

## **Complementary Mentor Motivations and Protégé Characteristics: Determinants of Mentoring**

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*We investigated supervisors' mentoring motivations as a moderator of the relationship between protégé characteristics and mentoring experiences. Participants were employees of a marketing communications company. Results indicated that protégé advancement potential was more positively associated with psychosocial support from supervisors who were strongly motivated to mentor for intrinsic satisfaction. Potential for advancement was less positively associated with career support provided by supervisors who were motivated to mentor for the benefit of others. Protégé ingratiation was associated with greater psychosocial support from supervisors strongly motivated to mentor for their own self-enhancement but negatively related for those not strongly motivated by self-enhancement.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Mentoring involves an experienced individual developing a novice individual and engaging in various types of support (e.g., career, psychosocial, role modeling) that can have benefits for mentors, protégés, and organizations (e.g., Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, & Lima, 2004). It has been suggested that mentorships are most successful when mentors and protégés are *complementary* (e.g., Kram, 1985; Wanberg, Welsh, & Hezlett, 2003) meaning the mentorship is molded by what each offers and seeks. However, few empirical studies have tested this notion (e.g., Chun, Litzky, Sosik, Bechtold, & Godshalk, 2010; Eby, Butts, Lockwood, & Simon, 2004).

Our study addresses calls for research on deeper level mentor-protégé characteristics by investigating match in terms of complementary mentor motives and protégé characteristics. Social exchange theory suggests that mentors reciprocate with greater mentoring to protégés who meet their needs (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Eby et al., 2004). Mentor-perceived benefits and protégé-reported support received have been shown to be positively related (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2008). In this regard, mentors should provide the greatest support to protégés whose characteristics enable them to reap the benefits they are most motivated to obtain.

Allen (2003) identified three primary mentor motivations. First, an individual may mentor for the *intrinsic satisfaction* of contributing to another's growth. These mentors seek to experience the pride and

gratification associated with the act of mentoring itself. Second, an individual may choose to mentor to *benefit others*. These mentors seek the satisfaction of knowing that they helped another to be successful and/or benefited their organization as a whole. Third, an individual may choose to mentor for *self-enhancement* reasons. Meaning, one might seek to improve his/her reputation through the status of being a mentor and/or may see the mentorship as a means of career promotion.

It is important to note that the three motivations to mentor are not mutually exclusive. Each can influence mentors to varying degrees. It has been speculated that the three types of motivations may be associated with differing levels of career and psychosocial support. However, study findings have varied (e.g., Allen, 2003; Allen, 2004; Allen, Poteet, & Russell, 2000; Lankau, Hirschfeld, & Thomas, 2005; Lima, 2004). Most motivational theories emphasize the need to prioritize and allocate resources (see Diefendorff & Chandler, 2011; Naylor, Pritchard, & Ilgen, 1980). Mentoring requires the allocation of time and energy, often extra-role. This can be of particular issue to those with multiple protégés (Allen, 2003; Allen, Poteet, & Burroughs, 1997). Thus, supervisors' mentoring motivations should predict the type of subordinates who report greater or lesser mentoring from those supervisors.

## THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

### Mentoring

Mentoring functions are typically grouped into career (e.g., protection, exposure, sponsorship) and psychosocial (e.g., counseling, confirmation, friendship) functions (Kram, 1983; Noe, 1988). Although the two functions tend to be strongly correlated, they have also been shown to be more strongly related to different outcomes.

#### *Career Support*

Career support such as advice and coaching requires the mentor to have the opportunity to observe and provide feedback to a protégé. Supervisory mentors differ from non-supervisory mentors in that they have regular opportunities to observe their protégés and are in an organizationally sanctioned position to protect and provide exposure to them. However, supervisors with multiple subordinate protégés must allocate their time, and their mentoring motivations may explain the manner in which they do so. Specifically, mentors are more likely to provide career support to protégés whose characteristics enable them to fulfill their motivations for mentoring.

