with a more anxious attachment style may be less likely to seek feedback and be less accepting of feedback provided. Although feedback serves several important functions in organizational behavior, such as permitting individuals to adjust their goal directed behavior, better assess their capabilities, and become socialized into new environments (Anseel, Lievens, & Levy, 2007), there are also costs (Ashford, 1986). Individuals may be concerned that seeking feedback will convey uncertainty to others. Feedback seeking could be viewed as a sign of low ability or of insecurity (Williams, Miller, Steelman, & Levy, 1999). Soliciting feedback carries the risk of hearing negative information about the self. Because individuals are highly motivated to defend and protect their egos (Baumeister, 1999), they may avoid feedback for self-protection purposes (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). This is likely to be more pronounced in anxiously attached individuals, as they tend to doubt themselves as a relationship partner. Feedback seeking also may be avoided because feedback based on active solicitation is more difficult to disregard than is unsolicited feedback (Roberson, Deitch, Brief, & Block, 2003).

Anxiously attached individuals may also be less receptive to feedback. Attachment behavior is most likely to be activated in situations that involve threat, stress, or challenge, all of which could occur when a mentor provides feedback (Feeney, 2005). When anxious attachment behavior is triggered it also activates accessibility of negative self-thoughts, causing individuals to be especially defensive when receiving personal feedback (Broemer & Blumle, 2003). Another relevant aspect of anxious attachment is negative appraisal of others' attempts to offer help. Feedback provided by others is likely to be viewed with mistrust (Bowlby, 1988). Prior research has shown that college students with preoccupation attachment tendencies (a component of anxious attachment) have difficulty seeking help from others and are mistrustful of those who offer guidance (Larose & Bernier, 2001). In summary, there is considerable theoretical and empirical evidence to suggest that protégés with an anxious attachment style are likely to avoid feedback seeking behavior and be less accepting of feedback provided.

Hypothesis 1a. Protégé anxious attachment negatively relates to protégé feedback seeking.

Hypothesis 1b. Protégé anxious attachment negatively relates to protégé feedback acceptance.

The feedback seeking actions of the protégé should relate to the frequency of feedback provided by the mentor. Within the feedback literature we are not aware of research that has linked target feedback seeking and acceptance with other feedback frequency. However, protégé feedback seeking may be viewed as a form of proactive behavior, and within the mentoring literature there is some evidence that protégé proactive behaviors are associated with more mentoring received (Turban & Lee, 2007). Thus, we expect that protégé feedback seeking will prompt the mentor to provide more frequent feedback to the protégé.

Hypothesis 2. Protégé feedback seeking positively relates to frequency of mentor feedback.

The extent that the protégé accepts feedback is also important. Research has shown that mentors desire protégés who are open to feedback. Mentors interviewed by Allen et al. (1997) reported that they were more likely to provide mentoring to others who were receptive to advice. Huwe and Johnson (2003) note that in order to maintain a successful doctoral student–mentor relationship it is essential for protégés to avoid becoming defensive, angry or deflated in response to mentor feedback. Protégé feedback acceptance sends a message to the mentor that feedback is wanted and appreciated. Accordingly, mentors may be more motivated to provide feedback and strive to provide feedback that is of high quality.

Hypothesis 3a. Protégé feedback acceptance positively relates to frequency of mentor feedback.

Hypothesis 3b. Protégé feedback acceptance positively relates to quality of mentor feedback.

Finally, we predict that feedback frequency and quality relate to protégé scholarly productivity. Frequent and high quality feedback from the mentor should enable the protégé to develop and be productive as a student scholar. Feedback is an important component of motivational theories such as goal-setting theory (Locke & Latham, 1990, 2002) and control theory (Carver & Scheier, 2000). Both of these

theories view behavior as goal directed and suggest that feedback helps individuals evaluate performance relative to their goals. Feedback may be particularly integral to performance in doctoral mentoring relationships as the research and publication process involve a skill set that is difficult to learn without the expert guidance of someone knowledgeable about the process.

Although the relationship between feedback and productivity has not been studied within mentoring relationships, the overall effect of feedback on performance has been positive (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). In addition, there is some evidence that higher quality mentoring provided by doctoral advisors is associated with student protégé productivity (Paglis et al., 2006).

Hypothesis 4. Mentor feedback frequency relates positively to protégé productivity.

Hypothesis 5. Mentor feedback quality relates positively to protégé productivity.

