Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF)

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The Development of a Gender-Informed, Culturally Competent Mentorship Program for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces

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Preface

This study explores the possibility of a mentorship program for women in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Through a six-phase study including a scoping review, interviews, resource mining and review, framework development, resource development, and validation, the Framework for Women Mentorship in the CAF (FWM-CAF) was created. This Martello paper lays out the creation of the framework using the interview data from twenty-eight initial interviewees (mostly women) and eight additional validation interviewees (an equal number of men and women). After an extensive scoping review of the literature about mentorship in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations, interviews were held with subject matter experts in mentorship as well as Canadian servicewomen and veterans who had served or are serving as mentors and mentees. The interview data revealed overall support for the idea of program specifically for women in the CAF, as interviewees expressed their positive experiences with the network and community-building that mentorship can provide, especially in male-dominated organizations such as the military. This research presents a ready-to-use, customizable framework for women's mentorship in the CAF and provides a roadmap for the creation of a sustainable, functional program which could be a benefit for the recruitment and retention of women and other minority groups in the military.

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Introduction

The purpose of this project was to develop a gender-informed, culturally competent mentorship program to support women members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Over the course of several research phases that included a scoping review, interviews, resource mining and review, framework development, and resource development, the question of "What can a mentorship program that supports the needs and experiences of women in the Canadian Armed Forces look like?" has been addressed.

Mentoring and mentorship programs are thought to improve an individual's organizational adjustment, lead to career advancement, and provide psychosocial support (Kram, 1985). Models of mentorship abound, and range anywhere from strict assigned mentor/mentee relationships with a template for how interactions should play out, all the way to informal mentorship external to organizational programs (Cook, Pratt, and Prabhu 2020; MacKinnon and Shepley 2014; Wanberg, Welsh, and Hazlett 2003). Generally, both mentors and mentees report positive experiences from mentorship relationships. However, issues can also arise, especially in the balance of power between mentors and mentees (Ng, Song, and Liu 2018; Price-Sharps et al. 2014; Washington 2010) which may be particularly pronounced in highly formalized structure and rule-based cultures found in military, military adjacent (e.g., military health professionals), and policing organizations.

This study advocates and develops a framework for a flexible, culturally competent mentorship program which addresses the needs of women in the military. Such a program could make strides in improving retention and create a more support environment for women in the CAF. This framework could also serve to address mentoring needs of

other minority populations in the CAF such as racialized minorities, Indigenous people, and 2SLGBTQIA+ service-members.

This first chapter of the study will begin by outlining the relevant policy environment, before moving on to some definitions for mentorship. In the next chapter, the methods and process of the study will be described, before moving on to a literature review in the chapter that follows. In the chapter after that, the Mentoring Framework for Women in the CAF (MFW-CAF) will be developed, along with resources which complement the framework. Before a conclusion with reflections on the process of the study and on the way forward for the mentorship of women in the CAF, the validation study will be outlined in its own separate chapter.

The Vision of Strong, Secure, Engaged

In 2019, *Strong, Secure, Engaged: Canada's Defence Policy*, committed to directed recruiting and "capitalizing on the unique talents and skill-sets of Canada's diverse populations" by "[increasing] the number of women personnel by 1% annually, with the target of reaching 25% by 2026" (Government of Canada 2019b). *Strong, Secure, Engaged* directly incorporates the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (United Nations Security Council 2000) on Women, Peace, and Security, which has broad goals of gender equality, and specifically tackles gendered dynamics in conflict situations. *Strong, Secure, Engaged* deploys various strategies to achieve the aforementioned goals, including engagement and outreach efforts, accessing advertising and social media, media partnerships, as well as one-on-one recruitment efforts. In addition, the Department of National Defence (DND) and the CAF are deploying recruitment and retention policies and strategies to increase gender diversity (Brown 2015). Similar male-dominated organizations, such as police services, also experience limited gender diversity within their ranks and have explored strategies including targeted mentorship opportunities to support well-being and retention among minority populations such as women (Jones 2017; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019).

Although mentorship programs have been created specifically for CAF members (Department of National Defence, n.d.), the role that gender and intersecting identities in addition to the impact of military culture has not been explicitly considered. A mentorship program development method that is grounded in evidence and conducted with

an intersectional approach in mind, may be best suited to address the unique career and psychosocial needs of women in the CAF.

What is Mentorship?

In the broader mentorship literature and in the literature on mentorship in military settings, definitions of mentorship vary depending on the audience and context in which mentorship is discussed (Cole Jr. 2012). A review of the military mentorship literature by Johnson and Andersen (2010) found that formal mentoring programs in the US military "employ a heterogeneous collection of mentoring definitions or, worse, fail to define the term altogether" (2010, 118). The result of such diverse interpretations of mentorship leads to confusion as to what mentors and mentees are supposed to do and what the goals of these partnerships are. This can be especially confusing in the military when mentorship can be conflated with leadership or coaching activities (Allen and Galvin 2015; Gunn 2016; Johnson et al. 2001; Neal 2015). The most significant impact of poorly defining mentorship (or the lack of a definition) is the potential to further confuse *mentorship* with other language around personal development and growth (i.e., coaching, sponsorship, leadership; Johnson and Andersen 2010).

Mentorship in the broader literature is described as a relationship between two individuals (Baker, Hocevar, and Johnson 2003; Bonica and Bewley 2019; Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Gunn 2016; Johnson et al. 2001; Jones 2017; McMains et al. 2018; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019; Payne and Huffman 2005; Scott et al. 2019) characterized as being voluntary, developmental, mutually respectful (Bonica and Bewley 2019; Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Felix and Thomas 2020; Kopser 2002), and even transformational (Allen and Galvin 2015). One individual, the mentor, is more experienced and serves as a coach, cheerleader, confidant, role model, devil's advocate, counsellor, and when possible, helps open professional opportunities for their less experienced mentee (Allen and Galvin 2015; Baker et al. 2003; Bonica and Bewley 2019; Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Felix and Thomas 2020; Hassell, Archbold, and Stichman 2010; Johnson and Andersen 2015; Johnson et al. 2001; Kopser 2002; Payne and Huffman 2005).

While some scholars discuss how the imprecise nature of the definition of mentorship impedes creating solid explanatory frameworks (Bozeman and Feeney 2007), others believe the flexibility of the ter-

minology is important for organizations (Costello 2015). Most models of mentoring view it as an activity which centres on a person's development through advice of another person in career or personal areas (Buzzanell and D'Enbeau 2014). Many more modern models centre on a flexible idea of mentorship which positions the mentor and mentee as learning from each other (Costello 2015). But most mentorship studies call for some sort of structure in the mentorship experience, encouraging adaptable, but somewhat standardized models which are supported by management, and where mentors offer quality time with regard to advice and guidance (Rockwell, Leck, and Elliott 2013; Tsen et al. 2012). Formal mentorship is particularly important to mentees' perceptions that they are being supported by their organization (Ismail et al. 2015; Washington 2010). Most studies on mentoring also focus on professional environments such as the private sector or academia, but there are a few which focus on mentorship in personal environments and personal development outside of a career such as Sheran and Arnold's (2012) study on mentorship in the gay community.

So how will the current study conceptualize mentorship?

Zachary's (2012) "The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships, 2nd Edition," will inform the definition of mentorship. Zachary (2012) grounds her mentoring program in a "learning-centred mentoring paradigm" (2012, 3) that is characterized by seven distinct but overlapping elements:

1. Reciprocity. The relationship between mentor and mentee is viewed as being bi-directional, where reciprocity and mutuality are present. Each party has their own roles and responsibilities to the relationship, and they learn from one another. At the end of the mentoring relationship, the hope is that both parties will benefit.
2. Learning. This is the purpose, the process, and the outcome of mentoring. It is important for mentors to understand how they can facilitate learning in their mentees as well as to be receptive to learning themselves.
3. Relationship. A good mentoring relationship requires time to develop and grow. For this to happen, both parties need to be open and honest with each other as well as with themselves. Like any meaningful relationship, mentors and mentees need to work together to establish, maintain, and strengthen the relationship and the benefits which may arise from that relationship.

4. Partnership. A good relationship is the foundation for a strong mentoring partnership which is grounded in trust. The mentor and the mentee will feel secure enough in the relationship to hold one another, and themselves accountable to the outcomes of the partnership they create.
5. Collaboration. The mentor and mentee will build the relationship, share knowledge, and come to agreements about the focus of the mentee's learning journey and work together to achieve their agreed upon objectives.
6. Mutually defined goals. The direction of the mentoring relationship must continually progress toward the agreed upon goals. It is important to have clear conversations about those goals at the beginning of the relationship and revisit them throughout.
7. Development. Mentors need to facilitate progress towards the goals set out with their mentee by helping to develop skills, knowledge, abilities, and problem-solving strategies in their mentees with broader goals in mind.

Methods

The overall study consisted of several phases that employed different methods of data collection and knowledge generation; however, an overall constructivist approach was taken for the whole study. A constructivist approach focuses on understanding the lived experiences from the perspectives of those who live it (Schwandt 1994) and is appropriate since the study aimed to develop and validate a mentorship framework for women in the CAF thus implementing a method that explores that exact experience. Constructivism reveals the features, intricacies, and situated meanings represented in the lives of the participants. This approach is especially beneficial for accommodating the appropriate breadth and depth of analysis when exploring a new phenomenon, which is the objective of this work.

Research Design

A scoping review was first undertaken to determine the existing literature for other mentorship programs employed in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations. The scoping review has been expanded to a literature review, which includes studies beyond what was included in the original scoping review to paint a clearer picture of gender and mentorship in military organizations. Next, interviews were conducted with subject matter experts, as well as women mentors and mentees in the military. The interviews assessed experiences of formal

and informal mentorship, and solicited the lived experiences of mentors and mentees, and the expertise of those who have run mentorship programs to assist in building a framework for mentorship. During the interviews, resources on mentorship in the CAF and adjacent organizations were also mined and review as part of Phase 3 so that framework development would not overlap with the resources already available and would instead complement the CAF's current strategies. At this point, a framework was created for mentorship in the CAF based on the program modelling of Borich and Jemelka (1980) and the framework development of Karcher et al. (2006). In addition to this framework, resources in the form of worksheets were created to complement the mentoring activities described. Finally, a validation study was undertaken to obtain feedback on the framework and how well it would fulfill the needs of CAF members.

Phase 1: Scoping Review

The scoping review framework by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) served as the basis for a literature review that answered the question, "How does the literature conceptualize and describe mentorship and mentorship programs in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations for women?" The results of the scoping review informed the development of the interview questions used in Phase 2 of the study. The results of the scoping review have been turned into a literature review for the purposes of this publication, but during the process of this study, allowed for a controlled review of the literature about possibilities of mentorship programs in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations.

A scoping review has been determined to be the most appropriate method to review existing literature on the use of mentorship in military and similar professions. Scoping reviews are the preferred method to "examine the extent, range and nature of research activities" as a way to map out a research area when it may be difficult to "visualize the range of material that might be available" (Arksey and O'Malley 2005, 21). The structured five-step methodological procedures for completing a scoping review as outlined by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and expanded upon by Levac, Colquhoun, and O'Brien (2010) were used to guide this study.

The first step in conducting a scoping review is to determine the scope and focus of the research question. As recommended by Arksey

and O'Malley (2005) and Levac et al. (2010), factors of breadth and specificity were balanced when determining the research question as stated above: "How does the literature conceptualize and describe mentorship and mentorship programs in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations for women?"

The next step, the search, identification, and retrieval process, involved accessing relevant databases, which were determined in consultation with a social sciences library to ensure a robust search across a wider range of databases. Canadian and international research was electronically searched in July and August 2020 using the following databases: OMNI, Academic Search Complete, Academic OneFile, Journal Storage (JSTOR), Gender Studies Database and Google Scholar. Hand searching lists of eligible literature was also conducted to yield any additional sources.

In the current study, selection criteria were developed using key search terms as a guide. Literature that was included used both qualitative and quantitative methods as well as position or perspective papers, all from peer-reviewed publications. Articles included in the study were limited to those that were peer-reviewed, published in the English language (due to lack of translation capacity) from one of the "Five Eyes" nations (i.e., Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand) and published between January 2001 to the present day. The Five Eyes nations were chosen because of similarities in socioeconomic climate and national and international geopolitical positions. In addition, the Five Eyes nations were involved in comparable peacekeeping missions since the 1990s with increased involvement in combat operations post–9/11 that also saw increased participation of women on the frontlines of both military and police services. More specifically, the included literature either discussed a study examining the effect of mentorship on military or police careers (e.g., program evaluation) and any gender differences or presented a position regarding mentorship in the military or police service. Studies that were conducted apart from the established timeframe for publication or were completed in countries other than those within the Five Eyes, were excluded from the analysis. Database searches were completed by combing key descriptor terms related to mentorship programs in military, military adjacent, or policing organizations aimed at supporting women (e.g., "military," "police," "women," "females," "mentorship program," "mentoring").

Charting the data came next. The process of charting the data in a scoping review includes reviewing, documenting, and sorting informa-

tion obtained by key issues and themes (Arksey and O'Malley 2005). An analytical data extraction tool was developed to guide and organize the documentation of the key features of each of the included papers. Information included title, authors, journal, year of publication, research location, key focus of the article, type of article (i.e., study, perspective), organization, specific population described in the article, article's stated objective, results/recommendations, definition of mentorship, and definition of culture (i.e., military, civilian).

The final stage requires the implementation of an analytical process to identify and compare key themes across the extracted data (Levac et al. 2010). Thematic analysis was supported by using MAXQDA (VERBI Software Consult Sozialforschung GmbH, 1989–2017), a qualitative data analysis software program. Key themes consistent with the purpose of the review were collated and summarized.

Due to our criteria for inclusion and methods, there were some limitations to the scoping review based, which is partially why it is integrated into a broader review of the literature. For example, the scoping review did not follow a citation trail and therefore may have limited the articles that were included in the study. The findings of the study (Tam-Seto and Imre-Millei 2022) may have been enhanced through the inclusion of broadened databases. Some articles behind paywalls, and chapters in academic books were not accessible.

Phase 2: Interviews

Prior to interviews, the study protocol obtained ethical clearance from Queen's University General Research Ethics Board (GRHBS-139-20) and as well as the Department of National Defence/Canadian Armed Forces Social Sciences Research Review Board (SSRRB #:1905/20F). All participants of the study provided written consent after reviewing the study's Letter of Information which was reviewed again with the interviewer just prior to completing interviews.

A total of 28 interviews were completed with self-identified subject matter experts and currently serving members of the CAF who noted experiences of mentoring women or being a woman mentee. The Critical Incident Technique (CIT; Flanagan 1954) and framework data analysis (Ritchie and Spencer 2002) approaches were used for data collection and analysis. The purpose of the interviews was to explore the role of gender and culture in mentorship partnerships as well as mentorship as an approach within the context of the CAF. For exploratory research

such as this, a constructivist qualitative approach is well suited as reality is created through multiple perspectives from participants that is informed by interactions with others (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011).

A data collection framework such as the CIT (Flanagan 1954) is suitable for qualitative information gathering, particularly when little is known about a specific experience. In-depth, semi-structured interviews used in CIT encourage participants to describe and reflect on *critical incidents* defined as "any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself" (Flanagan 1954). The purpose of the CIT approach to interviews was to explore mentoring for women in the military, specifically the CAF. The CIT approach is also appropriate for ensuring that intersectionality is incorporated into this study. Encouraging participants to "tell stories" as a data collection method allows them to address gender and other identities as a cultural construct thus reflecting a key difference between an intersectional approach and the more traditional and dichotomous additive approach to conducting research (Windsong 2016).

An interview guide (see the Appendix) was developed based on the study's objectives and the results of the scoping review conducted before the interviews. The guide was informally reviewed by a mentoring subject matter expert for content validity (Haynes, Richard, and Kubany 1995) and refined for further clarification. The interview questions were meant to elicit stories of positive and negative mentoring interactions. Follow-up questions were used only to encourage further exploration. Additional questions were asked to inquire about participants' experiences and perceptions of mentorship in the military.

Potential participants in the Subject Matter Expert (SME) group were recruited through social media channels (e.g., website postings, Twitter) through the networks within the Centre for International Defence Policy (CIDP) and the Canadian Defence and Security Network (CDSN). Mentees and mentors, who were all active members of the CAF, were sent study information from an existing CAF Women's Mentorship Program by the CAF study sponsor, CPO1 Robert (Sean) Wilcox. The members were notified via the Defence Wide Area Network (DWAN) through the Defence Learning Network Portal (DLN). Recruitment was also supported by study participants using snowball sampling, or chain-referral sampling. Inclusion criteria were as follows: English-speaking (due to lack of translation capacity) adults who have experience or expertise with mentorship of women in a military context. There were no efforts made to limit diversity in the study popula-

tion so as to encourage variability in sampling (e.g., gender, rank, element, location), which is important when striving for intersectionality in research design (Windsong 2016).

Interviews were conducted by the principal investigator (Linna Tam-Seto) over the telephone, electronically recorded, and transcribed verbatim by a transcription team. The transcription team consisted of seven undergraduate and graduate students affiliated with The Gender Lab within the CIDP at Queen's University. Interviews were approximately 45–90 minutes in length and were conducted between August 2020 and January 2021. The interviewer maintained field notes containing observations, thoughts, and any other pertinent information.