**Motivation to benefit others.** Prior research has found that mentors prefer protégés with greater ability or potential (Allen, 2004; Allen et al., 1997; Allen et al., 2000). Mentoring these individuals is likely to be less effortful than mentoring low potential individuals. For a supervisory mentor, the reward for doing so is likely to be greater as the high potential subordinate may later be more productive and take on greater responsibility. By contrast, providing career support to a low potential subordinate may be seen as an inefficient use of time. However, supervisors with a strong mentor motivation for the benefit of others may allocate career support to low potential subordinates and view their efforts to improve the 'weakest link' as being valuable for the organization. It follows that our first hypothesis stated:

*Hypothesis 1. Supervisors who are more motivated to mentor for the benefit of others will provide greater career support to subordinates low in potential for advancement than will supervisors who are less motivated to mentor for the benefit of others.*

**Motivation for self-enhancement.** *Ingratiation* involves flattering others with the goal of gaining acceptance or approval (Brodsky, 2004). Research has found that protégés use ingratiation to influence mentors (Scandura, 1998). Aryee, Wyatt, and Stone (1996) reported that protégés who ingratiated their mentor more felt they had received greater career support from those mentors. This is most likely to be the case when the mentor's motivation to provide such support is primarily for his or her own self-enhancement. Providing career support is not seen as useful unless mentors receive credit for the success of their protégés. An ingratiating protégé is more likely to publically attribute their success to their

mentor's effort to ensure the mentor continues to provide them with such support. Thus, a high ingratiating protégé is likely to receive greater career support than a low ingratiating protégé if their mentor is self-enhancement motivated. Thus, our second hypothesis stated:

*Hypothesis 2. Protégés' attempts to ingratiate a supervisory mentor will be positively associated with reported career support for supervisors highly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement and negatively associated with career support for supervisors not highly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement.*

### *Psychosocial Support*

In contrast to career support, psychosocial support tends to more strongly associated with liking (Ensher & Murphy, 1997) and with mentor-protégé similarity (Ensher & Murphy, 1997; Koberg, Boss, & Goodman; 1998; Ragins & McFarlin, 1990; Thomas, 1990; Turban, Dougherty, & Lee, 2002). Mentor motivations are likely to be associated with protégés they like and thus those who report receiving greater psychosocial support from them.

**Intrinsic satisfaction motivation.** Individuals in a supervisory role have achieved some level of organizational success. Thus, supervisory mentors are more likely to see high potential protégés as younger versions of themselves than they are low potential protégés. Accordingly, high potential protégés are more likely to provide mentors with a sense of generativity. Mentors derive intrinsic satisfaction from passing on their wisdom and experience to protégés (Levinson et al., 1978). Serving as a role model to a high potential protégé is likely to be more intrinsically satisfying. Mentoring can help alleviate feelings of reaching a career plateau and reignite their sense of purpose. "Although, in one sense, intrinsic motivation exists within individuals, in another sense intrinsic motivation exists in the relation between individuals and activities" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). Supervisors motivated by intrinsic satisfaction should seek to optimize such experiences. Thus, the bias to provide greater psychosocial support to high potential protégés should be particularly apparent for supervisors strongly motivated to mentor for intrinsic satisfaction.