Method

Participants

The total sample consisted of 177 doctoral student protégés and 103 of their mentor professors from a large southeastern university. Participants came from all colleges across the university. Of these, 96 of the faculty mentors and doctoral students provided complete data and could be matched. These 96 were used in all analyses. The protégé sample consisted of 33 males and 61 females (2 did not report gender). The majority were Caucasian/White ($n = 64$). The mentor sample consisted of 65 males and 29 females (2 did not report gender). The majority were Caucasian/White ($n = 77$).

Measurement

Attachment anxiety

Fifteen items from the Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ; Feeney, Noller, & Hanrahan, 1994) were used to assess protégé attachment anxiety (e.g., "I worry a lot about my relationships."). Responses were completed on a 6-point scale that ranged from "totally disagree" to "totally agree." Higher scores indicated a more anxious attachment style. Previous research has shown that the ASQ demonstrates strong test-retest reliability and it has been associated with other measures of attachment style, family functioning, and social support (Feeney et al., 1994). Internal consistency in the current study was.88.

Feedback seeking

The extent that the protégé sought feedback was assessed with a single item reported by the mentor ("This student seeks out feedback."). Responses were based on a 5-point scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with higher scores indicating more feedback sought. We are not aware of existing measures of other reported feedback seeking, but our item is similar to those used in self-report assessments (Kinicki, Prussia, Wu, & McKee-Ryan, 2004).

Feedback acceptance

Feedback acceptance was assessed with three items reported by the mentor ("This student is receptive to feedback regarding his/her performance."; "This student becomes defensive when provided with critical feedback." [reverse coded]; "This student seems to value the feedback I provide."). Internal consistency was.88. These items are similar to those used by Brett and Atwater (2001) to assess reactions to a multi-source feedback exercise (e.g., "This person was open to feedback.").

Feedback frequency

Frequency of feedback provided by the mentor was assessed with a single item reported by the protégé ("My major professor provides me with frequent feedback regarding my performance."). Responses were based on a 5-point scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" with higher scores indicating more feedback provided.

Feedback quality

Quality of the mentor feedback was assessed with four items reported by the protégé ("The feedback provided by my major professor is accurate."; "The feedback provided by my major professor has been helpful to my academic development."; "My major professor provides me with honest feedback regarding my strengths."; "My major professor provides me with honest feedback regarding areas in which I need improvement."). Responses were based on a 5-point scale that ranged from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." These items are similar to the feedback quality items developed by Steelman, Levy, and Snell (2004) (e.g., "My supervisor gives me useful feedback about my job performance"), but modified for the current context. Higher scores indicate greater quality. Internal consistency was .89.

Protégé productivity

Four indicators of student productivity were used. One was a single item reported by the mentors ("How would you rate the overall scholarly performance of this student compared to his/her peers?"). Protégés provided a similar self-report of their productivity ("How would you rate your overall scholarly productivity compared to your peers?"). Responses to both questions were based on a 5-point scale that ranged from "much below average" to "much better than average." Protégés also reported the

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Anxious attachment [a]	1.00								
2. Protégé FB seeking [b]	−.16	1.00							
3. Protégé FB acceptance [b]	−.23*	.63**	1.00						
4. Mentor FB frequency [a]	−.16	.28**	.36**	1.00					
5. Mentor FB quality [a]	−.11	.28**	.39**	.67**	1.00				
6. Productivity - mentor rating	−.09	.40*	.49**	.24*	.25*	1.00			
7. Productivity – protégé rating	−.22*	.16	.17	.35**	.29**	.38**	1.00		
8. Journal articles	−.07	.11	.08	.12	.10	.26*	.29**	1.00	
9. Conference papers	−.11	.16	.11	.11	.03	.20	.29**	.42**	1.00
Mean	4.79	4.01	4.29	3.60	4.26	3.25	3.79	.98	3.37
SD	2.93	.91	.72	1.08	.70	1.10	1.15	1.44	3.85

*$p<.05$. **$p<.01$.
FB = feedback.
[a] Report provided by the protégé.
[b] Report provided by the mentor.

total number of in press or published peer reviewed journal publications they accumulated since admission into the university and the total number of conference posters and/or presentations since admission.

Procedure

Data were collected via online surveys. An email was sent to doctoral students within the university inviting their participation in a study of student-faculty mentoring relationships. Students who responded were asked to provide the name of their major professor. An email was sent to the major professor with the name of the student who they were requested to evaluate. Once data were matched, all names were deleted from the data file.

Results

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. We used the two-step procedure advocated by Anderson and Gerbing (1988) to test our model. The fit of the measurement model was tested first, followed by the fit of the structural model.