Data analysis for the current study was completed in two parts. The first part involved "rough coding" by a research assistant according to an established coding tree informed by current literature on mentorship as well as the results of the scoping review that examined the use of mentorship in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations. The research assistant identified large segments of the transcripts that could be organized in the major themes within the coding tree as the first step of the data analysis. The next step of thematic analysis was completed in accordance to Hsieh and Shannon (2005) with a focus on the specific career and psychosocial functions of mentorship. MAXQDA software (VERBI Software Consult Sozialforschung GmbH 1989–2017) was used to assist with data management by organizing the rough codes previously identified and organized by a research assistant on the project, at which time the principal investigator completed line-by-line review for pattern coding and memos (Miles and Huberman 1994). Ultimately, conversations with participants also yielded additional information identifying specific mentoring resources that enhanced the next phase of the study.

Phase 3: Resource Mining and Review

In addition to peer-reviewed manuscripts and publications regarding mentoring, resources were identified by interview participants which they were either aware of or used in their own mentorship journey. The resources participants suggested were further investigated. Existing Department of National Defence/Canadian Armed Forces (DND/CAF) mentorship documents were forwarded to the principal investigator as most are only available to serving members or civilian employees of the DND/CAF. These resources were reviewed and considered

for the next phase of framework development. Most significantly, these resources were considered during the final phase of resource development to ensure that duplication did not occur.

Phase 4: Framework Development

A framework was created to illustrate the proposed mentoring program for women in the Canadian Armed Forces following the mentorship framework development approach described by Karcher et al. (2006) and based on program modelling by Borich and Jemelka (1980). This method of creating a mentorship framework allows for an opportunity to articulate the inputs, mentoring activity, and desired outcomes as well as account for external factors, or constraints, that may influence the success of a mentorship program. The framework developed for this study has been informed by interview results and review of the additional resources. The purpose of the framework is to identify the processes and factors affecting a formal mentorship program for women in the CAF.

Phase 5: Resource Development

The resources developed in this study are meant to augment existing resources created for use by CAF members. The focus of the newly created resources is to increase attention to gender and culture related factors that impact effective mentoring in the CAF. Resources are incorporated throughout the validation study. The resources have been adapted from worksheets found in Zachary's (2012) mentorship manual.

Phase 6: Validation

The validation study consisted of one-on-one interviews conducted with CAF veterans. In total, eight interviews were completed comprising four women and four men, all individuals identified as Regular Forces veterans. Prior to the interviews, the research team conducted a review of five studies about the validation of mentoring programs in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations. Articles were searched on Google Scholar using the following search terms in various combinations: "mentor," "mentorship," "program," "formal," "military," "police," "veteran," "women." The search was conducted in August 2021. These terms were determined to be the most relevant and were informed by the previous scoping review.

The search was limited to articles published in 2011 or later. Articles were selected by reviewing the titles, abstracts, and keywords. Five articles were chosen which met or came closest to meeting the inclusion criteria: description of a formal mentorship program; evaluation of the formal mentorship program in a systematic way; conducted in a NATO country (in this case Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom); and conducted with military or military adjacent individuals (e.g., military spouses, police, correctional officers, and veterans). The full article was then read, and the contents summarized and synthesized in combination with summaries of the other articles. The review revealed a diversity of methods in program validation and the results were paired with Shippmann et al.'s (2000), description of the dimensions for rigor in a program.

Next, the study protocol was granted ethical clearance by the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board (GCIDP-002-21). A purposive sampling strategy was used for participants who would have knowledge, insight, and experience of interest to this validation study (Marrelli, Tondora, and Hoge 2005; Teddlie and Yu 2007). Participants were recruited through email list-serve from the CIDP and through social media posts via Twitter through the CIDP and Servicewomen's Salute. Interested potential participants were directed to contact the principal investigator for detailed information about the study. The recruitment method also included snowball sampling. Prior to the interviews, participants were provided with a copy of the mentorship framework as well as the accompanying mentorship worksheets. Participants were asked to review the mentoring resources prior to the interview so that feedback could be provided during the discussion.

Inclusion criteria were veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces with self-identified experience with mentorship of women during their services. All people indicating interest in participating, regardless of self-identified sex/gender were welcomed to participate. Participants were English speaking due to a lack of translation capacity.

A verbal overview of the current study and the development of the mentorship framework and accompanying resources was provided to participants prior to the interviews. The principal investigator reviewed consent and provided participants with an opportunity to ask questions. Written consent was received from participants prior to commencing the interview via the Letter of Information, which outlined the study objectives, risks/benefits of participants, and consent to participate, and recording.

An interview guide was developed and semi-structured questions were used to guide data collection (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009). The questions in the guide were meant to elicit discussion about the mentorship framework itself and explore participants' feedback about the accompanying resources. The interview guide began with a confirmation consent from participants and a reiteration of the background information provided in the Letter of Information. Examples of the questions are:

1. What are your general impressions about the mentorship framework?
2. Do you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the box that is labelled "Key Mentoring Ingredients"? These are seen as the "inputs" required for a mentoring program.
3. Do you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the box that is labelled "Program Activities"? These are the activities that a mentoring program should be able to accomplish.
4. Do you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the box that is labelled "Goals and Outcomes"? These describe the purpose and objectives of mentorship and have been organized into short-, medium-, and long-term goals.
5. Do you have any thoughts that you would like to share about the final box, the one that is labelled "External Factors"? During the initial set of interviews, participants, described gender and culture related factors that play a part in what mentoring looks like for women.
6. Now I would like to talk to you about the resources that have been developed to support mentorship with women. There are already mentoring resources within the Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces which are excellent to use with women. These newly developed resources are meant to augment what exists with a particular focus on gender and culture. (Obtain feedback for each Activity sheet).

All interviews were conducted through Zoom or Microsoft Teams (whichever was most convenient for participants), however, only audio content was digitally recorded. All interviews were transcribed verbatim by a professional transcriptionist.

An audit trail was observed and included: retention of all data collected, maintenance of research literature used for the study design,

management of documents because of data analysis, retention of personal observations and reflection notes taken during and after interviews, and retaining drafts/versions of the FWM-CAF.

Theoretical or deductive thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) and applied by Pehrson, Stambulova, and Olsson (2017) informed this validation study and included the following:

1. Interview audio recordings and transcripts were reviewed.
2. Data related to participants' initial impressions of the framework and mentoring resources were sorted and summarized.
3. Rough synthesis process was completed whereby overall impressions of the FWM-CAF and mentoring resources were considered.
4. Analysis process was completed using specific feedback for the FWM-CAF and mentoring resources.
5. Synthesis at a higher-level process was completed by integrating changes to the framework and mentoring resources.

Data analysis was supported using MAXQDA data analysis software (VERBI Software Consult Sozialforschung GmbH 1989–2017).

Given recruitment and data collection challenges faced in this study because of the ongoing pandemic, individual interviews were the most suitable method for the current validation study. This decision was also based on previous work by the principal investigator validating a competency model and framework for healthcare providers (Tam-Seto and English 2019).

Shippmann et al.'s (2000), description of the dimensions for rigour in a program (or framework) is a useful reference when approaching the current validation study. Shippmann et al. (2000) is suitable to inform this study due to the similarities between competency models and program frameworks in the validation process. Shippmann and colleagues (2000) argue that *content review* and *assessment of reliability* are two specific dimensions of rigour that are directly related to the validity of competency models. *Content review* is the extent to which content experts have been involved in confirming the categories of the framework and the descriptors that follow (Shippmann et al. 2000). Information relevant to content review should include who and how many individuals provided feedback on the content, practicality, and over-all relevance of the framework (Shippmann et al. 2000). *Assessment of reliability* in a validation study aims to evaluate the consistency

of feedback or opinions that inform the development of the content in the final document (Shippmann et al. 2000). As previously indicated, there is little known about the mentorship experiences of women in the CAF and in particular, the role and effect of culture and gender on that experience. The proposed framework and its accompanying documents provide some guidance about mentoring; however, the program requires validation to ensure accuracy and utility.

A qualitative approach based on systems theory is appropriate for collecting and analyzing feedback and reflections from subject matter experts during content validation (Pehrson et al. 2017; Stambulova and Hvatskaya 2013). A process for validation is described as having the following three phases: *rough synthesis* which includes a summary of the participants' initial reflections; *analysis* which redevelops the framework to better represent the participants' reflections; and *synthesis on a higher level* which involves the integration of all new information (Pehrson et al. 2017; Stambulova and Hvatskaya 2013). This method of validation has been recognized for its holistic approach to collecting general and specific feedback from those with experience with the subject matter and/or those who may use the framework.

Literature Review

Mentoring is understood as a dyadic relationship between individuals, a mentor and a mentee, where the mentor uses his or her own knowledge and experiences to provide advice and guidance to augment the development of the less experienced mentee (Kram 1985). According to mentoring theory, mentors can provide mentees with two types of support: career and psychosocial (Kram 1985). Career-oriented functions of mentoring include providing mentees with sponsorship, increasing mentee's exposure or visibility in an industry, coaching, enhancing job satisfaction, and creating opportunities for challenging assignments (Woolnough and Fielden 2017). Psychosocial-oriented purposes of mentoring include providing mentees with role modelling, giving mentees acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship (Scandura and Williams 2004).

Within the broader category of military, military adjacent, and policing organizations, a number of sectors have explored the use of mentorship including law enforcement (Barratt, Bergman, and Thompson 2014; Hassell et al. 2010; Jones 2017; Ward and Prenzler 2016), air force instructors (Barron and Ogle 2014), military leadership (Gunn 2016; Johnson and Andersen 2015), health services (Bonica and Bewley 2019; Neal 2015), and military education (Allen and Galvin 2015; Baker et al. 2003; Johnson et al. 2001; Katayama, Jordan, and Guerrero 2008; Kofoed and McGovney 2019; Latham et al. 2020; Scott et al. 2019).

Times of transition, such as when cadets are beginning their service careers or when military members are rejoining the civilian workforce, were times during the career trajectory when mentorship was identified as being most useful. For members beginning outside the military, the shift in role and work environment was seen to be an opportunity

for mentorship to engage and support service-members (Bonica and Bewley 2019).

The transitional phase of joining the military is identified as an ideal time to provide mentorship as supported by seven articles on military education (Allen and Galvin 2015; Baker et al. 2003; Katayama et al. 2008; Kofoed and McGovney 2019; Latham et al. 2020; McMains et al. 2018; Scott et al. 2019). In combination with coaching and counselling, Allen and Galvin (2015) suggest that mentorship needs to be taught within military education. Although the skills of coaching, counselling, and mentoring (referred to by Allen and Galvin as CCM) are expectations throughout military service, Allen and Galvin (2015) argue that people first need to be trained and that "educational institutions should serve as centers of excellence in the art and science of CCM" (2015, 3).

In general, mentees are likely to experience increased self-confidence, greater networking opportunities, better leadership skills, and more access to role models (Kim and Kim 2007; Passmore 2007; Woolnough and Fielden 2017). Psychosocial mentorship for mentees in the military has been found to lead to greater commitment to a military career, expanded leadership competency, and increased likelihood to provide mentorship, compared to peers who have not received mentorship (Hu et al. 2008). Similar to other organizations that have used mentorship, research has shown that mentees within the armed forces were significantly more satisfied, more engaged within the institution, and had more opportunities to develop transformational leadership skills (Baker et al. 2003; Gunn 2016). Given the formative nature of a military education for its youngest members, the use of formal mentoring has also been explored in the literature (Hu et al. 2008; Katayama et al. 2008). Similar to the need for supports for those joining the military is the need for mentorship for individuals transitioning out of the military and returning to civilian life. As individuals transition from a military member to a civilian, the significant cultural shifts they can encounter creates a need for mentoring programs aimed at supporting vererans (Jackson and Bouchard 2019; Robertson and Brott 2014; Williams, Bambara, and Turner 2012; Yoon et al. 2017).

Mentors have reported experiencing rejuvenated interest in their work, increased knowledge, greater personal fulfillment, increased self-confidence, and improved professional reputation (Woolnough and Fielden 2017). In a study exploring the experiences of mentors and mentees in a peer mentorship program for mental health professionals in the Veterans Health Administration, mentors described their desire

to "give back" (Terry et al. 2017, 100) and take on their roles based on the benefits they received as mentees. The development of the skills necessary to be an effective mentor in a military context often overlaps with creating transformational leadership behaviours (Smith, Howard, and Harrington 2005).

A study by Payne and Huffman (2005) determined that U.S. Army officer mentees reported higher levels of organizational commitment (the strength which an individual identifies with and is involved with a particular organization) after a year of mentoring compared to those who were not involved in mentorship. Relating this finding to employee retention, the authors postulated that "mentoring reduces turnover by enhancing affective commitment" (Payne and Huffman 2005, 165). The use of mentorship to both attract and retain talent within the military has also been argued by Gunn (2016), who discusses using mentoring and coaching to develop leadership within the military. Similarly, in a survey conducted with US military faculty members, McMains et al. (2018) concluded that "results…affirm previous reports that effective mentorship potentially represents a powerful tool for faculty retention" (2018, 262).

There is evidence in the civilian world that mentorship can be a useful tool to enhance recruitment of diverse groups into organizations as well as supporting retention efforts by helping integrate new members of the team into the organizational culture, improving communication and knowledge transfer, and supporting diversity initiatives (McGee Wanguri 1996). Although mentorship has been used in militaries to ensure the success of all individuals joining, there is increasing effort to discuss the use of mentorship for specific populations such as visible minorities or racialized groups (Korabik 2008), 2SLGBTQIA+ personnel (Korabik 2008), and women (Bhirugnath-Bhookhun and Kitada 2017). Within the literature, there is increasing discussion about utilizing mentorship to support inclusivity efforts for ethnic and gender diversity (Felix and Thomas 2020). However the consistent operationalization of mentorship programs and their long term efficacy is unknown (Crapanzano and Cook 2017). Effective mentorship includes conscious consideration of factors such as culture and gender (Woolnough and Fielden 2017), such conscious consideration is of particular importance when developing a mentorship program for women in the military.

Identity and Mentorship

The literature also identifies the use of mentorship to support the careers of minority populations (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity/race) in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations. Identity, for the purposes of this study, is understood as qualities or expressions that make a person or group. Identity considerations that were made in the discussion of mentorship included race and ethnicity (Cho 2013; Crapanzano and Cook 2017), age (Crapanzano and Cook 2017), sexual orientation (Barratt et al. 2014), and gender (Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Felix and Thomas 2020; Hassell et al. 2010; Jones 2017; Kofoed and McGovney 2019; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019; Ward and Prenzler 2016).

Ethnic and racial identity appear to be a factor in military mentoring relationships such that the work of Cho (2013) has shown that there is a preference among mentors and mentees to engage with individuals who share their background. To support increasing calls for greater diversity within the ranks of the U.S. Army, Cho (2013) identified several keys to successful cross-race mentorship including mentors actively learning about the background of their mentees, honest and effective communication between mentors and mentees, the ability of the mentor to be self-aware, and all parties adopting open mindedness in the mentoring relationship. The challenges with increasing mentorship opportunities to ethnic and racial minorities was also highlighted in an article by Crapanzano and Cook (2017), that discusses a phenomenon known as "cultural bias" (2017, 12). Cultural bias describes the preference among mentors, regardless of their ethnicity and gender, to have mentees who are white and male, which is viewed as a manifestation of the "good old boys' network."

Crapanzano and Cook's (2017) study was also the only study identified that discussed age as an identity that played a role in mentorship. More specifically, Crapanzano and Cook (2017), spoke about the generation known as Millennials, individuals born between 1980–1996, and the value they place on mentorship and job satisfaction compared to those who came before them. Knowing about the general perspectives of this generation toward mentorship is seen to be beneficial to the military and was echoed in the paper by Nakamura and Nguyen (2019).

Sexual orientation as an identity impacting mentorship was discussed within the context of law enforcement in an American survey study of members of the Women in Federal Law Enforcement organi-

zation (Barratt et al. 2014). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships between gender role orientations (e.g., masculinity, femininity), sexual orientation, and mentorship for women (Barratt et al. 2014). It concluded that masculinity was positively related to career-based mentorship (e.g., promotion opportunities) and role modelling, whereas service-members who were part of a sexual minority (such as 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals) had fewer career mentoring opportunities. Although these findings can only be generalized to the participants in the study, the findings are an important step in understanding how sexual orientation enables or prevents progression in a policing career.

The role of gender identity in mentorship matching and influence on mentorship relationships were two common discussions in the literature. There are arguments advocating for both same gender mentor-mentee matching (Jones 2017; Kofoed and McGovney 2019) and mixed gender mentor-mentee matching (Felix and Thomas 2020; Katayama et al. 2008; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019). Using conditional random assignment of cadets to tactical officers at the United States Military Academy at West Point, Kofoed and McGovney (2019) found that female cadets who were mentored by women were 5.9 percent more likely to choose their tactical officer mentor's branch. The findings of the study examined the role of both gender and ethnicity on branch choices made by cadets and led the researchers to conclude that "if the Army would like to increase gender or racial diversity in certain branches, then selecting female or black officers of these branches to serve as tactical officers may prove effective" (2019, 464). In a perspective piece presented by Felix and Thomas (2020) the shared experiences of gender in the military was highlighted as a reason for same gender mentorship of early career women. However, the potential of harm to individuals, and the institution as a whole, through single gender mentorship was also noted, as such pairings may "reinforce negative perceptions and biases of gender, [therefore], hinder professional development and diminish trust" (2020, 3).