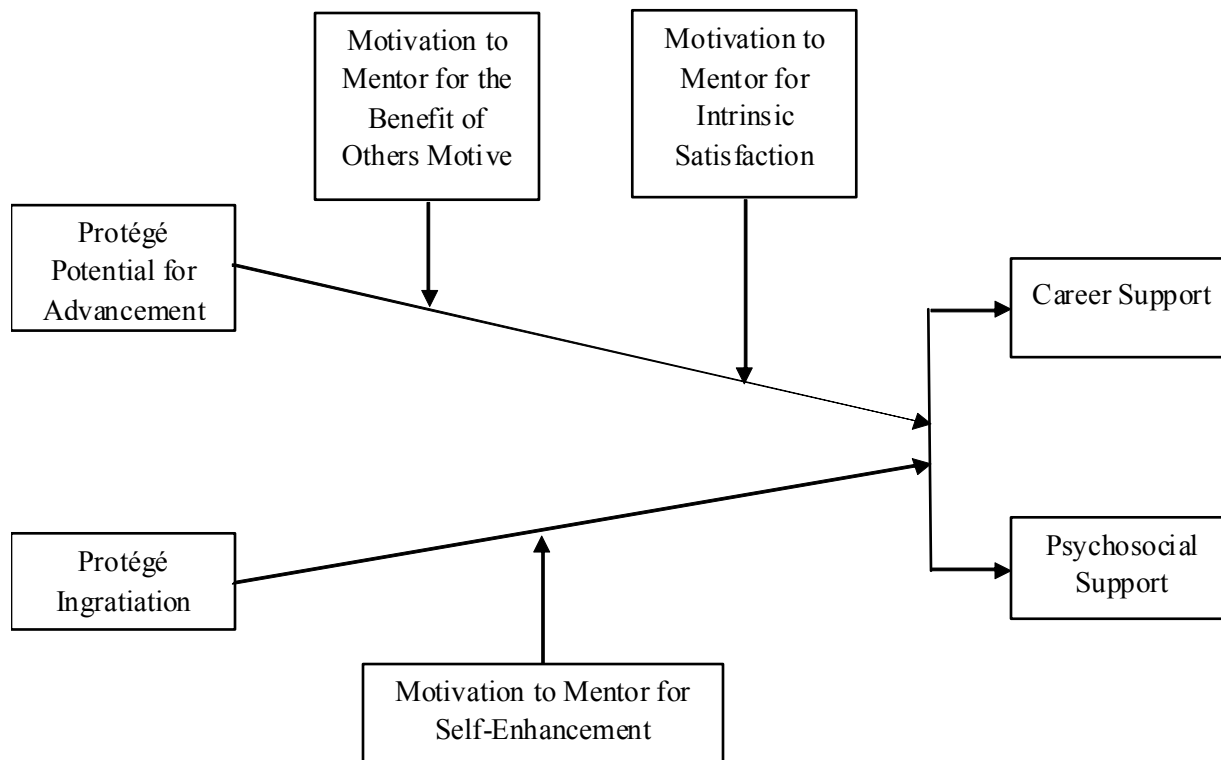
*Hypothesis 3. Protégés' potential for advancement will be more positively associated with the psychosocial support they report receiving when their supervisor is highly motivated to mentor for his/her own intrinsic satisfaction than when the mentor is less motivated to mentor for his/her own intrinsic satisfaction.*

**Self-enhancement motivation.** Ingratiation has been positively associated with interpersonal liking and positive affect (Gordon, 1996; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Protégés who ingratiate their mentors may become better liked by those mentors. In turn, the mentors may provide greater support to protégés they like (Ensher & Murphy, 1997). Therefore, a supervisory mentor may be motivated to reciprocate the praise from a protégé by reinforcing that protégé. Providing psychosocial support to a high ingratiating protégé should strengthen ingratiation behavior, which should be most desirable for a supervisor who is strongly motivated by self-enhancement. However, for supervisory mentors in particular, protégé ingratiation can also have costs if other subordinate protégés perceive favoritism. For those not motivated to mentor for self-enhancement, these costs may outweigh the potential benefits of protégé ingratiation. Based on these arguments, our next hypothesis stated:

*Hypothesis 4. Protégés who ingratiate their supervisory mentors will report receiving greater psychosocial support if their supervisor is highly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement but will report receiving lesser psychosocial support if their supervisor is not highly motivated by self-enhancement.*

The full conceptual model of our hypothesized relationships is presented in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1**  
**CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF HYPOTHESIZED RELATIONSHIPS**



**METHOD**

**Participants**

Eighty-six individuals (36 male, 48 female, 2 gender not reported) who reported having a *current* supervisory mentor participated in the present study as protégés. The protégés’ age ranged from 20 to 68 years ( $M = 36.39$  years). Protégés consisted of 64 Caucasians, 11 African Americans, 4 Hispanics, 4 Asians, and 3 “Other.” Protégés ranged in their tenure with the company from 2 to 230 months ( $M = 40.62$  months) and job tenure from 1 to 123 months ( $M = 27.34$  months). These participants were employees from five locations, across the United States, of a Marketing Communications business sector (associated with a large national corporation) and were recruited by way of a personalized e-mail sent by the head of Human Relations. The e-mail informed employees of the purpose of the study, the principal investigator’s third-party affiliation, and supplied employees with a link to complete the proposed survey. The preliminary survey for protégés was sent to 470 employees stationed at five locations. Sixty-five supervisors (36 male, 27 female, 2 gender not reported) who were identified as a mentor by their direct reports participated in the present study (85.9% response rate). The mentors’ age ranged from 24 to 67 years ( $M = 42.50$  years). Mentors consisted of 60 Caucasians, 2 Hispanics, 1 African American, 1 Asian American, and 1 “Other.” Mentors ranged in organizational tenure from 7 to 252 months ( $M = 81.51$  months) and job tenure from 1 to 135 months ( $M = 36.89$  months). *Twenty-two* of these supervisory mentors provided data regarding more than one subordinate protégé.