Models were tested using MPlus 4.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 2006) with maximum likelihood estimation. Both total disaggregation and partial disaggregation methods were used to model indicators of latent variables. Item parcels were created to model anxious attachment to reduce the sample-size-to-parameter ratio because this ratio can adversely impact standard errors and estimate stability. Exploratory factor analysis was used to ensure unidimensionality of the parcels resulting in four internally consistent multi-item parcels (Kishton & Widaman, 1994; Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002). Three single items served as separate indicators of feedback acceptance, and four single items served as separate indicators of feedback quality. Four indicators were used for productivity: mentor reports of protégé productivity, protégé self-report of productivity, number of journal publications, and the number of conference presentations. Feedback seeking and quantity were measured with single items; thus, these variables were modeled as measured rather than latent variables. The feedback seeking and acceptance variables were allowed to covary as were mentor feedback frequency and quality.

Measurement model

The model that included the four latent factors exhibited better fit ($\chi^2(84) = 115.83$, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .063) than did a three factor model with both feedback-related variables (feedback acceptance and feedback quality) loading on the same factor ($\chi^2(87) = 124.87$, CFI = .66, TLI = .59, RMSEA = .068). All path coefficients were significant ($t > 1.96$). Given the acceptable fit of the measurement model, we proceeded to test the hypothesized structural model.

Structural model

The hypothesized structural model fit the data well ($\chi^2(112) = 148.93$, CFI = .95, TLI = .95, RMSEA = .059). Model parameters are shown in Fig. 1. With regard to our hypotheses, in support of Hypotheses 1a and 1b, anxious attachment style was associated with both protégé feedback seeking ($\gamma = -.22$, $p<.05$) and with protégé feedback acceptance ($\gamma = -.27$, $p<.05$). Contrary to Hypothesis 2, protégé feedback seeking was not associated with feedback frequency ($\gamma = .03$, *ns*). In support of Hypotheses 3a and 3b, protégé feedback acceptance was associated with mentor feedback frequency ($\gamma = .37$, $p<.05$) and with feedback quality ($\gamma = .41$, $p<.05$). Hypothesis 4 was supported. Mentor feedback frequency was associated with protégé productivity ($\gamma = .29$, $p<.05$). Contrary to Hypothesis 5, the relationship between mentor feedback quality and productivity was not significant ($\gamma = .18$, $p = .18$). In total, 5 of our 7 hypothesized paths were significant.

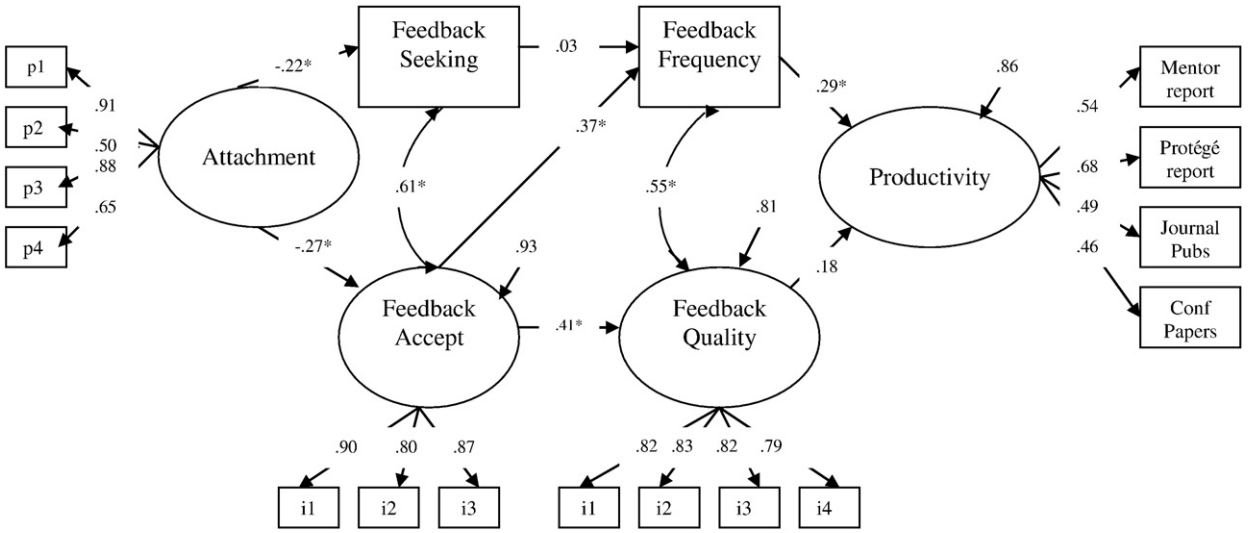

Fig. 1. Results of hypothesis testing with standardized path coefficients. Statistics are standardized path coefficients. Path estimates denoted with a * are significant at $p < .05$.