Identity factors were broadly discussed in the identified literature as having a role in the nature of mentorship relationships in the military, military adjacent, and policing organizations.

The military community is united by shared experiences of living within a distinct culture characterized by its own practices, attitudes, beliefs, language, traditions, and values (Coll et al. 2012; English 2004). In addition to their respective professional cultures (e.g., military cul-

ture, police culture), women also work within the overlay of the culture of masculinity (Rawski and Workman-Stark 2018). In the Canadian military (Regular Forces and Primary Reserve Forces), approximately 16 percent of members are women (Government of Canada 2020). In comparison, within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and municipal police, women make up approximately 21 percent of officers (Government of Canada 2020). The culture of masculinity dominates the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) with a particular emphasis on white Canadian men as heroes and protectors of liberal values (Managhan 2012; Whitworth 2005). As a result, to be successful within masculine organizations such as the military, women may be forced to take on masculine traits (Martin and Barnard 2013).

The reality that military culture touches upon every aspect of a member's life including engagement in their roles and interaction with others has resulted in an increase in attention and implementation of military cultural competency in the area of health and well-being (Gleeson and Hemmer 2014). Military cultural competency is described as the degree to which individuals understand the unique needs and concerns within the military population, including active members, vererans, and their families (Tanielian et al. 2014). Research examining healthcare relationships has shown that with increased military cultural competency, in other words, consciously increasing one's military specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours, positively influences healthcare interactions (Gleeson and Hemmer 2014). The need for cultural competency has also been identified in the development of mentorship relationships (Woolnough and Fielden 2017) given the potential for deep and personal relationships between the mentor and mentee (Tam-Seto and English 2019).

Mentoring often took a greater toll on women who already had been overlooked in many professional settings, and women expected more drawbacks to becoming a mentor (Beaulieu et al. 2017; Ragins and Cotton,1993; Zambrana et al. 2015). For example, Rockwell, Leck, and Elliott (2013) found that women take on more empathetic styles of mentorship whereas men tend to stick to facts-based advice and keep mentees at arm's length. Women who had positive experiences with mentors were more likely to mentor (Huitrado 2018), but in general men and women were open to becoming mentors at a similar rate (Ragins and Cotton 1993; Ragins and Scandura 1994).

Same race/ethnicity and same gender mentor-mentee pairings were found to increase commitment to career and satisfaction in mentees

(Hernandez et al. 2017). Similarly, Black mentors better related to Black mentees in one study, as mentors were able to help mentees navigate through primarily white institutions (Zambrana et al. 2015). Some studies have found that while Black women face barriers even when organizations focus on diversity, mentorship was a positive predictor for career success (Aquil 2020; Jackson and Bouchard 2019). There is no consensus on whether mentorship can in some way change organizational culture, with Banwell, Kerr, and Stirling (2020) claiming that the benefits are felt on an interpersonal, not on an organizational level, but with others such as Thomas, Bystydzienski, and Desai (2014) claiming that mentoring could be a facilitating factor for organizational change.

Impact of Culture on Mentorship

Another mentorship factor discussed throughout the literature is the role and impact of culture. Various cultures were identified throughout the reviewed literature as having a role in the success and failure of mentorship programs as well as influencing individual mentorship relationships. As previously indicated, the ethnic and racial background of mentor-mentee pairings was explored with mixed findings (Adams 2016; Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Kofoed and McGovney 2019). Culture, examined from a systemic level, was also examined from the perspectives of health professional culture (Bonica and Bewley 2019; McMains et al.,2018; Neal 2015), navy culture (Johnson and Andersen 2015; Johnson et al. 2001), army culture (Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Felix and Thomas 2020), military culture (Allen and Galvin 2015; Johnson and Andersen 2010), police culture (Hassell et al. 2010; Jones 2017; Ward and Prenzler 2016), leadership culture (Johnson et al. 2001), civilian culture (Bonica and Bewley 2019; Felix and Thomas 2020), culture of masculinity (Jones 2017), "work-life balance" culture (Nakamura and Nguyen 2019; Ward and Prenzler 2016), and mentorship culture (Johnson and Andersen 2015).

Some papers expressed the position that mentorship is already a part of military culture (Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Johnson and Andersen 2015), however, there are many others who argue current military culture is not conducive to the true tenets or definition of mentorship.

Military and police services are socialization organizations with singular identities that are purposefully created (Allen and Galvin 2015; Barratt et al. 2014; Barron and Ogle 2014; Johnson and Andersen 2010).

Based on existing evidence that supports the use of mentorship for minority populations like women and ethnic minorities, military and police services have created opportunities for their members to participate in mentoring by integrating mentoring programs and initiatives into the existing culture of the services, quite often with little success. For example, a literature review by Johnson and Andersen (2010) identified several challenges with implementing mentorship as defined by mentorship literature (Kram 1985) within the structure of the military. Johnson and Andersen (2010) found that there are varied definitions of mentorship used across the military which increases confusion of mentorship in a historical context where mentoring has been equated with "exclusivity, unfairness, cronyism, …and favoritism" (2010, 119).

Other studies present the idea that not only does the traditionally, masculine-dominant culture characterizing the military require careful examination, but effort is also required to create a different culture that is supportive of the diversity brought by women (Lane 2017; Managhan 2012; Whitworth 2005, 2008). One of the many challenges identified by women in these services is the balancing act between women's careers and their families. For example, Nakamura and Nguyen (2019) advocate developing a work-life balance culture that emphasizes the importance of personal and family time, by encouraging leaders to take time off and to "avoid implicitly promoting a culture of working on leave or during off-duty time" (2019, e377).

Intersectionality and Mentorship

Mentorship programs aimed at supporting women within the military should be developed and disseminated with intersectionality in mind. Intersectionality is grounded in the research and theory developed by Black women who criticized mainstream feminist and race scholarship for ignoring the experiences of individuals who possess multiple identities that situated them as multiply disadvantaged (or with intersecting advantages and disadvantages) due to their gender and their race (Crenshaw 1989). Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) is an intersectional analytical tool used to assess how various intersecting identity factors impact the effectiveness of available programs, services and resources (Government of Canada 2018, 2019a). In addition to gender differences, it considers other identity factors, such as socio-economic background, ethnicity, age, mental and physical disability, or religion,

and is an approach that has been adapted by Canada's Department of National Defence (DND) and CAF in policy and program development (Johnstone and Momani 2019). In works by Ragins and Cotton (1993) and Ragins and Scandura (1994), it was found that there are differences in how women experience mentorship (e.g., women's drawbacks in being a mentor; fewer women mentors in higher rank positions) compared to their male counterparts, indicating that gender has the potential to inform what mentors and mentees do and how they interact with one another. Research conducted by Jones (2017) around the utilization of mentorship to support women in the male-dominate organization of the Central England Police Force, found that "mentoring can provide a huge amount of support to develop self-confidence, self-awareness and positivity: all key ingredients for career success" (2017, 9).

Interviews

Mentorship is used in some male-dominated organizations and professions to address challenges of recruiting and retaining minority populations including women. It is well documented that women have unique gendered cultural experiences in the military, which points to gender and culture as important factors when providing support. The current study aims to address the gap in knowledge about the mentorship experiences of women in the CAF and specifically seeks to understand the role and impact of gender and culture on mentoring while informing the creation of a framework to support mentorship efforts. Although the current study cannot be generalizable to all women in the CAF, it provides a foundation for ongoing research which a framework can be built upon.

The CAF has struggled to retain women from recruitment to retirement. Mentorship has been identified as a strategy to ensure individual and organizational success, and particularly beneficial for specific minority populations such as women (Brown 2015; Forest 2018; Mbithi 2018; Rodgers 2014). The retention of women within the ranks is not a challenge faced only by Canada. The Australian Defence Forces and Michigan State Police have set forth retention strategies for women that have included increasing targeted mentorship opportunities (Australian Government 2018; Forest 2018). Supporting mentorship opportunities for women in the military, along with flexible work arrangements and affordable childcare, have been identified as strategies to increase the likelihood of remaining within the profession (Brown 2015). For mentorship programs to be effective and successful in meeting the needs of both mentees and mentors, specific considerations, such as identity intersectionality and cultural competency, are necessary for

development and implementation (Karcher et al. 2006; Mikkonen et al. 2019). Research literature indicates the need for gender-informed, culturally competent mentorship programs (Woolnough and Fielden 2017), particularly when it comes to a military population (Tanielian et al. 2014; Westphal and Convoy 2015). Gender, intersecting with other identities, creates a cultural context which has been deemed necessary for successful mentorship (Tam-Seto and English 2019). Within military health research, there is evidence demonstrating that increased military cultural competency that addresses military specific knowledge, skills, and behaviours, can positively influence healthcare interactions through the use of culturally informed assessments and enhanced rapport building (Butler et al. 2015; Gleeson and Hemmer 2014; Tam-Seto et al. 2018; Tam-Seto et al. 2019). The need for cultural competency is important to mentorship relationships given the potential for deep and personal relationships between the mentor and mentee, not unlike those in a healthcare interaction (Tam-Seto and English 2019).

The current chapter describes the portion of the mentorship development study that involved conducting interviews with three distinct participant groups including subject matter experts external to the Department of Defence Canada/Canadian Armed Forces (DND/CAF) in the area of mentorship, individuals from within DND/CAF who identify as mentors, and service-women within the CAF who have experience as mentees.

Results

In total, 28 individuals ($n = 21$ women, $n = 7$ men) participated in interviews from across Canada. There was representation from Regular Forces (Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Navy, and Royal Canadian Air Forces), Canadian Defence Academy, Canadian and international veterans, and a not-for-profit Canadian organization working with women in defence and security. Among the participants connected with the CAF, a range of ranks were also represented including chief warrant officer, captain, major, lieutenant colonel, commander, and brigadier general.

From interview data, mentorship can be thought of as a "system" organized into the following themes: key mentoring ingredients, mentoring program activities, goals and outcomes, and external factors. For this study, the experiences of mentorship for women in the CAF will be

illustrated through the process of program modelling (Karcher 2005; Karcher et al. 2006) while also highlighting the gaps required to ensure a mentorship program that meets both career development and psychosocial mentoring needs.

Table 4.1

Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes	Example of Subthemes
Key mentoring ingredients	Individuals	Mentors support career and psychosocial development.
		Mentors have effective communication and interpersonal skills.
		Mentees actively engage in mentoring relationship.
		Mentors and mentees regularly engage in self-reflection.
	Mentorship training	Mentorship should be taught in cadet curriculum.
		Mentorship should be taught at Staff Colleges.
		Mentorship should be taught throughout training system.
Mentoring program activities	Matching mentors and mentees	Importance of a dedicated mentorship program coordinator.
		Challenges and strategies in mentor-mentee matching.
	Mentorship within the structure of the CAF	Importance of a mentoring program that is parallel to and outside of the chain of command.
	Rules of engagement and sustainability	Importance of establishing commitment requirements for participants.
		Importance of ensuring organizational support to allow participation in the program.

… continued

Table 4.1, continued

Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes	Example of Subthemes
Goals and outcomes	Psychosocial development needs	Having role models.
		Accessing psychosocial supports.
	Career development needs	Receiving specific progression advice.
	Network of support	Creating a support system for women.
		Increasing visibility and diversity.
	Long-term goals	Individual job satisfaction.
		Supporting recruitment and retention efforts.
External factors	Gender	Reception of a gender specific program.
		Role of gender in mentorship relationships.
	Culture	Military culture.
		Mentorship culture.
		Cumulative impact of multiple cultures.

Key Mentorship Ingredients

From the interviews, the two major subthemes identified as *key mentorship ingredients* were *individuals* and *mentorship training* There were many suggestions provided in the interviews about the role, responsibilities, and approaches individuals involved in mentorship, as mentors, mentees, and supervisors, should take. Through the storytelling approach of this study, participants shared situations which highlighted specific roles and responsibilities that mentors of women mentees in the CAF should have including dissemination to support career development. This mentor shared how she advises mentees about the promotion system within the CAF:

> Here's what you have to do to get promoted. The system is the system. I can't change that system. I can only tell them how the system works and the best way to go forward. There's no one way in the system but French is a pretty obvious one…It's clear because it's a Government of Canada rule. I can help teach them the rules. I can teach them the system and how best to use the system to do what they want to do with it. Not to exploit it but to make it work for them and the life they want.

Mentorship theory also emphasizes the role of mentors in providing psychosocial support to their mentees. Given the nature of military work, many mentors and mentees shared the importance for mentors to provide life advice, particularly when it comes to managing the compounding stressors of work and home—a regularly cited topic of discussion for women mentees. This mentor described the importance of setting an example for her mentee, in addition to having conversations, related to balancing life demands:

> My mentee has definitely had some struggles with maintaining a bit of space for herself. She's super dedicated, motivated, driven to the point of burnout at times. So just reminding her that if you can't take care of yourself, you're never going to be able to take care of your subordinates. You have to protect your own energy level…so that you can keep giving as a leader. So that when you take leave, you have a point in acting and you turn off your email. You take the hour a couple times a week and you go to the gym. Staying till 7'o'clock at night is not sustainable. I think, for her, hearing someone give her permission to take space for herself was helpful. She's being a little better at it. It's so easy to get sucked in.

Communication and interpersonal skills to effectively engage mentees were also identified throughout the study as important factors for people to consider when taking on the role of a mentor. One mentor

emphasized the importance she puts on being available and communicating that availability. She felt that was important to ensure her mentees know she is open and accessible to speak to them as method she uses to develop rapport:

> I always make a point of inviting [my mentees] to extracurriculars that I'm involved [in] and also making sure that they know they can come to me anytime or call me anytime with any question and it's never going to be a dumb question. I will always be happy to make time for them. I think the message is getting through, too, because there's two people here [who] call me I would say almost every day now if not, like, weekly. I think that's a good sign in terms of…it doesn't have to be overly formal…Just don't hesitate to give me a call. I know the calls will become less frequent as time goes on.

There were also suggestions from participants about what mentees can do to get the most out of their mentoring relationships. Given the time constraints that mentors and mentees often find themselves in, one mentor described how her mentee is organized and task oriented during their meetings, thus contributing to productive conversations.

> We set up an hour-long conversation at least once a month even with the time change and she and I email back and forth on a weekly basis. We've formed a friendship. It is still definitely very professionally focused, and I've never met her in person. We've only ever [connected] virtually…It's just been a lovely relationship. She always has a set of questions when we set up our monthly chat. She comes with an agenda. I appreciate how organized she is and how well thought out her questions are. [The questions are] usually pertaining to stuff that she's dealing with [in] real time. Some of it's career related. Some of it's job related. Some of it's decision-making related. Some of it's work-life balance stuff. It's a really enjoyable reciprocal relationship that we have.

As supported by the example above, mentoring theory also emphasizes the reciprocal nature of mentoring, with both parties benefiting. Interestingly, the participant from the above quote was the mentor of the participant in the following quote. The study's ability to speak to "mentoring pairs" provided evidence that reciprocity occurs in mentoring women in CAF. The following quote, from the mentee, shared some of the strategies she has used to learn how to be an effective mentee. She shared how it was important for her to learn as much as she could about what is required of her as a mentee for her to get the most out of her interactions with her mentor.

> It sounds dorky…I read books [about mentorship] and I watched some Ted Talks and I tried to find [information] before I went to my first mentoring chat with [name of mentor]. I went onto Pinterest [to find out] what are the top 10 mentoring questions. Like what the heck do I even talk about with this woman? [Pinterest] had some pretty good thought-provoking questions. For a little while, we essentially kind of ran, not a book club, but we would go away with a certain issue then we come back and talk about it.

In addition to learning about mentoring, this participant talked about the importance for her to take time in between her mentoring sessions to self-reflect and learn as a way to use what she learned from her conversations with her mentor.

> I'm definitely driven. This is gonna sound super cheesy, but I like being the best version of myself and I think I can get that a lot from learning from other people. I've done some internal work to try to understand where that's coming from. I'm not a shrink by any means but I [have experienced loss at a young age] and I think I have this drive…a need brought over to constantly look for parental advice or mentoring advice.

The importance of self-reflection was also identified by mentors. One participant noted that she takes time to consider her role as a mentor and what she can share with her mentees:

> It's a very rewarding thing to do. If you're thinking about becoming a mentor, I think it's important to do some introspect[ion] onto yourself to figure out who you are and what you can offer, or not, where your own boundaries might be. What are the things that you would be willing to talk about or not with a mentee and then lay it out there and let them know? Just be honest…laying yourself out there to be honest on the challenges you've had or the things that you wish you had known early on that might be helpful for someone else.

Finally, the interviews identified the role that senior officers and others in leadership positions can contribute to the process of mentorship. There were reports of senior officers who were supportive of those engaged in mentoring women while there were others who did not feel that time should be set aside to mentor specific populations.