Job types for mentors and protégés ranged from company president (led all client relationships and business development opportunities for the company and responsible for all profitability in the company) to Account Managers (managed the client relationship and lead generation on behalf of client strategies), IT Team (ensured data integrity and provided data consultation to clients), Administration (provided

accounting deliverables and human resources support to employees), Operations Manager (provided operations support for the entire organization), and Creative Department (provided production and creative deliverables to support client marketing efforts).

## Measures

**Mentor motives.** 11-items (Allen, 2003) were used to assess mentor motivations on a 6-point scale (1 = *no extent*, 6 = *great extent*). Mentors completed this measure for each of their individual protégé separately. Alphas for the three subscales ranged from 0.73 to 0.93.

**Functional mentoring.** Twenty-one items (14 psychosocial items,  $\alpha = 0.94$ ; 7 career development items,  $\alpha = 0.89$ ) from Noe's (1988 see Table 1 page 468 for full scale) Mentor Function Scale assessed protégé-perceived functional mentoring. Items were measured using a six-point Likert scale (1 = *no extent*, 6 = *great extent*).

**Protégé ingratiation.** Protégé ingratiation was assessed using a modified version (applying to a mentoring context) of Bolino and Turnley's (1999) 4-item scale ( $\alpha = 0.95$ ). Items were measured on a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *never*, 6 = *often*).

**Protégé potential for advancement.** Protégé potential for advancement was rated by each protégé's supervisory mentor with a single item ("How would you rate this individual's overall potential for advancement?") using a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *poor* to 6 = *excellent*).

## Procedure

Participants were given the following definition of a mentor,

"A mentor is a person of greater experience who is committed to the personal and professional development and support of a less experienced individual (i.e. "protégé"). These relationships can be informal or formal (i.e. protégé is assigned to a mentor by the organization), and you may have more than one mentor at a time. Furthermore, mentoring relationships are not always 100% positive. Like other types of relationships, they can have their ups and downs."

Prospective participants were then asked if their current supervisor fit the mentoring definition. If so, they were asked to complete the ingratiation and functional mentoring measures with that supervisory mentor as a referent. Supervisory mentors were asked to complete the measures indicating their mentor motivations as well as a rating of advancement potential for the subordinate protégés.

## RESULTS

Correlation and descriptive statistics are reported in Table 1. An alpha level of .05 was used for all analyses.

### Tests of Hypotheses

**Career support.** In order to test Hypotheses 1 and 2, protégé reports of the career support they received from their supervisory mentors were regressed on protégé potential for advancement, protégé ingratiation, mentor benefit others motivation, self-enhancement motivation, intrinsic motivation, and three product terms representing the interaction of benefit others motivation and protégé potential for advancement, intrinsic motivation to mentor and protégé potential for advancement, and self-enhancement motivation to mentor and protégé ingratiation. As shown in Table 2, this equation was significant.

**TABLE 1**  
**INTERCORRELATIONS, MEANS, AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Motivation to mentor for SE <sup>a</sup>	1.00						
2. Motivation to mentor for BO <sup>a</sup>	.10	1.00					
3. Motivation to mentor for IS <sup>a</sup>	.28*	.54**	1.00				
4. CS <sup>b</sup>	-.18	.24	-.01	1.00			
5. PS <sup>b</sup>	.09	.20	.08	.70**	1.00		
6. PPA <sup>a</sup>	-.22	.38**	.25	.59**	.34**	1.00	
7. PI <sup>b</sup>	-.11	.08	-.01	-.25*	-.27*	.12	1.00
<i>M</i>	2.04	5.44	4.38	4.54	4.74	1.51	4.45
<i>SD</i>	0.96	0.88	1.17	1.00	1.01	0.67	1.21

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .  $N = 55$ .

Note. SE = self-enhancement; BO = benefit others; IS = intrinsic satisfaction; CS = career support; PS = psychosocial support; PPA = Protégé Potential for Advancement; Protégé Ingratiation = PI.

<sup>a</sup> Report provided by the mentor. <sup>b</sup> Report provided by the protégé.