Despite the good fit of our hypothesized model and support for most of our hypotheses, we followed Medsker, Williams, and Holahan's (1994) recommendations for testing alternative models to determine whether the hypothesized model fits the data better than other theoretically plausible models. Specifically, we tested an alternative theoretically plausible model that added direct paths from protégé feedback seeking to productivity and from feedback acceptance to productivity in addition to existing paths in the hypothesized model. These paths were thought plausible because much of the prior research on feedback seeking links it directly to performance (e.g., Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Fit statistics for both models are displayed in Table 2. Results of a chi square difference test indicated that the alternative model provided a better fit to the data ($\chi^2(2) = 7.82$). However, neither of the two additional paths was significant and the change in fit statistics was minor. Hence, we retained the more parsimonious fully mediated model.

Discussion

Based on a matched sample of mentors and protégés currently in a mentoring relationship, the present study makes several contributions to the mentoring literature. Feedback seeking is an important self-regulation and performance improvement strategy, yet it has not been investigated within the mentoring literature. Our study takes an important first step in that regard. It answers the call for research that examines individual differences in mentoring relationships and helps delineate one process whereby protégés accrue positive benefits from mentoring. We demonstrate the potential benefit of shifting attention within the mentoring literature from broad mentoring functions to specific behavioral processes.

Several key findings emerged. Protégés with a more anxious attachment style were reported by their mentors as seeking feedback less frequently and as less accepting of feedback than were protégés with a less anxious attachment style. Individuals with anxious attachment may be reluctant to seek and accept feedback because of the threat to the self. As noted by Bowlby (1988), insecure attachment can result in negative relational expectations. Huwe and Johnson (2003) too noted that individuals anxious about relationships are unlikely to reap maximal benefits from a mentoring relationship. Our findings are consistent with this line of thought. With appropriate caution regarding causal direction, the results of the current study suggest that an anxious attachment style may make it difficult for an individual to engage in a mentoring relationship that reaches its full potential.

Table 2
Model Fit Statistics.

Model	Fit statistics			
	χ^2 (*df*)	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Measurement – 4 factor	115.83* (84)	.95	.94	.063
Hypothesized	148.93* (112)	.95	.94	.059
Hypothesized + direct paths	141.11* (110)	.96	.95	.055

*$p < .05$.
CFI = comparative fit index.
TLI = Tucker-Lewis fit index.
RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation.

Protégés who were more accepting of feedback, received more feedback and received feedback that was of higher quality. This finding is consistent with previous research that has underscored the importance of protégé willingness to learn to the initiation and development of mentoring relationships (Allen, 2004; Allen et al., 1997; Allen, Poteet & Russell, 2000).

Results show that frequency of feedback provided by the mentor was associated with protégé productivity. Specifically, more feedback was associated with greater protégé productivity. These findings demonstrate the value of mentors who provide frequent feedback to their protégés. Interestingly, the quality of the feedback was not associated with productivity. According to Kluger and DeNisi's (1996) feedback intervention strategy, feedback effectiveness is dependent on where the feedback focuses one's attention. Feedback that is focused on the task, rather than aspects of the person, is more likely to produce a positive effect on performance. Feedback that threatens self-esteem has lower effectiveness (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). Our general measure of feedback quality likely did not capture such distinctions.

Limitations

Several limitations to the current research should be acknowledged. The main limitation to the current study is the cross-sectional design. Although it seems unlikely that mentor reports of protégé feedback seeking predict protégé self-reports of anxious attachment style, reverse causality of all relationships in the theoretical model cannot be ruled out. The causal direction between feedback seeking and feedback providing is especially difficult to assert with certainty and is likely one that is reciprocal over time. For example, a protégé who makes several attempts to seek feedback but does not receive any by his or her mentor may make no further attempts. Some may view our single item assessments of feedback seeking and feedback frequency as a limitation given the inability to assess reliability. However, given the direct, basic, quantitative nature of these constructs it seems unlikely that multiple item measures would have changed the results appreciably. Moreover, it is notable that single item assessments of feedback frequency have been used in previous research with expected relationships observed (Kinicki et al., 2004).

Our sample represents a potential boundary condition. There are both similarities and differences between student–faculty mentoring in academic settings and those that occur between junior and senior employees in workplace settings (Allen & Eby, 2007). Hence, it is uncertain the extent that our findings will generalize to other settings or to other types of mentoring relationships. However, this could be said with regard to the study of any of the various forms of mentoring. As with most studies of specific forms of mentoring, replication across different settings is needed.