Although mentorship is discussed throughout all aspects of training and education in the Canadian Armed Forces, it is always taught within the scope of leadership. The literature has shown that when formal training and education combines mentorship with leadership, the differences are not apparent and, as a result, participants are not provided

with information about how to be a mentor or how to be a mentee or even what the purpose and objective of mentorship should be. Given what little attention there is currently about mentorship across the entire organization, there is even less formal training or education, if any, on the role of gender and culture in mentorship. Many of the participants felt that mentorship should have been taught early in their careers and treated the same as the other training they take part in:

> Well, you have all the training they try to put you at a certain standard. Like fitness and behaviour and all that stuff. But not really mentorship… They have these regulations, and you do what they tell you to do right?

This participant also advocated for early career mentorship training and provided specific suggestions about when this type of training can occur for women. She shared:

> I wish it was talked about in our training system. Like early days but then even as they come up. We have different career courses that we go to. [Someone] was trying to organize a [name of specific profession] mentoring network, the element, and we were trying to do that because the school was in [name of base] and we thought that what a great way 'cause every [specific profession] had to come through [name of base] at one point or another. So, what a great way to be the home of the [specific profession] mentoring network or you could come hear a little bit about it…I think as a profession, we can be so much stronger…I wish it was in the training system or at least the idea of what it was and how it could benefit you [while you were] in the training system.

Some participants felt that given the amount of training in which members participate as their careers progress through the military, formal training and education, particularly as it concerns mentorship for women, is currently a missed opportunity. One participant, a mentor, shared how the Canadian Forces Staff College can be a place where mentorship can effectively be taught to leaders:

> We have our Staff College in Toronto where people go there as Senior Major, Junior Lieutenant Colonel. Maybe, that's the first place—but it's more than officers too, we have to look at NCMs. But again, in [military college], they could bring up that training of mentorship and you know, that relationship. That would be a good place to introduce those concepts so that we can remove the myths attached to it.

This sentiment was echoed by another participant who felt that the Staff College would be appropriate environment to provide courses on mentorship, specifically mentorship of women members.

> Well, [attendees] they're stuck in their chair so they're not gonna walk away [when mentorship is being taught]. But maybe if they could even put like exercises or work it into something. Certainly, the Toronto Staff College is nice because they would then be implementing programs. We did this for the Lieutenant-Colonels going to command units who already thought they know everything. But what if we had done it with the four courses or six courses of Captains that go through every year at that Staff College…in Kingston. Wouldn't that have been brilliant. They're young and impressionable.

Mentoring Program Activities

There were many program activities identified by the participants of the study. Since there is not currently a sanctioned formal or informal CAF-wide mentoring program for women, much of the discussion around program activities centred on program design. First and foremost, there was a clear message from almost all participants that any mentorship program, no matter how formal, must have some structure, yet be flexible enough to meet the needs of the users. A participant hypothesized that a well-designed and well-supported mentorship program for women in the CAF could have significant organizational benefits:

> I really think it can strengthen the CAF; I'd be really interested to see if women who are in a mentoring relationship stayed in the Forces because we have a recruitment issue, but we also have a big retainment issue… I would love to see if there's any correlation between women who are at positive mentoring relationships if they're more likely to be retained.

How mentors and mentees should be matched, where mentorship should reside within the structure of the CAF, and rules of engagement and sustainability were other key design items for a mentorship program and important program activities.

The importance of having a defined yet flexible matching process was the most discussed program activity. Participants who are or were a part of a formal mentoring program described how they were "matched" by someone who acted as a mentorship coordinator. A coordinator could potentially have the resources to facilitate connecting mentors with mentees to ensure the best fit. The program coordinator should have knowledge about cultural differences across elements and environments and how these differences can inform the matching process. For some mentors and mentees, military cultural differences

may or may not be an issue, therefore it is important for a coordinator to be aware of such differences and their significance. One participant described some of the cultural differences across elements that may be important during mentoring discussions as a consideration for matching mentors and mentees.

> So, the Navy, the Army, and the Air Force are different elements. Now this is also the world according to me. I have known that when I tried to talk to my friends who are in the Navy before and then after switching to the Army, they were like I don't get it. [They would say], I don't know why that's a problem or why the Navy doesn't have 'forced fun' the same way the Army. There are certain expectations that when you get into the Army, you're not supposed to leave the nest until the most senior officer has left the nest. Or you have to shake their hand before leaving. These are all rules that are not written in any bloody book. They're not there but somehow, you're just supposed know and as you switch to the different elements that [there is someone] that can help you navigate. That's when I look at mentoring. That is kind of navigating through the folklore. It's stuff that's not in the book so you're relying already on the person to person to help navigate that piece, right?

A mentorship program coordinator was identified as an important role in this participant's experience with mentoring in the CAF. Many early career mentees reported that approaching a woman who is senior to them was a nerve-wracking experience. A coordinator could facilitate introductions. A coordinator could also facilitate a mentoring relationship that spans the country or across disciplines or elements based on the requests of those within the mentorship program. The task of matching is not an easy one as described by this participant who is currently coordinating a mentorship program where she works.

> So, one thing that we looked at doing because matching people by hand… it's a fair bit of work. What I was looking to do is create what we were calling the Tinder of mentorship, that was just like our informal name. Where if you could upload profiles online and people could kind of scroll through and pick her own [mentor or mentee] …I was planning on pursuing this but then when I learned more and more about mentorship… it's not as good to do that way so I kind of dropped that…it is left as me making matches or hopefully people in the future that help volunteer.

Without clear guidance on how mentoring partnerships should be selected, the same participant described different strategies she has used to facilitate the matching process and some of the challenges she faced using those strategies.

> When I first started, I was purposely matching, for example, the helicopter pilot with somebody else who was a helicopter pilot. I would find a helicopter pilot that's two ranks higher and match them. I was thinking I was doing such a good job taking a Sea King pilot [mentee] with the Sea King pilot [mentor] and off they go! In learning more about mentorship stuff, that isn't necessarily the way to go because Sea King pilots are brought up in the same community with people of similar mindsets. Once you get to higher ranks, it's actually better to have people that are [in] completely different trades with a different point of view. But when you go to the table, you already have other Sea King pilots like their bosses and their coworkers…they can talk to you about [the same] issues. So, when I first started, it was always matching the exact same trades and stuff. I still do that with the lower ranks and the junior ranks because I think there's still probably a benefit for them. They're relatively new in the military or new to their job. It would probably benefit them. So, for Corporals, Master corporals, and Captains, I keep them with the same trade but then the higher ranks I have started giving them different ranks and different trades.

Since mentorship is an important function of leadership, there is no doubt that mentorship happens at every level in the CAF. However, engaging in mentorship as defined in the mentorship literature cannot occur within the chain of command. The potential for conflict of interest is real when orders and promotions are given to the same individuals who may also disclose personal challenges or seek career advice. This unfortunate reality prompted many of the study participants to suggest that any formal mentoring activities need to occur outside of the chain of command. In addition, mentoring relationships that reside outside of the chain of command must be acknowledged and sanctioned by the CAF to address any possible concern of undermining or threat to a unit's leadership. Some participants suggested that a mentorship program should be running outside and parallel to the chain of command as discussed by this mentee:

> My boss inherently does some mentorship. That's just part of the job and it's part of our normal process. But sometimes there are things I want to talk through or figure out before I go to my boss. So having someone outside that immediate chain would be helpful.

Mentorship outside the chain of command was also echoed by another participant who shared:

> I think it would be helpful to have a mentor outside of my chain. You would have a mentoring relationship and you have your chain of com-

> mand leadership. Two kind of separate things and make a clear distinction of what is one and what is the other and what you get from one, and what you get from the other. Or what you can expect to get from one or the other.

For participants who expressed support for a formal mentorship program for women, many made suggestions regarding the requirements for mentors, mentees, and supervisors taking part in or supporting mentoring. Many of the ideas presented were based on current or previous experiences with formal mentoring programs for women. For example, some participants proposed a minimum time commitment to allow adequate time for a relationship to develop in addition to a minimum number of interactions per month, whether by face-to-face, telephone, or email correspondence. There was also the suggestion that mentoring partners should be required to engage in a minimum number of activities over the course of a year. One participant provided the following information about their current mentoring experience:

> We had committed so that…you'd be talking together over the period of a year. Knowing that the commitment was there, I was like okay, what am I going to talk about with this woman? We agreed on meeting once a month for a year. What was interesting is [in the mentorship program] agreement it said that we would only [need to] talk for a year. At the end of it, myself and [name of mentee], I considered pretty good friends. We don't have to stop talking because this pans out. I don't know if you made that connection with somebody. It would be interesting to see how you would do just not talking to them if you were really struggling.

For the participants who were supportive of a mentoring program for women, program sustainability needed careful consideration. One participant described a mentorship program she was previously a part of which no longer exists:

> Okay yeah, from my experiences, [mentorship programs] seem to be a short-lived program. Like the one I had at [military college], I don't think that it exists anymore or I'm not sure what happened with it. I don't know when it started or how much support you folks have gathered. So, these opportunities seem to start but never get the full wind or the full support, whatever the case may be, to become big. You know to become, [a priority].

As this participant notes, organizational support is important for the long-term sustainability of a mentoring program. Another participant added:

> I would hope that there would be positive reception [from the CAF]. I feel like, where it's failed before or the idea falls apart, is when there isn't any structure to it. It's just like 'here's one more thing to add to your already 6-foot-long to-do list' without a structure, without any support. It's definitely one of the things that I struggle with trying to make that leap into being a mentor instead of just a mentee. You know, I'm taking the best lessons I can come up with from the people who have been my mentors, and my experience, and things. I wish someone had told me but there's no hand. There's no 'how to guide'. It's just best intentions most days.

Goals of the Mentorship Program

Clearly defined goals are important to ensure that mentorship program activities are working towards a common end. Goals for mentorship programs identified by the participants included meeting psychosocial development needs, meeting career development needs, a network of support, and long-term goals.

Participants identified psychosocial support as one reason to seek out women mentors in the CAF. A range of psychosocial issues were identified in mentoring conversations including balancing work activities with family responsibilities; the fit and function of uniforms and/or equipment; and enduring and surviving military sexual misconduct and trauma. Participants who were mid- to later career shared that they would look for opportunities to mentor early career women because of their own experiences as a woman in the military. This participant, a lieutenant in the Navy, told a story about meeting a high-ranking woman officer early in her career; she found the shared lived experience of being a woman in the Navy inspired her to become a mentor:

> The first time I'd ever personally interacted with a female [high ranking officer] in my life, I was kind of like holy shit if she can be a [high ranking officer], I can be [one too]. It was this mind-blowing moment. From that moment on that's what piqued my interest in mentorship. I was around her all the time and got to see her interact with male officers and her other staff and it was just like it changed a lot for me. I was motivated and wanting to help.

Most women in the study shared stories of having a family in the military and the challenges they experienced throughout the course of that journey. These participants described talking to woman mentors (or wishing they had woman mentors to speak to) about a range of fam-

ily related issues such as finding uniforms that fit correctly when they were pregnant or managing absences as a result of training or deployments. The trials of balancing work and family were also the subject of much discussion when mentoring conversations were shared by some of the subject matter experts. This participant shared information about resources available to support women in the CAF who have families:

> I'll give them my own personal experiences what worked what might not have worked and how things have changed too…So my challenges 25 years ago are not the same challenges that they would have today. I also show them the options that are there now for them…like Military Family Services. Twenty-five years ago, it didn't exist…So it's a combination of things. I might provide advice what worked or not worked for me, but I might also point them in direction of programs that they might not know about. That's one of the big challenges we have across the board is all these great programs we have in place and just people don't know them.

Many of the women in the study reported having either witnessed or experienced first-hand incidents of sexual misconduct. Participants shared that although they may not have disclosed these experiences in their mentoring relationship, information about how to receive support or advice was exchanged. One participant noted:

> I've reached out to [my mentees] to tell them about more about the sexual misconduct lawsuit. I emailed them all saying, 'If you're like me, you probably got the email, thought it was good that something was being done about [sexual misconduct] but you weren't planning on joining in yourself. You probably deleted it without even clicking on the link'. I said, 'Here's some of the information that I'd like you to know because it helped me make my decision and I actually changed my mind, and I did fill out the form'. I just put bullet points of: you don't need to name the perpetrators or the witnesses; you don't need cooperating evidence; intoxication is one form of not being able to provide consent. That was something that hit home for me…Just a few different details like that that I emailed out to everyone. The response has been pretty positive in that a lot more people have come forward. I also said, you know, you might not realize that you were victim of sexual harassment because back in the day it was so common and prevalent that that's just the way people talked and whatever else, but really it is.

Another participant, a mentor, described how she openly shares with other women her personal recovery journey from military sexual misconduct. This experience has positioned her as someone that other women in the military go to for mentorship:

> I would say the women come to me for different reasons…They know [that] I was a victim of sexual misconduct…sexual assault when I was in military college. They heard, reached out to me on that aspect because they too had encountered a similar situation and wanted guidance and help on that aspect and moving forward in their careers. They thought that I would be a good mentor to them on how to continue on in your career despite some initial challenges like that.

Mentorship is described as a lifelong journey, however, there are gaps in providing members with knowledge and education on mentorship in the military. As a result, many participants reported turning to their mentoring network to learn about what mentorship is and what to do as a mentor. As rising military leaders, participants eagerly shared stories about receiving support and advice from their mentors so they could become good and effective mentors in the future. For example, a participant shared that she was expected to provide mentorship early in her career with little knowledge of what to do and turned to her mentor to learn how:

> If you wanna call it a closed-door opportunity, where I could say 'here's how I'm reading a situation, this is what I think the right thing to do is, [what are the] pieces I'm missing?' and 'do you think I'm totally out in the left field?' We can sort of war game it a little bit without the fear of judgment and then they could give me that sort of [feedback] like 'yeah, you're on the right [path] and that's a good way to approach it' or 'have you thought about this?'. Just that bit of a filter to run through a solution before I had to stand in front of my subordinates and own it.

As mentoring relationships develop, women with positive experiences as a mentee described having a network of support they could turn to for psychosocial and career guidance. This is a support system that exists outside of their chain of command and one that validates their gendered experiences within the military culture as shared by this participant:

> Oh, I think [the benefits are] huge in the CAF. I think we all just want to see somebody who looks like us or who's in a similar circumstance or who has had a similar circumstance as us just to validate that we have a place, and our thoughts and feelings are important too. Where I think sometimes women can really feel dismissed or when they're the only woman sitting at the table it can be very intimidating.

In addition to the proximal subtheme of sharing information about how and where mentees can get support for their own experiences of

sexual misconduct or using one's lived experiences of sexual misconduct as a way which mentees can approach a potential mentor, is the role mentoring has in creating a support system for women to amplify their voices. This participant shared her thoughts about how she sees mentorship encouraging women to come forward and speak about their experiences:

> I think the generation that's coming behind me is not okay with some of the behaviors or some of the negativity in the military culture that was accepted when I first joined. So, I think it's a really exciting time that people who are joining are [coming into] a place where people have more of a voice whether in terms of initiatives such as Op Honour [the CAF Operation HONOUR which sought to address sexual misconduct until it was ended in 2021] when we're talking about sexual misconduct or hateful conduct. I think we're finally saying these things out loud and we're giving people a voice to call out unacceptable behavior. I feel when I first joined there were things that happened that crossed all of those spectrums and you just didn't say anything.

The long-term goals described by participants included increased job satisfaction contributing to the desire to become a mentor themselves. As discussed previously mid- to late-career participants who identified as being mentors as well as some of the veteran participants who were veterans, described how their own positive experiences of being a mentee inspired them to "give back" through mentorship. As previously indicated, providing mentoring support to subordinates is an expectation as one progresses through the military; however, participants who described their own positive mentee experiences made the choice to become mentors on their own time. When asked how this participant became involved in mentoring, she stated:

> I've really enjoyed it to be honest. I find it really rewarding. I was super fortunate to have a few women early on in my career that did that for me so I'm super keen to pass it on.

This sentiment was similarly echoed by another participant who shared:

> They were great leaders and good mentors. And some of them, I mean, mentored me right up until their retirement a couple years ago! So, I was fortunate enough to have met those people at the very start of my career. So, as a pay it forward act in some respects, but also as a responsibility.

The literature identifies increased recruitment and retention of mi-

nority populations in the military as one of the long-term outcomes of mentoring programs. The participants also expressed that recruitment and retention of women in particular could be improved through mentorship programs that focus on providing positive, career-long support to women in the CAF.

External Factors

In the current study, there were several potential external factors that may influence a gender-informed, culturally competent mentorship program, including gender and culture. One of the questions posed to all participants was about their personal perceptions of a mentoring program developed to support the unique needs and experiences of women in the CAF. While most participants saw the potential positive effects of a mentoring program for women, there were some participants who did not view it as necessary and shared their concern that such a program could harm the organization. One woman mentor shared:

> See, I see us all as one, right? I know that this study you're doing is mentorship with women and I don't think it should be different…the mentorship. For me, I don't think it should be any different.

Although this perspective was in the minority, it is an important constraint to consider. Another participant's hesitation for a women-only mentoring program was grounded in her perception and experience of women's personalities:

> Relationships between women are often strained relationships because we are very competitive, or I don't want to use the word petty because I don't think that that isn't accurate. But we are competitive in a different way than men are. So, therefore the all-women mentorship program may not be a benefit to some women.