**TABLE 2**  
**PREDICTORS OF PROTÉGÉ-PERCEIVED CAREER SUPPORT**

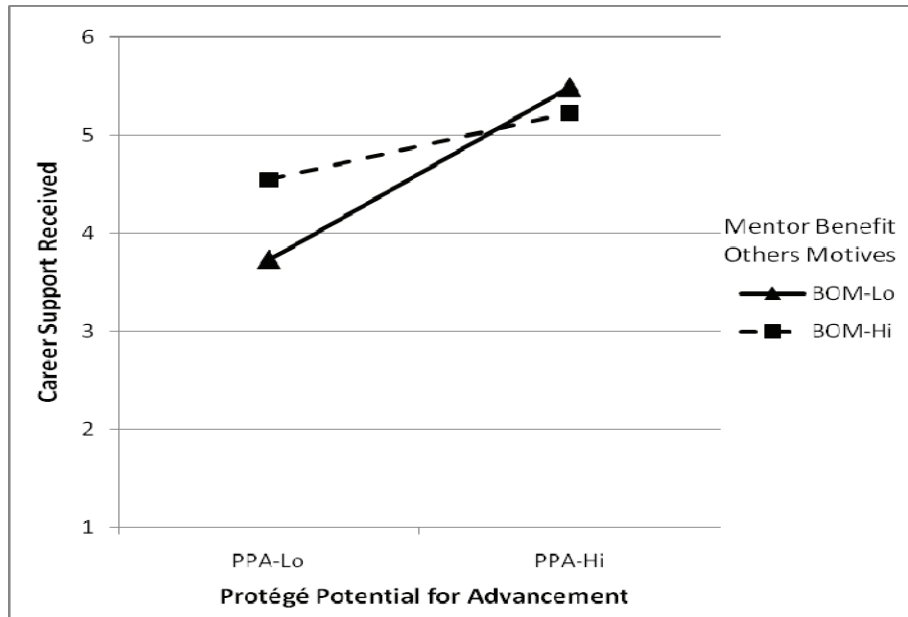
Variable	Protégé-perceived career support			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	95% CI for <i>B</i>
Constant	.15	3.14		[-5.13, 5.42]
Motivation to mentor for SE <sup>a</sup>	-.30	.23	-.30	[-0.69, 0.09]
Motivation to mentor for BO <sup>a</sup>	1.57	.73	1.45	[0.34, 2.79]
Motivation to mentor for IS <sup>a</sup>	-1.15	.51	-1.41	[-2.01, -0.30]
Protégé Potential for Advancement (PPA) <sup>a</sup>	1.19	.77	1.45	[-0.10, 2.48]
Protégé Ingratiation (PI) <sup>b</sup>	-0.42	.22	-.52	[-0.79, -0.04]
Motivation to mentor for SE <sup>a</sup> x PI	0.16	.11	.46	[-0.03, 0.34]
Motivation to mentor for BO <sup>a</sup> x PPA	-0.31*	.17	-2.72	[-0.60, -0.03]
Motivation to mentor for IS <sup>a</sup> x PPA	0.21	.11	1.81	[0.03, 0.40]
$R^2$	.49			
<i>F</i>	5.49**			

\* $p < .05$  one-tailed. \*\* $p < .05$  two-tailed.

Note. SE = self-enhancement; BO = benefit others; IS = intrinsic satisfaction; PPA = Protégé Potential for Advancement; Protégé Ingratiation = PI. <sup>a</sup> Report provided by the mentor; <sup>b</sup> Report provided by the protégé.

Hypothesis 1 stated that low potential protégés would receive more career support from supervisors higher in motivation to mentor for the benefit of others than from supervisors low in this motivation. In support of this hypothesis, the interaction of protégé potential and benefit others motivation to mentor did account for unique variance in career support received ( $\beta = -2.72, p = .04$  one-tailed) and the pattern of relations (see Figure 2) was as expected.

**FIGURE 2**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROTÉGÉ POTENTIAL FOR ADVANCEMENT (PPA) AND CAREER SUPPORT RECEIVED AS MODERATED BY SUPERVISOR MOTIVATION TO MENTOR FOR THE BENEFIT OTHERS (BOM)**



Note: Levels “Lo” and “Hi” represent -1 SD and +1 SD on the respective variable.

The interaction between protégé ingratiation behavior and supervisor motivation to mentor for self-enhancement was not a significant determinant of career support received ( $\beta = .46, p = .08$  one-tailed). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

**Psychosocial support.** In order to test Hypotheses 3 and 4, protégé reports of the psychosocial support they received from their supervisory mentors were regressed on protégé potential for advancement, protégé ingratiation, mentor benefit others motivation, self-enhancement motivation, intrinsic motivation, and three product terms representing the interaction of benefit others motivation and protégé potential for advancement, intrinsic motivation to mentor and protégé potential for advancement, and self-enhancement motivation to mentor and protégé ingratiation. As shown in Table 3, this equation was significant.