Most mentoring studies have been based on single source data with surprisingly few that include data from both mentoring partners (Allen, Eby, O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008). One strength of the current study is that data were collected from matched mentors and protégés. Protégé feedback seeking was reported by mentors and the quality of the mentor's feedback was reported by protégés. Although this design reduces the likelihood that relationships are based on common method variance, each variable remains bounded to the perspective of the person who provided the report. In future studies it may be informative to collect data on these topics from the perspective of both mentor and protégé.

Implications for research, theory and practice

The current study provides the foundation for future research and theory building. Our results provide support for attachment style as a theoretical vehicle for understanding mentoring relationships. Protégé attachment style may play a considerable role in determining the course and outcomes associated with mentoring. Attachment theory may be a useful foundation for understanding other relational processes important to the development of effective mentoring relationships. For example, research has shown that interpersonal comfort between the mentor and protégé is important to the development of effective mentoring relationships (Allen, Day, & Lentz, 2005). Interpersonal comfort may take longer and/or be more difficult to achieve when either the mentor or the protégé possesses an anxious attachment style. Although developing a relationship with a protégé with greater anxious attachment may be difficult, such individuals may greatly benefit from a strong mentoring relationship. For example, anxious attachment has been associated with dysfunctional career thinking such as career decision-making confusion (van Ecke, 2007) and a lack of career self-efficacy (Wolfe & Betz, 2004). Clear and consistent feedback from a mentor could help the protégé attain career development skills (Day & Allen, 2004).

We thought it important to shift the mentoring literature from broad mentoring functions to specific behaviors. Our findings demonstrate the value of examining the micro-processes that are involved in mentoring relationships. As we noted in the introduction, continuing to exclusively focus on broad career and psychosocial mentoring behaviors limits our ability to pinpoint specific processes within mentoring relationships that contribute to its effectiveness. Moreover, measures of career and psychosocial mentoring tend to be highly correlated with each other as well as with outcomes such as mentorship quality (Paglis et al., 2006). This suggests that such assessments may be more reflective of the respondents overall affective reaction to the relationship than about mentor behaviors that actually occurred.

The results have several practical implications. Our intent in focusing on feedback is that it is behavioral and thus amenable to training and subsequent change. Our results suggest that there may value in training both mentors and protégés on feedback dynamics. This may be incorporated into training programs associated with formal mentoring efforts within organizations. Within academic institutions, new faculty members may benefit from guidance regarding providing feedback to doctoral students. As noted by Johnson (2002) new faculty cannot be expected to fully understand the form and function of mentoring relationships. Professional organizations that offer workshops for junior faculty may include this topic. Protégés should be advised with regard to the importance of being open and accepting of the feedback provided by those who mentor them. Mentors may be trained on how

to recognize those with an anxious attachment style and to provide feedback even to those who do not seek it. By taking attachment models into consideration, mentors may be able to better understand student feedback seeking tendencies and reactions.

Future research

The results set the stage for several avenues of future research. Findings suggest the need for a programmatic examination of the role of attachment in the development and effectiveness of mentoring relationships. One topic is the relationship between anxious attachment and relationship initiation. Both academic and workplace mentoring relationships may be initiated through formal means (the pair is matched through third party intervention) or through informal means (the mentoring pair forms naturally). The effect of protégé anxious attachment may be more pronounced in relationships that are initiated through a formal means, particularly if the protégé is involuntarily placed into the program (not likely in an academic setting, but often occurring in workplace programs (see Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006) and/or had little say into the matching process. Such circumstances may activate protégé mistrust and apprehension.

The current study was limited to examining protégé attachment style. In future studies, it would be interesting to also examine the mentor's attachment style. For example, a mentor with anxious attachment may be reluctant to give critical feedback for fear that the protégé will dislike him/her. The interaction between the two could also yield useful insights into mentoring processes. Both mentors and protégés bring their own unique interpersonal histories into mentoring relationships that are likely to interact and impact the course of the partnership.

Another topic for consideration is a more in depth examination of the nature of the feedback provided by mentors. As mentioned above, our general feedback quality measure did not capture the type of feedback provided by the mentor (e.g., feedback focused on the task versus feedback focused on the person). In future studies it would be informative to take a more fine-grained approach to the nature of the feedback provided in order to determine what forms are most effective within mentoring relationships.

Conclusion

Our findings provide novel insights into mentoring relationships. To our knowledge this is the first study to directly examine feedback. We linked feedback to protégé anxious attachment and to protégé productivity. Given the important role that mentoring plays in individual growth and development, as well as the growing use of mentoring as an employee development tool, a better understanding of factors that can improve its effectiveness is needed (Allen, Finkelstein, & Poteet, 2009). The results support the value of continued study of individual differences as well as specific behavioral variables in mentoring relationships.

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