Arguments in support of a gender-specific mentoring program were largely grounded in the understanding that gender is a factor that colours the experiences of women within their careers in the CAF and constructs their roles and responsibilities in all other aspects of their lives. This woman mentor shared her opinion about the benefits of a mentoring program for women:

> Having a female mentor helps younger women or women like myself take off the blinders that we don't even know we have. It helps us more

> effectively deal with self-limiting thoughts because you have all of that gender stuff tied in. Whereas men, sure they're parents but they don't get stuck with being at home with the babies or the tough decision of 'do I take this maternity leave, or do I get back to work because I don't wanna be penalized or be seen as slacker?' So, there's just a lot of unique gender issues women have to deal with.

These differences in mentoring women compared to men may also be a constraint in mentorship, depending on whether or not the mentor has knowledge of potential differences. Although the following statement, provided by an experienced woman mentor, cannot be generalized to all women and men in the CAF, her years of experience being a mentor gave her insight that there are differences in what women and men look for during mentoring and those differences are usually informed by gendered roles and expectations:

> I think men, from my experience, want the facts. They were very interested in the steps, the logic, of how career management worked and my role and how I would represent them. Where women wanted to know more about 'how can I reach my goal?', 'how do I operate in a system where not everybody looks like me?' They wanted to know, based on my experience how I found successes and also how I work through failures…I also offered a perspective of being a married service couple. Some people were very interested in that. Like, how can I be a mom and a woman who is an officer and how do I manage those things? Women were looking for more of the work-life balance piece.

Some participants also expressed interests in the insights and experiences of men who have held roles of mentors in the CAF. One participant shared that his gender may be a limitation in his ability to provide support adequately and appropriately for women, particularly when it comes to psychosocial issues experienced in the military.

> If we don't have a network [or] have a mechanism out there [like] mentorship where it's a priority, women can't know what other women are going through. And [to be able to] share in a safe manner, share those thoughts, share their problems. If they're not being led by people who get what they're going through, at the end of the day, it's a silo of women [who are] not going to work. We [will have] missed an opportunity. [As a man], I acknowledge my blind spots that there's a lot that I just simply don't understand and I'll never understand and not to be defeatist, but there's limits of what I can comprehend and what I'll experience.

Gender cannot be examined as a constraint that is completely inde-

pendent from culture. Many stories shared in interviews described the interplay of gender with culture and how gender has informed culturally ascribed roles for many of the women in the CAF. The topic of work-life balance (e.g., the lack of, the desire to achieve, disruptions to) was a theme throughout all the interviews. The dominance of gendered roles in greater Canadian society contributes an additional layer of constraint that is unique to serving women. A participant noted:

> But you know, what I would say for the majority of women that I've talked to…the concern is always…how do I balance the work-life situation? Mostly women are concerned about how can I do it all and survive as a mother, as a spouse, as a CAF member, as an operational warrior? How do we do it? Given, sadly, the traditional roles that most women are still stuck with.

There are also cultures within the military that are possible constraints on mentorship. There are marked cultural differences within the military depending on the element, profession, rank, and even the base/wing. One example was shared by this participant who discussed perceived differences between the Navy and Army and how these differences may inform mentoring relationships:

> So, the Navy is very hierarchal, very traditional, a little bit stodgy…I guess the same things could be said about the Army. I find the Army… gave a bit more autonomy to people. They expect younger people to take action. It's not as rigid as 'you shall do this position before you before you progress'. I think the Navy… [has a] little bit more of a class structure whereas the Army…their officers die in the field with their soldiers and so the comradery is a little bit different and a little bit more familiar.

These "within military" differences were also previously described as factors that may contribute to mentorship matching. Of course, mentorship matching and even mentorship may not occur if the work environment does not allow it to exist and/or thrive. The notion of a mentorship culture was described by participants as the extent to which the work environment has a desire to accept mentorship for its staff. A positive mentorship culture also needs time and resources made available, and mentorship activities must be prioritized through the recognition of mentoring as explicitly part of the development of members and the organization as a whole. The results of this study indicate a significant variability in mentorship culture in the CAF. While there are pockets of teams and programs that clearly support mentoring activities, mentoring was largely seen as extra-curricular. By and large, participants saw

the CAF as falling short in mentoring activities as a whole and providing even less targeted mentoring support for women:

> I don't think we do a particularly good job of mentoring people in general…I'd like to believe that I'm developing my subordinates but it's the time I can squeeze out in the margins. We largely default to [teach] by leading them through activities and responses and events…and activities at work [and hope] that I'm able to shape their thinking. I don't know how much of this I would classify as mentoring…that's just management… there's definitely overlap but when you say mentoring, I think about the deliberate activity of going out and focusing on it, on an individual to improve their ability. I can say honestly say I do not do it as much as I would like.

The cultures described do not exist in isolation of one another and the study indicated that there is a cumulative effect of each of the cultures on the experiences of women in the CAF. The compounding effect of each of the identified cultures may be a significant constraint hindering the individual success of mentoring partnerships as well as a gender-specific mentoring program as a whole. The cumulative nature of culture was described by one woman mentor:

> I think women want to talk about how to be seen as a credible leader in a system where there are often few of them at the table. We talk a lot about being confident in a situation where you might be the only woman or because of being a logistics officer. We're also a support trade so we have a couple of strikes against you. You're a woman, you're a supporter so how do you find credibility in the system?

Building on the Literature

The purpose of the interviews was to learn about the experiences of mentoring women in the military from the perspectives of currently serving CAF members who see themselves as mentors as well as those who are women mentees. To further explore mentorship for women, subject matter experts were also interviewed; these individuals included military veterans who have mentored women, researchers in mentorship, or have been involved in facilitating mentorship programs for women in military or military-adjacent careers. Using Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan 1954), where storytelling makes up data collection, participants were encouraged to recall and share incidents of positive as well as negative mentoring interactions. Thematic analysis as

well as the results of the scoping review aided in identifying the main themes which were then mapped into a framework using the program modelling (Karcher et al. 2006). The resulting framework identifies specific input elements, program activities, outcomes, as well as potential constraints to a mentoring program for women in the Canadian Armed Forces.

The current study highlights the contributions and roles of the individuals who seek out and take part in mentoring activities. For women mentees, the support they seek from their mentors differ when compared to their men counterparts. The CAF has a masculine culture (Managhan 2012; Whitworth 2005). This masculine culture influences all levels of the proposed mentorship program framework including individuals at the input stage, program activities such as matching mentors and mentees, proximal outcomes of supporting career and psychosocial development, and most significantly, potential constraints in the areas of gender and culture.

Research on purposefully constructed mentoring programs that place organizational culture and gender first has promising results (Cross et al. 2019; Lin et al. 2019; Martin and Barnard 2013; Rockwell et al. 2013). The potential benefits of mentoring in the male-dominate organization of the Central England Police Force as experienced by women mentors and women mentees was the subject of a longitudinal qualitative case study by Jones (2017) who aimed to examine the learning journey for these policewomen through a series of semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Participants (i.e., mentors and mentees) felt they were learning a great deal covering all identified learning domains (i.e., cognitive, skill-based, affective-related, and social networks) supporting the idea that mentoring benefits both parties while supporting learning and development (2017). Jones (2017) concluded that mentoring "can provide a huge amount of support to develop self-confidence, self-awareness and positivity: all key ingredients for career success" (2017, 9) for women in male dominated spaces.

There are several current examples of mentorship programs devoted to supporting the military career development of women, particularly in the United States. For example, *Women in Uniform Mentorship Program* (WIU) is offered at Fort Bragg for the military police brigade and matches lower ranking women soldiers with experienced women mentors (Twedell 2013). WIU serves as an educational program that "teaches new Soldiers to be observant to the potential warning signs of sexual harassment and assault, and how to avoid being a victim of such

violence" as well as "learning to professionally reach one's potential, and dealing with work-related and personal issues that Soldiers encounter on a daily basis" (Twedell 2013, n.p.). It appears that WIU addresses some of the same gendered and cultural issues that have been identified by participants in the current study. Effective mentorship programs, that meet the needs of mentors, mentees, and organizations, must be mindful of factors such as culture and gender (Woolnough and Fielden 2017) and the role they play in psychosocial and career development.

The current study is beginning to identify the relationship between gender and types of psychosocial supports that is being sought out by women in the Canadian military when engaging in mentoring. Psychosocial support specific to gendered roles of caregiving in families contributes significantly to the challenges women face while trying to achieve work-life balance. Although the literature about work-life balance for military members, particularly women members, is small, it is important to consider in the context of this study. Nakamura and Nguyen (2019) support developing a work-life balance culture in the military that highlights the importance of personal and family time. The authors feel strongly that leaders should lead by example thus, encourage leaders to take time off and to "avoid implicitly promoting a culture of working on leave or during off-duty time" (2019, e377) is key to promoting a healthy work-life balance culture. Good leaders must empower others to demonstrate and embody the behaviours to achieve the desired change in culture (Mierke and Williamson 2016). In a study that aimed to identify effective strategies for making improvements in the advancement of women in police, Australian-based researchers, Ward and Prenzler (2016), found that senior management commitment, clear objectives, monitoring, flexible employment, and support mechanisms such as mentoring, and leadership programs have indicated good outcomes. The study also identified the need for greater work-life balance in policing and highlighted the importance for organizations to support culture change for greater flexibility.

The current study has identified that for some women who have experienced military sexual misconduct, the psychosocial support they received through mentoring has been important for them. The effects of sexual misconduct are unique to each survivor; however, it is generally accepted that it impacts the whole person and therefore, it may be appropriate to pursue a collective healing approach that can be facilitated by a mentor who is familiar with the culture and environment in

which the misconduct occurred (Thompson 2014). Obtaining support from someone who is familiar with military culture has protective or buffering effects for women in their recovery journey. Smith and colleagues (2020) conducted a study that found women veterans who had experienced sexual misconduct during service reported higher levels of post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and impairments in their social functioning in contrast to their peers who did not report military sexual trauma (MST). Most significantly, the study found that having a network of supportive peers, such as mentors, appeared to have a protective effect on negative outcomes associated with MST. The benefits of peer support were also identified by Azevedo and colleagues (2020), who examined a pilot program of a peer support group for veterans living in rural communities facilitated by a peer support specialist. The study found that a peer-based relationship can create trust that enables veterans to speak freely about their traumatic experiences, similar to the psychosocial supports provided by mentors in the current study. Although the work by Smith et al. (2020) and Azevedo et al. (2020) may not necessarily use the term mentor in their descriptions of these relationships, it is well understood that mentors can serve the role of a friend and peer (Zachary 2012).

The appeal for same gender mentorship pairing (e.g., women mentees matched with women mentors) was generally well-supported in the current study and reflective of the receptivity in the literature as a whole (Felix and Thomas 2020; Jones 2017; Katayama et al. 2008; Kofoed and McGovney 2019; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019). Kofoed and McGovney's (2019) study at the United States Military Academy at West Point, involved randomly assigning women cadets to women officers at the beginning of their first academic year. After completing their final year, Kofoed and McGovney (2019) found that women cadets who were mentored by women officers were 5.9 percent more likely to choose their tactical officer's branch as their top choice and 18.1 percent more likely to pick the officer's branch as one of their top three choices. More broadly, the study examined the potential role of gender and ethnicity on mentoring for cadets and concluded that if the military, the Army in particular, wants to increase diversity in specific branches, promoting minority populations such as women and people of colour may be beneficial to the overall goal of increasing diversity in the military (Kofoed and McGovney 2019). While acknowledging that gender plays a role in mentorship pairing, Felix and Thomas (2020) have argued that the shared lived experience of being a gender minority in the

military is an important factor to consider when providing mentorship to early career women mentees by providing mentees with someone they can see themselves becoming. However, Felix and Thomas (2020) also present the argument that single gender mentorship pairing in the military (e.g., women mentees paired exclusively with women mentors) may have a way of reinforcing negative perceptions and biases of gender, ultimately hampering professional development, and decreasing trust between individuals, teams, and the institution.

Framework Development

Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF)

The proposed mentoring program for women in the Canadian Armed Forces is an adaption of various frameworks as described by Beecroft et al. (2006), Karcher (2005), Karcher et al. (2006), and Lippe and Carter (2018). The work by Karcher (2005, 2006) describes a mentoring framework development process and indicates that the work is based on a program modelling technique by Borich and Jemelka (1980). Program modelling was also used to create a framework to assess nursing education and described by Lippe and Carter (2018) and similarly adapted by Beecroft et al. (2006). Program modelling describes a method to illustrate all of the necessary components of a program, be it a mentorship program or program evaluation (Borich and Jemelka 1980). More specifically, program modelling articulates inputs, program activities, outcomes/products, and context/constraints as a way to understand the various goals and expectations of the program as well the factors that will impact and influence those goals and expectations (Beecroft et al. 2006; Karcher 2005; Karcher et al. 2006; Lippe and Carter 2018).

Given the similarities in the purpose and objects of the Karcher et al. (2006) mentoring program with the current study, the mentoring framework for women in the CAF is based on that work. The Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF) is composed of four distinct parts: inputs, program activities, constraints, and outcomes (Borich and Jemelka 1980; Karcher et al. 2006). *Inputs* are

factors that contribute to a mentoring program such as the participants who take the roles of mentors and mentees, resources such as materials and time, and training that all lead to the program activities. *Program activities* are the activities that the mentorship program engages in such as recruiting and training participants, and opportunities for participants to connect. *Constraints* are the processes or resources that may facilitate or inhibit the effectiveness of the identified program activities. Finally, the *outcomes* are the "behaviours, attitudes, skills, or products that result from the activity" (Karcher et al. 2006, 716) and are organized as being proximal (immediate) outcomes, enabling (intermediate) outcomes, and distal (final) outcomes.

Given the similarity of Karcher and colleagues' (2006) work to this current study, program modelling has been used to frame the results of the interview portion of the study as well as illustrate the anticipated processes and outcomes of the proposed mentorship program for women in the CAF.

Figure 5.1

Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF)

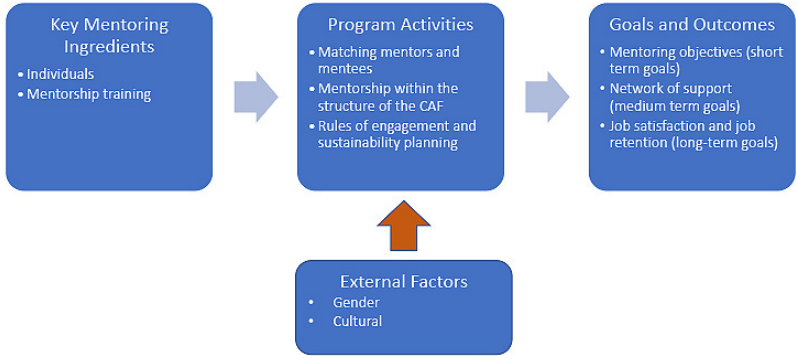


Table 5.1

Summary of Mentoring Framework for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces

Framework Component	Definition	Specific Information
Inputs	Resources that contribute into a mentoring program	Individuals – Potential mentors, potential mentees, as well as those within the organization who support mentorship participants (e.g., members of Chain of Command, CAF leadership, educators/trainers).
		Mentorship training – Training and education specific to mentoring should be focused on developing mentors, mentees, and personnel who support individuals who engage in mentoring relationships. Mentoring training and education should be specifically targeted to mentor/mentee respective roles, ranks, and professions.
Program Activities	Activities that a mentorship program engages in	Matching mentors and mentees: Compatibility between the parties involved in mentoring partnerships is vital to the development of a partnership that is reciprocal and collaborative.
		Mentorship within the CAF: Encouraging a work culture supportive of mentorship in the CAF.
		Rules of engagement and sustainability: Guidelines on how mentoring pairs should communicate and create opportunities to encourage interaction.

… continued

Table 5.1, continued

Summary of Mentoring Framework for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces

Framework Component	Definition	Specific Information
Outcomes	Behaviours, attitudes, skills, or products that result from a mentoring program. These are described as being proximal (short term) outcomes, enabling (medium term) outcomes, and distal (long term) outcomes.	Short term goals: Mentee is receiving support for career development and psychosocial development toward goals. Medium term goals: Mentee is being connected with other women in the military to create a community of support. Long term goals: May be difficult to foresee and measure for quite some time; includes increased job satisfaction and job retention.
Constraints	The processes, resources, and/or factors that may facilitate or inhibit the effectiveness of program activities	Gender – Factors related to gender that impact women's psychosocial development and career development such as striving to balance work and life demands, and experiences of sexual misconduct at work. Culture – Factors related to the various cultures that affect the lives of participants such as broad military culture, civilian/Canadian culture, mentorship culture.

Inputs: Key Mentoring Ingredients

Individuals considered as *inputs* into the framework include potential mentors, potential mentees, as well as those within the organization who support mentorship participants. Evidence from the current study indicates a role and a desire for women and men mentors by mentees. With regards to the FWM-CAF, mentees will be women. Finally, individuals who would be considered "supports" of mentorship participants may include, but are not limited to, members of the Chain of Command, CAF leadership, and educators/trainers.

Dedicated training that focuses on mentorship has been identified through the literature as being an important part of ensuring the long-term success of a mentoring program (Hansman 2016; Tuomikoski et al. 2020). This is particularly the case when mentoring is introduced in highly structured organizations like the military or police services (Allen and Galvin 2015; Blankenbaker 2005). Not only does training and education need to focus on the specific tasks and responsibilities of mentorship engagement, an agreed upon organizational definition of mentorship needs to be presented and content needs to highlight the effects of the constraints on mentoring women in the CAF.