**TABLE 3**  
**PREDICTORS OF PROTÉGÉ-PERCEIVED PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT**

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Protégé-perceived Psychosocial Support</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	95% CI
Constant	6.75*	2.99		[1.72, 11.77]
Motivation to mentor for SE <sup>a</sup>	-0.28	.22	-.31	[-0.65, 0.09]
Motivation to mentor for BO <sup>a</sup>	0.90	.70	.94	[-0.27, 2.07]
Motivation to mentor for IS <sup>a</sup>	-1.63**	.49	-2.23	[-2.45, -0.82]
Protégé potential for advancement (PPA) <sup>a</sup>	-0.46	.73	-.63	[-1.70, 0.77]
Protégé ingratiation (PI) <sup>b</sup>	-0.50	.21	-.70	[-0.85, -0.14]
Motivation to mentor for SE x PI	0.22*	.11	.72	[0.04, 0.40]
Motivation to mentor for BO x PPA	-0.14	.16	-1.42	[-0.42, 0.13]
Motivation to mentor for IS x PPA	0.36**	.11	3.22	[0.16, 0.51]
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.42			
<i>F</i>	4.08**			

\* $p < .05$  one-tailed. \*\* $p < .05$  two-tailed.

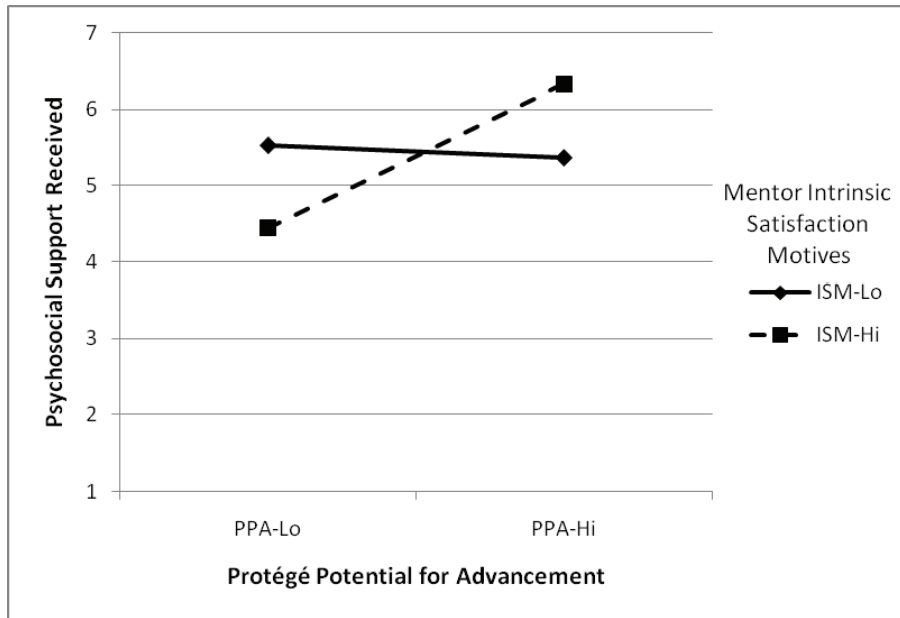
*Note.* SE = self-enhancement; BO = benefit others; IS = intrinsic satisfaction. <sup>a</sup> Report provided by the mentor. <sup>b</sup> Report provided by the protégé.

In support of Hypothesis 3 (see Figure 3), the relationship between supervisory mentors' belief in a protégé's potential for advancement and the psychosocial support that protégé felt they received from that mentor was more strongly positive when the mentor was more motivated to mentor for his/her own intrinsic satisfaction than when the mentor was less motivated to mentor for his/her own intrinsic satisfaction ( $\beta = 3.22, p = .002$  one-tailed).

In support of Hypothesis 4 (see Figure 4), protégé ingratiation was positively related to psychosocial support when the mentor was highly motivated to mentor for their own self-enhancement and negatively related to psychosocial support when the mentor was not highly motivated to mentor for their own self-enhancement ( $\beta = .72, p = .02$  one-tailed).

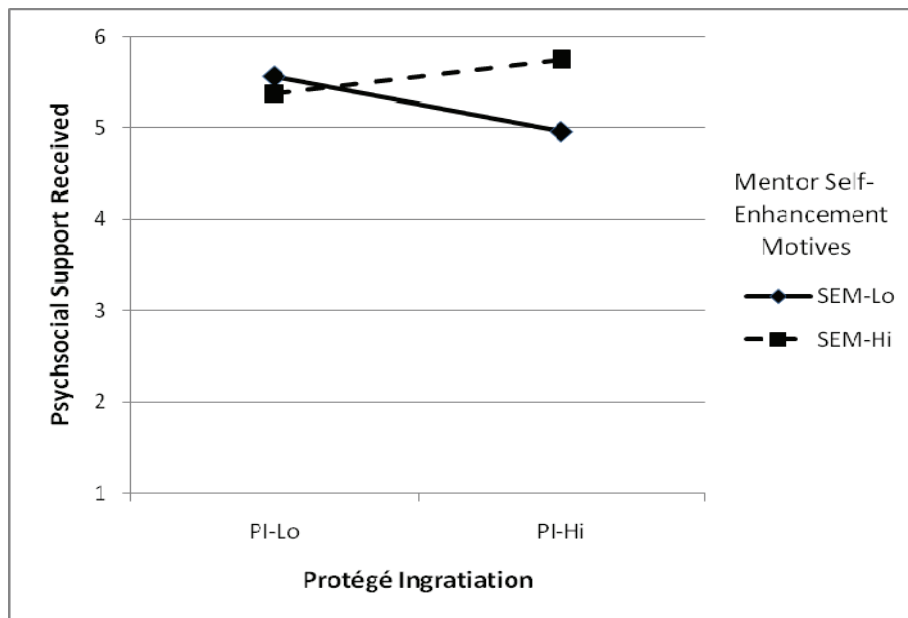


**FIGURE 3**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROTÉGÉ POTENTIAL FOR ADVANCEMENT (PPA) AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT RECEIVED AS MODERATED BY SUPERVISOR MOTIVATION TO MENTOR FOR INTRINSIC SATISFACTION (ISM)**



Note: Levels “Lo” and “Hi” represent -1 *SD* and +1 *SD* on the respective variable.

**FIGURE 4**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROTÉGÉ INGRATIATION (PI) AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT RECEIVED AS MODERATED BY SUPERVISOR MOTIVATION TO MENTOR FOR SELF-ENHANCEMENT (SEM)**



Note: Levels “Lo” and “Hi” represent -1 *SD* and +1 *SD* on the respective variable.

## DISCUSSION

Consistent with social exchange theory, prior research (e.g., Eby et al., 2008) has demonstrated that mentors who report greater mentoring benefits provide greater support to protégés (from the protégé's perspective). The present study extends this theory by showing that mentors vary in the degree to which they value various benefits (e.g., intrinsic satisfaction). This appears to motivate them to provide greater support to protégés, allowing them to maximize those benefits. Our findings indicated that supervisors' mentoring motivations moderated the relationships between protégé potential for advancement and protégé-reported psychosocial and career support. Specifically, the more a supervisor was motivated to mentor for intrinsic satisfaction, the stronger the positive relationship was between protégés' potential for advancement and the psychosocial support they reported receiving. Further, protégés' potential for advancement was less positively associated with career support provided the more a supervisor was motivated for the benefit of others. Finally, if a supervisor was strongly motivated for self-enhancement, protégés who made greater attempts to ingratiate themselves reported receiving greater psychosocial support. However, if a supervisor was *not* strongly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement, protégé ingratiation attempts were negatively associated with psychosocial support.

### Practical Implications

Results from this study have multiple practical implications. First, protégés should be trained to be aware of the potential negative effects of ingratiating their supervisory mentors. Supervisory mentors who do not wish their protégés to engage in ingratiation could also be trained to communicate their concerns and desires regarding public (or private) displays of ingratiation and to provide feedback to them regarding appropriate methods for demonstrating their appreciation to the mentor. In terms of matching, when possible, the highest potential protégés will receive the greatest mentoring if they are assigned to a supervisor highly motivated to mentor for intrinsic satisfaction; whereas lowest potential protégés will benefit more if assigned to a supervisor highly motivated to mentor for the benefit of others. Supervisory rewards and sanctions may be used to increase particular motivations to mentor based on organizational priorities.