The interviews revealed possible opportunities throughout the course of one's military career to obtain mentorship training that may be most suitably delivered separately from leadership and development training. Training and education specific to mentoring should be focused on developing mentors, mentees, and personnel within the organization who support individuals who engage in mentoring relationships (Allen and Galvin 2015; Gunn 2016; Latham et al. 2020). Suggestions have also been made that mentoring training and education be specifically targeted to their respective roles, ranks, and professions. For example Farnese et al. (2016) aimed to understand the moderating role of formal mentoring in organizational socialization and adjustment. In their study, mentors were provided with two and a half days of training upon the onset of their involvement, with a follow-up half day of training.

Finally, an often overlooked but significant training and education process is articulating and reinforcing the organization's definition of mentorship. As indicated throughout the literature (Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Johnson and Andersen 2010), the definition of *mentorship* often gets confused with similar words such as *coaching* and *teaching*. Without regularly revisiting the organization's definition and position

on mentorship, including throughout formal training and education, confusion and misunderstanding will occur. The FWM-CAF would serve as an excellent foundation for formal education where role, rank, and profession-specific information may be presented.

There are also several resources that are currently available for members of the CAF to support independent learning of mentorship or for teams and individuals. Some of the resources are:

- National Defence website:
  - "January is #MentoringMonth across the Public Service" (dated January 4, 2021) https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/maple-leaf/defence/2021/01/january-mentoringmonth-across-public-service.html
  - Canadian Army: Mission: Ready, Mentorship https://strongproudready.ca/missionready/en/mentorship/
- "The Defence Team Mentoring Program Guide"
- "National Defence: Mentoring Handbook" by Dr. Daniel Lagacé-Roy and Retired Lt-Col Janine Knackstedt
  - https://publications.gc.ca/site/eng/9.697218/publication.html
- Available from Canadian Forces Training Development Centre
  - Agreement Form
  - Worksheets:
    - Am I ready to be a mentee?
    - Am I ready to be a mentor?
    - First meeting checklist: Preparing for the first meeting
    - Possible questions to ask a mentor
    - Right fit meeting questions and considerations
    - Tips for building a successful mentoring relationship

Program Activities

The study highlighted the need for a set of clearly defined activities within a mentoring program. These activities include, but are not limited to, the process of matching mentors and mentees, increasing the visibility of mentorship in the CAF, and outlining the rules of engagement and sustainability planning.

Compatibility between the parties involved in mentoring partnerships is vital to the development of a mentoring that is reciprocal and collaborative (Zachary 2012). The process of matching is an activity described in almost all mentorship programs in the literature (Farnese et al. 2016; Gunn 2016; Katayama et al. 2008). Participants in this study pointed to various systems in place to create mentoring pairs based on commonality (e.g., profession/trade, location, gender) or on preferences expressed by mentees. The disadvantages experienced by individuals due to their gender (e.g., being a woman) or their ethnicity (e.g., being a person of colour) has been the focus of some mentoring research that has specifically examined the manner in which mentorship matching occurs. The paper by Blake-Beard et al. (2011) explored the effects of race and gender matching in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) students and mentors. It found that for students, having a mentor who shared their gender and racial identities was important, particularly for women and students of colour. These students also shared that having a mentor with shared gender and racial identities meant they received more help, however, matching on these traits did not impact academic outcomes (Blake-Beard et al. 2011). Although this work may not be directly translatable to women members of the CAF, it provides some important insights about the impact of identities for individuals who are in the minority in typically male-dominated cultures, as well as the importance of mentorship early in one's professional career.

In some programs, matching is completed manually, with a mentorship program coordinator who organizes preference questionnaires, or is automated through the development an algorithm. For mentoring programs that do not have a capacity for an in-depth matching process, innovative approaches such as *speed mentoring* events, akin to *speed dating* events have been tried. A study conducted within the context of undergraduate medical education explored the experiences of mentors and mentees in a *mentoring speed dating* (MSD) event and examined the effect of MSD on the perceived quality of the mentoring interaction as well as the sustainability of that relationship (Guse et al. 2016). The researchers found that after a year, individuals who were involved in the MSD event were more likely to have a mentoring relationship than those who did not participate, leading to the conclusion that such an event has a role in matching mentees with potential mentors (Guse et al. 2016).

In the mentorship program described in study by Rivera-Mata and Martorell-Riera (2019), mentorship is viewed as an art with importance

placed on compatibility. For the Fostering Grades program, PhD students from Spain were matched with mentors within their host laboratories within the United States, which included the National Institutes of Health, Purdue University, Columbia University, and the University of California, San Diego among others (Rivera-Mata and Martorell-Riera 2019). The program coordinators completed analyses of personal and professional profiles using the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) questionnaire for mentees and all potential mentors, not accounting for gender. They found that this matching process, using the MBTI, directly contributed to the overall success of the program (Rivera-Mata and Martorell-Riera 2019).

This mentorship program activity directly addresses the CAF's efforts to enable mentorship to occur. There are calls in the military mentorship literature for the need to create a work culture that demonstrates willingness for mentoring to occur (Johnson and Andersen 2015). Although military culture is addressed as an external factor in the framework, this point addresses the specific actionable processes that need to occur to allow mentorship to be embraced in the everyday functions of members. Research is beginning to recognize the importance of support structures for the mentorship program, as well as for mentors themselves (Arnold 2006), in order to deliver robust and meaningful programs. Mentorship programs, including those outside of military and police services, have identified frustrations of mentors with the lack of resources for them to be fully engaged. For example, Jokelainen et al. (2011) completed a study examining the capacity of organizations to support mentorship in Finnish and British nursing students. The mentors identified the importance of human and financial resources as critical to their ability to mentor including having protected time for mentorship to not only engage in direct interaction with mentees, but to provide mentors with the opportunity for reflection and documentation (Jokelainen et al. 2011). Echoing an earlier part of the FWM-CAF, the availability of mentorship education and the resources to allow attendance at these educational opportunities were also identified by mentors in the study by Jokelainen et al. (2011).

In mentorship programs, there should be defined opportunities to allow mentors and mentees to engage with one another as shared by Jokelainen et al. (2011). The interviews reveal the variety of ways mentors and mentees connect with one another including meeting in person for a coffee in the community, or in the workplace, and regularly scheduled telephone calls. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, meetings that

would typically be occurring in-person have shifted with relative ease using online, virtual platforms. Many participants in the study had long-standing relationships with their mentors or mentees and relied on technology to maintain their mentoring relationships due to the nature of military life, characterized be regular relocations and/or deployments.

Similarly, Zachary (2012) expresses the importance of such *points of connection* especially in a world where a lot of communication is completed without the benefit of nonverbals. Points of connection are vital to establishing and maintaining meaningful connections and include the following:

1. Investing the time and effort to learn about a mentee's learning style and learning needs and understanding how this may affect interactions that do not occur in person.
2. Spending time to ask the mentee questions about their current experiences.
3. Exploring multiple ways of communicating with a mentee including email, videoconference, telephone, and other emerging technologies. Looking for opportunities to see another face-to-face.
4. Deciding on a mutually agreed upon time to connect on a regular basis, but being flexible.
5. Asking for feedback about the mentoring interactions and modes of communication.
6. Ensuring that connections lead to meaningful learning for the mentee.
7. Sharing information and resources to augment personal interaction (Esaki et al. 2019).

Plans to sustain a mentorship program are also necessary to consider at the program's creation. A paper by Tanenbaum (2013) found that most mentorship programs do not last more than two years, a disappointment given the considerable time and resources dedicated to the development and implementation of these initiatives. As a result of this finding, Vance et al. (2017) proposed a structured approach for creating and sustaining a yearlong mentorship program within a segment of the American Statistical Association. Many of the steps articulated during the creation phase of Vance and colleagues' (2017) work share similarities with the FWM-CAF, but there are additional steps built into

the years after implementation that may be worth consideration in this current framework. According to Vance et al. (2017), Year 2 activities should include "transition committee members to start next year's program" (2017, 25) and "recruit last year's mentees as mentors" (2017, 25) to ensure that legacy knowledge remains in the program. Year 3 activities, according to Vance et al. (2017), evaluate and propose making the ad hoc committee permanent, which was formed at the beginning of the mentoring program, and look for alternative ways to mentor. The authors also found it important to complete an annual report to translate knowledge and experiences learned in previous years. The report should include an executive summary, a statement of whether or not the mentoring program achieved its goals and addressed the needs of participants, names of the ad hoc mentoring organizing committee, program timelines, qualitative and quantitative feedback from participants, lessons learned by the committee at the end of the year, a decision about the continuation of the program, and recommendations for the program the following year (Vance et al. 2017).

Goals and Outcomes

Mentoring is defined as a relationship between individuals, a mentor and a mentee, where the mentor uses their own knowledge and experiences to provide advice and guidance to support the development of the less experienced mentee (Kram 1985). The current study is situated within the collaborative learning paradigm described by Zachary (2012) that is characterized by seven critical elements: reciprocity, learning, relationship, partnership, collaboration, mutually defined goals, and development. These elements should be used to inform communication in mentoring partnerships as well as self-reflection of mentors and mentees.

According to mentoring theory, mentorship fulfills two main functions: career development and psychosocial development (Kopser 2002; Kram 1985). Career-oriented functions of mentoring include providing mentees with sponsorship, increasing mentee's exposure or visibility in an industry, coaching, enhancing job satisfaction, and creating opportunities for challenging assignments (Woolnough and Fielden 2017). Psychosocial-oriented purposes of mentoring include providing a mentee with role modelling, giving mentees acceptance and confirmation, counselling, and friendship (Scandura and Williams 2004).

For mentees in the military, mentoring that focuses on psychosocial development may lead to greater commitment to a military career, expanded leadership competency, and increased likelihood to provide mentorship compared to peers who have not received mentorship (Baker et al. 2003; Gunn 2016; Hu et al. 2008; Rodgers 2014).

Literature about women and mentoring found that women as mentors did not necessarily see a positive impact on their work experiences; mentoring had a negative impact on women's workloads and some women did not see the benefits of taking on this new role (Beaulieu et al. 2017; Ragins and Cotton 1993; Zambrana et al. 2015). For example, Rockwell, Leck, and Elliott's study (2013), concluded that women utilized more empathetic styles of mentorship whereas men tend to stick to facts-based advice and keep mentees at arm's length and as a result, men were less emotionally invested. Benefits were also noted in the mentorship literature as women who had positive experiences with mentors were more likely to become mentors themselves (Huitrado 2018), and at the same rates at their male counterparts (Ragins and Cotton 1993; Ragins and Scandura 1994).

The interviews conducted in this study successfully identified and increased our understanding of the specific career development and psychosocial reasons why women in the military participate in mentorship. The findings support existing research on the use of identity-specific mentorship programs to support minority populations in male-dominated professions such as the military. The results are unique in those specific aspects of mentorship support sought by women and highlights the role of gender and military culture in these kinds of relationships.

Many women participants in the study felt that mentorship provided them with a network of support built upon trust and grounded on the shared experiences of being a woman in the military. A network of support includes having mentors to provide psychosocial and career development advice and guidance that is informed by gendered experiences. Most notably, women mentees shared how the mentorship programs in which they participated has been validating to them in that leadership within the CAF has recognized that their experiences and needs are unique enough to provide them dedicated supports. Although women-specific issues are not the basis of mentorship groups for women in the U.S. Army, Felix and Thomas (2020) discussed how it is easier to address women's issues with other women (e.g., menstruation, pregnancy, postpartum depression, hair regulations). The authors

also shared information about gender-specific mentorship groups that can provide an arena for women looking for assistance or guidance who are not comfortable seeking the same from their male counterparts (Felix and Thomas 2020). The importance and benefits of mentorship as contributing to the creation of support networks have also been expressed in research examining the advancement of women in policing in Australia (Ward and Prenzler 2016), women physicians in the Military Health System in the United States (Nakamura and Nguyen 2019), and supporting the careers of police women in the United Kingdom (Jones 2017).

Although much more difficult to foresee and even more difficult to measure, long-term goals such as job satisfaction and job retention are typically the main objectives of any mentorship program, and especially for programs aimed at supporting women in the military. Many of the interview participants shared that satisfaction with their careers and dedication to the CAF can be partially attributed to their positive mentoring experiences. Increased job satisfaction as a benefit of mentorship has also been well supported in the literature. A study by Oyesoji Aremu and Adeola Adeyoju (2003) found that compared to men in the Nigeria Police, mentored female police officers showed more satisfaction with their jobs, leading the authors to query whether "mentored female police are much more at home with their policing jobs" (2003, 383).

Mentorship has been suggested as a way to increase representation of minorities (e.g., women) in the military—a long term goal of military organizations to increase diversity (Crapanzano and Cook 2017; Felix and Thomas 2020; Hassell et al. 2010; Jones 2017; Kofoed and McGovney 2019; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019; Ward and Prenzler 2016). Addressing the broader issue of job retention, Hassell et al. (2011) examined the interrelationship between various workplace challenges experienced by women in policing: bias, lack of influence/support, lack of opportunity, and underestimation based on physical stature. They found that women in the study were underestimated with respect to their physical abilities more regularly than men. The study results also found that women reported higher stress levels and less job satisfaction and were more likely to report considering a career change compared to their male counterparts; however, these differences were not statistically significant. In conclusion, Hassell et al. (2011) found that the lack of mentoring, for both women and men, was related to increased workplace stress and decreased job satisfaction, highlighting the desire and need for appropriate mentoring supports.

External Factors

Throughout the literature and interview data, gender has been identified as a factor that has the potential to inform mentoring in the military. For example, Nakamura and Nguyen (2019) noted the need for mentors and leaders to fight against gender bias while highlighting the additional mental stress that women experience while dealing with systemic bias.

As highlighted through the scoping review and interviews, military culture informed both the nature of mentorship (i.e., what mentors and mentees discuss with one another) as well as ability of mentorship to occur (i.e., the presence or absence of mentoring culture; the presence or absence of a traditionally, masculine dominant unit/base). As a result, cultures need to be considered throughout the development, implementation, and sustainability plans in formal mentorship program.

Validation

Once the Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF) was developed through a combination of interviews and resource mining as discussed in previous chapters, the framework had to be evaluated to ensure it was in line with the needs of CAF members and could work within existing military structures. A culturally competent mentorship program is grounded in the assumption that mentors and mentees bring with them their collective identities (e.g., gender and/or intersecting identities) and respective cultures (e.g., military, civilian, ethnic, religious, etc.), which inform the roles, expectations, and nature of their mentoring relationship. The current study engaged CAF veterans who have self-identified as having knowledge and experience of mentorship, particularly mentorship of women in the CAF, to provide feedback on a proposed mentorship framework package that included a mentorship flow chart, a table describing the flow chart, and accompanying resources to be used by mentors/mentees. An evidence-informed validation process was used to guide this study and is presented in detail later in this chapter.

After a review of other validation studies for mentorship in military and military adjacent spaces (as discussed below), it was determined that interviews with CAF veterans would serve as the basis for program validation. Interviews were conducted with eight CAF veterans who discussed their concerns about the program freely but supported its overall implementation.

Other Approaches to Program Validation

To determine what approaches were used to evaluate mentorship programs in military and military adjacent settings, a review was conducted of five articles which detailed the validation of mentorship programs in military, military adjacent, and policing organizations.

The articles selected are:

1. The piloting of a mentorship program for the pregnant spouses of deployed US military personnel (Weis and Ryan 2012);
2. A review of a recently implemented mentoring program for new Italian correctional police officers (Farnese et al. 2016);
3. A case study of a mentoring program implemented to support women in the UK police force (Jones 2017);
4. A thesis examining three active mentorship programs for US veterans in university (Eells 2017); and
5. An evaluation of a mentoring program for new police officers in England and Wales (Gill, Roulet, and Kerridge 2018).

Four (Eells 2017; Farnese et al. 2016; Gill et al. 2018; Jones 2017) of the five articles referenced the work of Kram (1985) as a key part of their theoretical framework. The Kram (1985) definition of mentorship frames the relationship as one between more and less experienced people which is both developmental and intense in nature and is often formed to give feedback and other form of psychosocial support as related to personal and professional development. Some authors also used Kram's (1985) stages of mentorship (initiation, cultivation, separation, redefinition) to inform their theoretical framework and structure their studies (Eells 2017; Gill et al. 2018; Jones 2017). Organizational socialization and psychosocial support were also key concepts used across the studies.

Two of the five studies focussed on women (Jones 2017; Weis and Ryan 2012) and while the other three did not explicitly claim to focus on men, their participants were made up either entirely or almost entirely of men (Eells 2017; Farnese et al. 2016; Gill et al. 2018). Data was not generally provided on other demographic characteristics of participants, except for their age, and rank when it was applicable. In all cases, more experienced mentors mentored less experienced mentees except for one study (Weis and Ryan 2012), where this dichotomy could not necessarily be applied.

All mentorship programs described in the studies, except the one by

Eells (2017), were described as formal. The programs in Eells's (2017) study were based on largely unstructured relationships between mentors and mentees. Some studies evaluated mentorship programs already in place (Eells 2017; Farnese et al. 2016; Gill et al. 2018), while other studies focussed on mentorship programs created and piloted by the authors (Jones 2017; Weis and Ryan 2012).