### Theoretical Implications

Past research on mentor motives has investigated direct effects on mentors' preferences for protégés (e.g., Allen, 2003; Allen, 2004). The relatively few studies that have examined relations between mentor motives and protégé reports of the mentoring they actually received have found mixed results (e.g., Allen, 2003; Allen, 2004; Allen et al., 2000; Lankau, Hirschfeld, & Thomas, 2005; Lima, 2004). Results from the present study suggest that this may be in part due to the presence of complementary interactions between mentor motives and protégé characteristics.

Consistent with social exchange theory, prior research (e.g., Eby et al., 2008) has demonstrated that mentors who report greater mentoring benefits provide greater support to protégés (from the protégé's perspective). The present study extends this theory by showing that mentors vary in the degree to which they value various benefits (e.g., intrinsic satisfaction). This appears to motivate them to provide greater support in situations where they can maximize those benefits. Based on protégé reports, supervisors who were more strongly motivated to mentor for intrinsic satisfaction appear to have provided greater support to protégés they felt had growth potential. Observing such growth should have provided these mentors with the opportunity to meet their needs for intrinsic satisfaction. Conversely, those more strongly motivated to mentor for the benefit of others appeared to differentiate less in the support they provided to high and low potential protégés. This may be because such supervisors viewed their efforts to mentor both types of individuals as contributing to the organization's overall performance, and thus a means to benefit others in a broad sense. Finally, supervisors more strongly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement appear to have provided more support to protégés whose ingratiation would increase the likelihood that the mentor would receive credit for their efforts.

Protégés may not be able to affect supervisory mentors' perceptions of their advancement potential. However, the findings reported here suggest that protégés can affect the level of psychosocial support they receive by engaging in a level of ingratiation appropriate given the degree to which their supervisor is motivated to mentor for their own self-enhancement. Although Aryee et al. (1996) reported a positive correlation between protégé ingratiation and reports of career support, research outside the mentoring literature has shown that ingratiation can backfire (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Thacker & Wayne, 1995). Specifically, ingratiation that appears disingenuous tends to elicit negative reactions (Bolino, 1999; Ferris, Bhawuk, Fedor, & Judge, 1995). Whereas prior research has focused on the skill of the ingratiator (e.g., Ferris, Treadway, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, & Frink, 2005), our research shows that the interpersonal motivations of the target can also dictate when ingratiation elicits positive or negative reactions. A supervisor who is highly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement may want to positively reinforce subordinate protégés who publically flatter them or give them credit for the protégé's growth by reciprocating with extra psychosocial support. Alternatively, a supervisor who is not strongly motivated to mentor his/her subordinates for his/her own self-enhancement may intentionally hold back psychosocial support from high ingratiating protégés so as not to reinforce such behavior. These mentors may be more concerned about the appearance of favoritism that could result from a protégé's public flattery.

Alternatively, this finding may be because protégés who put a great deal of effort into ingratiating their supervisory mentors expect those mentors to reciprocate by providing them with greater support. These expectations may be fulfilled if the supervisor is highly motivated to mentor for self-enhancement. However, these expectations may not be fulfilled if the supervisor is not motivated by self-enhancement. It is possible that highly ingratiating protégés perceive that they are receiving less psychosocial support because their extraordinary efforts at stroking their mentors' ego are not reciprocated by the mentor. Thus, it may be that mentors low in self-enhancement motivation are simply perceived to provide less psychosocial support by their protégés due to the fact that they do not respond as those protégés expect them to. Additional research is needed to explore this possibility.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study had a number of methodological strengths such as the use of multi-source data. However, limitations should also be noted. First, the data reported were collected at the same point in time. Thus, the directionality of the relationships found cannot be determined with certainty. Additional longitudinal research is needed. Second, relationships between mentor motivations, protégé characteristics, and mentoring received were tested in the context of supervisory relationships. It is possible that they are most pronounced in a supervisory context given the visibility of such relationships. Thus, future research is needed to determine whether these relationships hold in other types of mentorships that cross departmental boundaries. Finally, we investigated two particular protégé characteristics (i.e., potential for advancement, ingratiation). Additional research is needed to explore the manner in which other characteristics may interact with mentor motivations.

### **Conclusion**

Our research demonstrated support for the notion that supervisors' motivations to mentor determine, in part, the type of protégés that are most likely to receive mentoring from them. This research contributes to our understanding of what makes for an effective mentor-protégé match. Future research should continue to explore the manner in which mentor motives interact with other protégé characteristics beyond potential and ingratiation and should do so in the context of different types of mentorships (e.g., informal, peer).

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