Eells (2017) searched for existing mentorship programs for veterans at universities and colleges within the United States via Google and ended up using the *Peer Advisors for Veteran Education* (PAVE) database of 67 universities and colleges to contact mentorship programs. Only those universities and colleges were included that had some form of structure in their mentoring program, with one-on-one mentoring. Three unnamed universities were chosen by Eells (2017). The mentoring programs at the three universities ranged from meetings with untrained mentors multiple times a month, to veteran mentors who conducted orientation and remain available, and local businesses mentoring veteran students for employment by using veteran and non-veteran mentors.

The program evaluated by Farnese et al. (2016) was started by the *Training Office of the Italian Ministry of Justice* to improve retention of new correctional officers. Mentors were superintendents and inspectors who were not directly supervising their mentees. These mentors volunteered or were recommended by supervisors based on their supportive characteristics. No formal benefits were given to mentors, but they were trained for 2.5 days with a 1.5-day follow-up to become qualified mentors. No formal matching process was possible, but mentors and mentees had icebreaker activities to facilitate connections. Each mentor was assigned one to five mentees. The program was co-built between mentors and their mentees but had to include three weeks of planned activities to support newcomers in the system. These activities were meant to introduce mentees to the job environment. In the first three weeks there were weekly meetings between mentors and mentees and after this, there were monthly meetings for the next 11 months.

Gill et al. (2018) evaluated a mentorship program launch by the police forces of England and Wales in 2013 which aimed to mentor new recruits in the early stages of their employment. The program operated in 43 locations. A new cohort was brought through the program each year on a voluntary basis. Mentors and mentees each had a one-day orientation explaining aspects of the program before being matched based on work functions. The program lasted for a year formally, with meetings

occurring at a minimum of two times every three months.

Jones's (2017) case study of mentoring women police officers in the UK was based on a pilot mentorship program developed by Jones in collaboration with the police force. The program was meant to allow senior policewomen to share experiences with more junior women to support their careers in a masculine environment. All women in the force were invited to participate as mentors or mentees. Twenty-three mentors were trained as part of this pilot, and each had two to three mentees. Mentors were at least two rank positions higher than mentees, and the dyads co-created their own goals and program content.

Finally, Weis and Ryan (2012) investigated whether a mentoring program would help military mothers accept their pregnancy and identify with their maternal role more strongly. The mentorship program they created for the intervention group in their study, run at Elgin Air Force base in the US, was called the *Mentor Offering Maternal Support* (MOMS) group. The group was designed for pregnant women whose husbands were scheduled to deploy, and who were not from a military family prior to living with their current husband. Three mothers were chosen as mentors, all with some connection to the military and with a willingness to mentor. The mentors received a two-day training period about the concepts of the program, which included a book that formed the base of the program: *Birth of a Mother*. Mentees were split into groups of five to nine and participated in eight semi-structured classes lasting from one hour to one and a half hours each week. Each session mirrored a chapter from the book and allowed women to share their experiences and receive support based on the chapter theme, as facilitated by the mentors.

All the studies discussed used surveys to glean information about their participants. These surveys (sometimes called questionnaires) usually asked for demographic information with an additional section that included a test based on the specific literature cited for the study. Most of these specific questionnaires from the literature used Likert scales or similar rating systems. Most studies also primarily relied on statistical tests of survey results, but some supplemented such tests with qualitative data.

Eells (2017) surveyed 71 participants (from a pool of 178) across the three selected university mentorship programs. Using the *College Student Mentoring Scale* plus questions about the mentor and transitioning, Eells (2017) took a descriptive quantitative approach with ANOVAs and *t*-tests for analysis. Participants were from the U.S. Air Force, Navy,

Marines, Army, and Air Force National Guard, but the majority were from the Air Force. Most participants had served between six and ten years in the military before transitioning. The survey was only administered once to participants but was piloted on six veterans to ensure it was readable.

Farnese et al. (2016) surveyed the 396 mentees who were part of the Training Office of Italian Ministry of Justice's mentorship program who had assumed a mentee role in the last six months. Of those, 117 mentees completed the study; all of whom were young men. Farnese et al. (2016) used the *Organizational Socialization Inventory* as part of their survey, which they administered once to participants. For analysis, Modern Text was used to perform 10 moderate regression models.

Gill et al. (2018) had the most complex study design, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches for an abductive empirical approach. The locations for both the quantitative and qualitative elements were two separate locations in England. First, Gill and colleagues (2018) conducted a deductive exploratory field experiment, administering survey questions in mentoring and control group at three different points over eight months. Twenty-one dyads completed the study as part of the treatment group. Control and treatment groups completed the survey at the same time, and the *Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory* was used as the measure of anxiety. ANOVAs were conducted to analyze the survey data. Next, the qualitative study comprised a set of interviews run on a separate cohort of mentors. Thirty-five interviews were completed in the first, third, and ninth month of the relationship. Mentees and mentors were interviewed separately, and informal interviews were conducted first, followed by semi-structured interviews. Gill et al. (2018) performed an interpretive phenomenological analysis of interviews, using themes emerging from the transcripts.

Jones (2017) used Kram's (1985) mentoring cycle to collect data via interviews and focus groups at four phases of the 12-month mentoring process: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. In the study, 23 mentees and 19 mentors participated, producing 68 interviews. Of those, 36 of the interviews were from mentors, and 32 were from mentees. Jones (2017) also ran two focus groups for mentors and mentees separately, with four to eight people per group. To analyze the data, Jones (2017) performed a content analysis coding against the learning domains identified in the literature.

Weis and Ryan (2012) used multiple questionnaires as part of their survey, including a tailored program satisfaction questionnaire, the

Lederman Prenatal Self-Evaluation Questionnaire, the *Maternal Antenatal Attachment Scale*, the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale*, and the *Social Support Index*. Weis and Ryan (2012) used a randomized controlled intervention study to test their pilot mentoring program, with 65 women (29 treatment, 36 control) completing the study. Participants were considered as the mentees, not the three mentors and were administered surveys (except for the program satisfaction survey, which was administered only at the end), during session one, five, and eight, which corresponded with the women's trimesters. The analysis took on a univariate or mixed model approach, using descriptive statistics for demographics and attrition, and repeated ANOVAs to explore outcome variables.

A variety of methods were used to validate mentorship programs (specifically in the fields of military service and policing) including surveys (Eells 2017; Farnese et al. 2016; Gill et al. 2018; Weis and Ryan 2012), interviews (Gill et al. 2018; Jones 2017), and focus groups (Jones 2017).

Researchers have generally employed large scale questionnaires to capture quantitative information of participants' experiences. The study by Gill et al. (2018) was the most extensive including a variety of data collection methods (e.g., questionnaires, field experiments, interviews) thus highlighting the potential need to approach validation in such a robust manner.

It is important to note that none of the articles examined in the literature review described validation of a mentorship program *prior* to implementation; therefore, while the studies are useful guides, they cannot be directly applied to the current validation study. As previously noted, the results of this review were combined with Shippmann and colleagues' (2000), work on program evaluation.

Validation Study: FWM-CAF

Many of the impressions the eight interviewees expressed about the framework echoed the comments received during the mentorship framework development study; however, there was feedback specific to the proposed framework. The concern that a formalized mentorship program would be extremely challenging for units and groups to integrate was one also voiced in the original study. Although this participant indicated it had been several years since leaving the military, the person stated:

> Well, the framework I'm going to call an outline [was] a bit premature.

> I'm struggling to understand the operationalization of this document. Well, you know how we would make the rubber meet the road.

Hesitation about a formalized program aimed at increasing diversity and inclusion among the CAF workforce was also shared by another participant. This person described several diversity and inclusion initiatives that they were a part of (during their time in the CAF) as both inadequately implemented by the CAF and received poorly by its members. The participant cited pressure on military leadership to apply such initiatives from political leadership as a significant reason for poor uptake. As a result, there is concern that "forced" implementation of a women-specific mentorship program would result in pushback toward the program including from the population (women) it aims to support:

> So, I guess my biggest concern about this project is if it's rolled out as a mentorship framework or network for women, you'll make the same mistakes as we did with Francophones and that will lead to unintended consequences. […] There'll be an antifeminist backlash, right? So that's the danger, so my proposal would be is, figure out what the standard mentorship expectation is in the military and don't invent a new one. I would suggest bolt this onto the existing one and encourage the powers that be to apply it across all sexes and genders.

A different participant indicated that having a framework and accompanying resources, such as the one presented to them to review for the current study, would be a useful way to operationalize and implement a more formalized mentoring program. Rather than presenting the framework document and forcing implementation, the participant made several other suggestions to ensure that the mentoring framework becomes part of the culture of the military.

> The key thing that stood out to me overall…is that the way they have things structured now. The way they have everything online, so people have more opportunity to read and understand and go through things as opposed…we used to sit in a classroom, here's the document, read it now and then comment on it. I think that having that structure in place is good. Having something and giving it ahead of time to absorb and read and discuss is very important when you look at something like this...I think the key overall when you're doing this kind of stuff is that sending it ahead of time, giving opportunity for people to discuss it.

The importance of creating a mentorship culture was reiterated by this participant when describing the various processes that would be helpful to implement a formal program throughout the chain of command.

> Well, I would say have an introduction, or a briefing. So, for example, if I got something like this what I would do is I'd say to my director or whoever, can we have a meeting on this with the staff. I would have the director get up there with saying can we go through this with everybody and talk about it. Then I would say okay this is going to be coming out as a resource document, I want you to have a look at it, read it, come back, we'll have a meeting on it and then we'll do a follow-up. To me, that's so important because if something is missed, if something is not understood, then they can ask the questions and then if whoever is guiding this can come back…So that would be one of my main concerns—that it's a discussion document and it happens in a room full of the people who really need to have input, you know?

Another participant, who did some work in supporting a mentorship program in their unit prior to their release, shared the following thoughts about the framework and accompanying resources.

> I didn't see any red flags at all. It made a whole lot of sense. I think, the big thing, when you look…in your section where you're talking about the gender and culture and stuff. I think that it's a huge part of it that we're paying attention to now. You know through some of the stuff that we're doing. I think it's important for young women in the military to have another, a more senior woman to be able to go to because the needs are different, right?

When asked about the potential reception of such a mentorship framework for women in the CAF, the same participant provided the following statement:

> I think they would be good. They would be welcomed because…again it just goes back to the nature of the group [military members] that we're talking about, right? They're so used to be given a template, you know an SOP and here is something to, to follow, right? But it's also knowing that this is a guide, right?

Another participant stated that the framework and activities sheets could potentially be very helpful to inform the roles and expectations of those involved in mentorship for women. Although one aspect of being a mentor is to support career development, there is often confusion or misunderstanding that a mentor has the ability to inform promotional decisions.

> So generally speaking, I thought it was really well done. Like there's a lot of [information] just kind of getting into the why you're doing it. Understanding your role, I thought that was super important because I think a

> lot of times it turns into an advice conversation, like I think you should, you need to make sure you do, you know your command, you need to make sure you do your PD, you need to do your French and then you'll get to be this as opposed to being a conversation about what it is that you actually want. So, I find that they turn more into career management. So, this whole idea of understanding the difference between you know telling, giving somebody advice, and telling them what to do and supporting them through whatever journey it is that they want to go to. I think is important 'cause I think quite often mentoring, when we think about mentoring is we're thinking about how to make people successful in our organization, in the jobs.

Generally, the impressions of the mentorship framework and resources were quite positive. There were some important concerns about the operationalizing of the framework that need to be carefully considered; however, participants also provided some strategies about how it could be implemented and supported. Generally speaking, participants felt that the proposed mentorship framework would be beneficial in supporting women in the CAF.

Feedback on Framework Flowchart

Participants described the flowchart as easy to understand, well-organized, and a useful way to illustrate how mentorship may appear (and how it should ideally appear) based on their knowledge and experiences of mentorship of women in the CAF. Some specific suggestions were given during this portion of the interview to enhance the understanding/illustration of what mentorship for women in the CAF should be like.

One suggestion was to change the term *rules of engagement and sustainability planning,* to *guidelines for interaction and sustainability planning,* because of the military association connected to the phrase "rules of engagement." While one participant did not feel it was appropriate to use, others did not express any concerns when this was discussed with them.

There was another suggested change in language from the word *individuals* to *people* as stated in the area of the framework that defines *key mentoring ingredients*.

> So, let me throw out what struck me. In the block that says key mentoring ingredients, you have individuals and I thought it should be people because I just thought individuals is not what we really are striving for when we mentor. It just struck me that we want people but not to be individuals. I guess, that's kind of weird but anyway, it struck me that way.

Another key recommendation is to expand the *goals and outcomes* of mentorship from only those relevant to people directly involved to include the overarching *organizational goals and outcomes* for the organization.

> Something that I thought was really important for your diagram, the outcomes are job satisfaction and job retention and that's great…I fully agree but the real outcome is a more effective inclusive Canadian Armed Forces. Because people are going to ask why are you doing this and job satisfaction, of course, and job retention, absolutely true. I mean that is why we're doing this, but the actual goal of course is a more effective Armed Forces. Like I'm glad that you like your job, I'm glad that you're staying with us, right? That's what you're saying but in the big picture it's to build a better military.

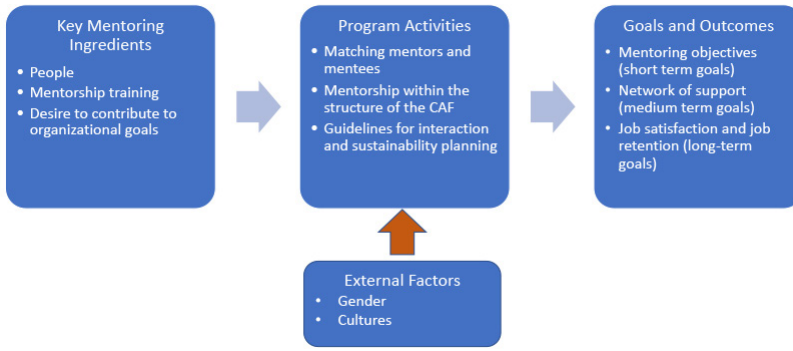
Additional details were also suggested in the description of *external factors*. This participant highlights that military culture not only includes the culture within the military, and the sub-cultures that exist within each service branch, but also the military culture that civilian society projects onto the Canadian military.

> So external factors I saw gender and cultural. I did wonder if an external factor is military cultural. I think, a lot of people might say military cultural. It's something within the organization but there's also a long military tradition, history in this country of service before self and battles and wars and expectations that are set by the rest of society about what their military should be. Then individuals joining…the military may come with these expectations. So, there's this external military cultural world Canada has and then there's the cultural piece inside which I'm sure you've encountered that can differ amongst service branches.

Each of these suggestions were discussed in greater detail during the interviews. To ensure the framework flowchart continues to appear easy to read and remain a high-level overview of mentorship for women in the CAF, participants agreed that any substantial additions should be reserved for the framework table (that precedes the framework flowchart). A note to add the statement "*Detailed information to follow*" was suggested to communicate to the users that additional information was available.

Figure 6.1

Validated Flowchart



Feedback on Framework Table

To further explain each component of the framework flowchart, a table was constructed with detailed information. Each part of the table was discussed with the participants and some of the responses have been included in the report. From the participant who expressed concerns about a mentorship program that focused exclusively on supporting women in the CAF disagreed with language in the table that spoke specifically to the experiences of women:

> Further down, medium term goals, being connected with other women, that really irks me. […] That's an expectation that women want to connect with other women, just like men want to connect with other men, but the better expectation is that good leaders connect with other good leaders. Or good professionals connect with other good professionals.

Feedback such as the above was in stark contrast to the other feedback provided of the mentorship flowchart and of the language used in the table. For example, this participant, a woman veteran who held roles as mentor and mentee during her time in the CAF expressed the importance of the mentoring framework, as described in the table, to recognize and name the differences experienced by women.

> I think it's important for young women in the military to have another,

> a more senior woman to be able to go to because the needs are different, right? So, you know if I'm kind of going in and saying okay I'm trying to balance you know this stuff, I mean I think back to, I was doing, when I was working at (name of employment) which was a Canadian Expeditionary Force Command, so this was the headquarters that…did all the international deployments, right? You know to [have someone] help guide me through some of these things…You know it's a little bit different and it was just kind of more on the informal side. Having that resource to go to…I think they'd welcomed it.

Based on the conversations specific to the mentorship table, there were some minor changes in language to enhance the intended goals and objectives of the mentorship framework. The suggested changes identified during discussions of the mentorship flowchart were also incorporated in the table to ensure consistency.

Table 6.1

Validated Summary of Mentoring Framework for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces

Framework Component	Definition	Specific Information
Inputs	Resources that contribute into a mentoring program	People – Potential mentors, potential mentees, as well as those within the organization who support mentorship participants (e.g., members of Chain of Command, CAF leadership, educators/trainers).
		Mentorship training – Training and education specific to mentoring should be focused on developing mentors, mentees, and personnel who support individuals who engage in mentoring relationships. Mentoring-specific training and education should be specifically targeted to mentor/mentee respective roles, ranks, and professions.
		Desire to contribute to organizational goals – People and mentorship training create an atmosphere that is motivated to contribute to the ongoing objectives of the CAF to be more effective, diverse, and inclusive.
Program Activities	Activities that a mentorship program engages in	Matching mentors and mentees – Compatibility between the parties involved in mentoring partnerships is vital to the development of a partnership that is reciprocal and collaborative.
		Mentorship within the structure of the CAF – Create a work culture that demonstrates willingness for mentoring to occur.
		Guidelines for interaction and sustainability planning – Guidelines on how mentoring pairs should communicate and create opportunities to encourage interaction.

… continued

Table 6.1, continued

Validated Summary of Mentoring Framework for Women in the Canadian Armed Forces

Framework Component	Definition	Specific Information
Outcomes	Behaviours, attitudes, skills, or products that result from a mentoring program. These are described as being proximal (short term) outcomes, enabling (medium term) outcomes, and distal (long term) outcomes.	Mentoring objectives (short term goals) – Mentee is receiving support for career development and psychosocial development toward goals Network of support (medium term goals) – Being connected with other women in the military to create a community of support. Job satisfaction and job retention (long term goals) – May be difficult to foresee and measure for quite some time. This will directly contribute to the organizational goals and objectives of a more effective, diverse, and inclusive military.
Constraints	The processes, resources, and/or factors that may facilitate or inhibit the effectiveness of program activities	Gender – Factors related to gender that impact women's psychosocial development and career development such as striving to balance work and life demands, and experiences of sexual misconduct at work. Cultures – Mentorship for women in the military are impacted by various cultures such as military culture (military sub-cultures), civilian/Canadian culture, mentorship culture, corporate culture, generational culture, etc.

Feedback on Activity Sheets

Each of the activity sheets were reviewed and discussed with participants to obtain feedback on content and language.

Many participants shared that they completed the worksheets themselves to help determine its utility. Some additions were recommended such as expanding the examples of past mentors to include career managers and friends. It was also suggested that an additional prompt for the user to reflect on the gender of their previous mentors and whether that played a role in their mentorship experiences. Another prompt was suggested by this participant:

> I would offer: what were satisfying relationships and why? I would say the one thing that I would offer is what were the experiences that bonded you to this particular mentor and are they unique? Probably every single one of my mentors when they're going to have those conversations with you on the telephone, at odd times or when you have a serious issue that you want to talk through, none of them were formed in Canada. Every single one was formed on an operation.

These additional prompts will be helpful in supporting the reflective process encouraged for people who are learning to become or are already mentors.

Culture, in particular military culture, was discussed throughout the interviews. At the beginning of Activity 6.2a, there is a definition of military culture and further information about the various factors that inform it. External cultural factors such as ethnicity and religion are currently listed. A participant suggested another factor:

> Mentoring is affected by the culture, the profession, the base, what rank, things outside like ethnicity, religion, roles and so forth. I wanted to add the word age. Because mentoring can be done obviously by a friend or someone that's maybe five or ten years ahead of you or somebody that's thirty years ahead of you and each of those cases comes with certain, let's say challenges, right? Because the person that's been out of the organization for some time may not be aware of what has happened within and could be giving you advice that's not right because when they were in, there were no women in certain roles. So, they're now giving you advice that could be a little bit iffy but then again it can be very sage advice with applications in general but it's just a factor…Because we talk about things like gender of the mentor and age is important too.

The proposed framework also acknowledges the role that military sub-cultures have on mentoring and was reiterated by one of the par-

Activity 6.1

Reflection on Your Experiences a Mentee (for Mentors)

Think about your mentoring experiences over the course of your career in the CAF. Think about the people who were present to guide, support, and strengthen you.
My mentors were…. *(Examples: teachers, instructors, supervisors, career manager, friends, peers…)*
When did they come into my life? *(Examples: As a cadet? Early career? Formal mentorship program?)*
What wisdom have I gained from each of them? *(Examples: About my career? About my life outside of work?)*
What were the most satisfying aspects of those relationships and why?
What were the least satisfying aspect of those relationships and why?
What did I learn about being a mentor from these experiences?
What did I learn about being a mentee?
What were the experiences that bonded you to your previous mentors/mentees?

Activity 6.2a

Reflecting on Your Own Cultural Assumptions (for Mentors and Mentees)

Military culture is as characterized by its own practices, attitudes, beliefs, language, traditions, and values (English, 2004; Westphal & Convoy, 2015) and effects mentoring and mentoring relationships.

Mentoring is affected by the culture within each element, profession, base/wing, and rank. Mentoring is also affected by cultures outside of the military like age, ethnicity, religion, and roles/expectations related to gender.

Consider what values and assumptions do you hold about things that may affect mentoring such as: the military; roles/responsibilities in the military; civilian life; family life; gender; among others. How do these values and assumptions played out in what you do and how you do it?

Value or Assumptions	How They Are Reflected in Your Behaviour
Example of value/assumption….	

ticipants. This person described how sub-cultures can inform the mentorship culture in a unit in the following quote:

> Not only just what your organizational culture is but how you're designated. Operator support trades and purple trades and everything else, I think they all handle [mentorship] completely differently. The resistance to mentoring is an interference in the chain of command's responsibility. [For example], when you're in a formal hierarchical organization, like a unit, where the junior officers…are coming in, they do their three years and then they come out. The commanding officer is their career manager. He or she [is] the one who manages that space for all the lieutenants and the captains in that space.

Participants were generally quite supportive of Activity 6.2b. Because there is recognition of the role of gender in the military career experiences of women, participants stated that it would be helpful for everyone involved to reflect on their assumptions and biases as related to gender.

> I think [looking at] gender [assumptions] would make a huge difference. A lot of times…they're going to go through things…whether they're married, not married, gay, not gay, whatever, it, you know it doesn't matter they're going to have you know still, still trying to fit you know into that um, that round hole, you know that the square peg in the round hole sometimes.

The importance of a worksheet that encourages reflection on the role of gender and potential gender biases was underscored by a participant who shared her personal experiences of how women's gender roles can be used as a stumbling block in their military career.

> I know a number of young women who've had that thumb put on the scale for whatever reason because they took too many maternity leaves. I've heard that comment—she's taken too many maternity leaves. It's like, she had children, that's what you do. My boss told me when I got pregnant with my second child that my career was done. I was a captain. He just told me you're done. He was mad. He was angry with me. He yelled at me for fifteen minutes.

Examining gender assumptions was also identified as being an important process as echoed by this participant in which he stated:

> I'll just give you a quick [comment] on the gender assumptions. I think the biggest piece—there [are] male dominated professions and how to get past the idea of fairness and standardization. So, militaries and police

> forces, historically, have sought uniforms, haircuts and thinking as a way to standardize people inside of an organization.

Although the feedback for Activity 6.2b was not specific to a language or content, the discussions surrounding this worksheet emphasize the need to reflect on gender assumptions when preparing to engage in mentorship.

One of the stated benefits of Activity 6.3 is that it provides an opportunity for mentors (and mentees) to reflect on themselves as well as the organizational structure they work in and how that may influence mentoring. An example of how self-awareness reflection can be operationalized during a mentorship meeting was shared by this participant:

> So, depending on what job you have…for the mentee it may not be easy to separate that because the whole chain of command kind of structure and the hierarchy is so engrained in your thinking, in your philosophy, in how you do things. It's hard to separate that out. So, you know maybe it's having [mentorship] meetings that's not done in uniform… You know, you go in and then you're somewhere, you're in jeans and a t-shirt and then it takes off that barrier. I think sometimes a uniform can create that barrier for people.

This worksheet was seen as potentially particularly challenging by a participant who shared that identifying and then articulating (in writing) what ones' biases and stereotypes may be very challenging for military personnel.

> I think it's hard for people to identify their biases. That's not always an easy conversation…It's not always easy for somebody in the military to say they have a discomfort. We're usually about handling all situations under stress and duress. I don't know if it would be helpful to have… I like your example. I don't know if there's a way to help lead them to that feeling or that comfort or discomfort identification because I just feel like just saying do you have any discomforts or disconnects or feelings it might be too broad…I don't know if everybody…most of us are not in tune with our biases. I think I could I admit that on paper, I don't know…I'm just wondering if there's a way to help lead them to it more than just some blocks to fill out because I don't think there'd be hesitation to fill it out… So maybe just an acknowledgment that your biases, previous experience, life context whatever can influence how you speak, how you respond, how you listen.

Activity 6.2b

Reflecting on Your Own Gender Assumptions (for Mentors and Mentees)

Sex and *gender* are distinct personal characteristics:
Sex refers to biological characteristics (e.g., male, female, intersex);
Gender refers to a social identity (e.g., man, woman, non-binary or two-spirit; Government of Canada 2019).

Gender orientations (e.g., masculinity, femininity), and sexual orientation has been found to effect career mentoring and role modelling for women in male dominated professions such as the military and police services (Barratt et al. 2014; Jones 2017; Managhan 2012; Nakamura and Nguyen 2019; Whitworth 2008).

Consider what values and assumptions you may have about gender, how gender may/not impact a career in the military, and how gender may/not impact mentoring relationships. How do these values and assumptions get played out daily in what you do and how you do it?

Value or Assumptions	How They Are Reflected in Your Behaviour

Activity 6.3

Your Self-Awareness Reflection (for Mentors and Mentees)

The process of reflecting on your own biases and stereotypes of others has been identified as an important part of mentoring whether you are a mentor or mentee. It is important that reflection on biases and stereotypes occurs on a regular basis throughout the course of your mentoring relationship.

Questions to consider: Do I have biases/stereotypes of mentorship? Do I have biases/stereotypes of women's roles in the military? What are they? Where did they come from? How do these perceptions influence my behaviours, speech, or interactions?

Discomforts	Disconnects	Feelings
Example: Don't know how to mentor a woman	*Example*: What to say? How to say it? How to relate to her?	*Example*: Don't want to hurt her feelings. Uncomfortable.

Activity 6.4a

Assumption Hunting for Mentors

We base our assumptions on our experiences, and this determines how we see the world. For some, these assumptions become the truth and we act on them; however, assumptions are not necessarily the truth.

It is important to be aware of your assumptions about mentorship and reflect on them to ensure that they are valid and accurate.

What assumptions are you holding about your role as a mentor? (Example: How engaged do you see yourself being?)

What assumptions are you holding about your mentee's role? (Example: How engaged are you expecting your mentee to be?)

What assumptions might your mentee hold about your role as a mentor?

What assumptions is your mentee holding about their role in the relationship?

Activity 6.4b

Assumption Hunting for Mentees

We base our assumptions on our experiences, and this determines how we see the world. For some, these assumptions become the truth and we act on them; however, assumptions are not necessarily the truth.

It is important to be aware of your assumptions about mentorship and reflect on them to ensure that they are valid and accurate.

What assumptions are you holding about your role as a mentee? (Example: How engaged are you comfortable being?)

What assumptions are you holding about your mentor's role? (Example: How involved would you like your mentor to be?)

What assumptions might your mentor hold about your role as a mentee?

What assumptions is your mentor holding about their role in the relationship?

The participants all agreed that having a space to engage in assumption hunting is a good idea; however, there was variability in their thoughts about whether people would be able to engage in this activity. Because of the somewhat challenging nature of this exercise, like identifying biases and stereotypes, the main suggestion made is to add example prompts in the worksheet.

Given the important nature of confidentiality, in any relationship, there were some good discussions in all interviews regarding this worksheet. One participant commented on the overall importance of confidentiality:

> The default constraint is that unless both parties agree to divulge discussions, the default is absolute confidentiality. Nothing gets written down and nothing gets shared. You know loose lips sink ships. Nothing gets turned into gossip at the coffee clutch or at the bar. Mentoring is a private and personal thing. Would there, should there be exceptions? Absolutely. If you're mentoring me and it appears that, to you, that I'm at risk of harmful behaviour, suicidal or if you become aware that I'm taking drugs then yeah there's got to be an offramp where you're allowed to share that legally. We don't do well with that, that type of grey zone.

Mentorship is often misunderstood as a mechanism for performance evaluation or as part of the promotion process. Therefore, it was suggested that a statement be included in the confidentiality checklist that content of any mentorship discussion will not be communicated to any other military personnel for purposes of assessment or promotion.

Because confidentiality is such an important aspect in mentorship and, at times, can be interpreted by different people in different ways, this participant discussed how the confidentiality checklist may cause challenges:

> I think it's just talking to the confidentiality piece where mentors, because of the military cultural aspect, if they do hear something is not right, they feel compelled to do something and maybe they need to be reined in to say that's not really your job. You have to try very carefully, in that relationship with the mentee. But having said all of that I don't think you know nine times out of ten that, that these relationships are not going to tread into those kinds of challenging areas.

Activity 6.5

Checklist for Discussing Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of utmost importance in developing trust within a mentoring relationship. It is important to discuss each of your expectations around confidentiality before the mentoring relationship begins. Ensure that both parties are aware that mentorship will not be used to inform or influence job performance or promotion, therefore, be confidential.

Use this Activity to guide your discussion when completing the Mentorship Agreement.

What of the following assumptions about confidentiality do you hold?	Yes	No	Not sure
What we discuss stays between us for as long as we are engaged in our mentoring relationship.			
We can freely disclose what we talk about in our conversations with other people.			
After our mentoring relationship has ended, it is okay to talk with others about what we discussed or how we related.			
If there is a demonstrated need for someone else to know, we can appropriately disclose our conversations and impressions with that person.			
What we say between us stays here unless there is specific permission to talk about it with others.			
Some issues (e.g., those that are not deemed to put yourself or others at risk of harm) will be kept confidential, while others will not.			
It is okay to discuss with others how we relate to one another but not the content of our discussions.			
It is okay to talk about what we talk about as long as it is positive.			

Other assumptions I hold that should be added to this list (refer back to Assumption Hunting Activity 4a/b):

Overview

The validation study aimed to validate the FWM-CAF through interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of CAF members for a mentorship framework for women. After reviewing the five studies on validating various mentorship programs and in conjunction with Shippmann et al.'s (2000), description of the dimensions for rigour in a program, interviewers were determined to be the most useful way to evaluate the FWM-CAF.

The eight interviews with former CAF members with experiences of mentorship revealed the considerations necessary to tweak the program. Accordingly, language about gender, culture, and confidentiality was clarified and expanded for better understanding. The interviewees particularly noted the need to integrate this program within the existing structures of the CAF so that the framework did not just create another top-down unsupported system and bring backlash and lack of acceptance from CAF members.

Conclusion

It is clear, both from the literature reviewed and from the various phases of this study, that mentorship should be thought of as an important mechanism to support psychosocial and career development in the CAF. Further, the psychosocial and career support provided in mentorship settings could be part of the strategy for the CAF to reach the goal of 25 percent of women by 2026 (Government of Canada 2019b). For this goal to be met, the recruitment and retention challenges plaguing the CAF when it comes to women, racialized minorities, and Francophones, and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community must be addressed. The CAF must support these populations to recruit and retain them in a way that goes beyond surface level statements. A cohesive mentorship program for women in the CAF could be one way to support women (including the women who are part of the marginalized groups in the CAF mentioned above).

The interviews conducted for this study show that women service-members and veterans are already formally and informally creating mentorship programs. The women in our interviews discussed how these programs created communities of support which allowed them to focus on and excel in their career while simultaneously supporting the wins and challenges in their person lives. Many women participants noted that the male-focussed and dominant culture of the CAF meant that their concerns and experiences were not always understood by the men who worked with and supervised them. Advice about promotions, family-planning, work-life balance, and sexual misconduct from colleagues and superiors was not always tailored to our women participants' lives. The communities of women created through mentorship allowed the service-members in our study to experience friendship and

networking outside of the so-called "old boys' network" and the chain of command. These networks strengthened women's desire to stay in the CAF and created positive environments, which they claimed were not present to the same extent before participating in women's mentorship programs.

However, not all participants (both in the original interviews and in the validation study) agreed that an all-women mentorship program all of the time was purely beneficial. Some of the men (mentorship experts and mentors) who participated noted that there is a cultural benefit to the interaction between men and women in mentorship settings, as it builds the empathy and understanding that is needed for women to succeed in the CAF. Others (both men and women) noted that because the CAF is dominated by men, women must have relationships with men that allow them access to the military hierarchy to be promoted on time and receive beneficial assignments. Some men, however, noted that both men and women must mentor women, as they felt they (men) were not always equipped to deal with every question a woman might have.

Some of the participants (both men and women) noted that they felt no difference in the quality or outcome of mentorship as related to gender and felt that cultural elements of the various CAF branches and trades were more important. Others advocated for a sensitivity to both gender and organizational culture, noting that different mentors from different sub-cultures within the CAF might be required for different stages of a mentee's career. While some participants did not support a women-specific mentorship program, all participants saw the benefits of mentorship in the CAF and believed a formalized framework supported at every level was necessary for such a program to be fruitful.

However, a program tailor-made for women in the CAF was supported by almost all participants, with the caveat that more generalized mentorship programs should exist alongside it. A program for women was seen as particularly beneficial because women are a specific minority population in the CAF that the military is struggling to recruit and retain. According to some participants such a program also has the potential to challenge the masculine culture of the CAF and build towards a more inclusive set of values. Such change is much needed in the environment that the CAF has faced in 2021 and will continue to face in the years to come. The calls for culture change (re-ignited by allegations of sexual misconduct against some of the highest-ranking CAF members, the ending of Operation HONOUR, and the creation of

the new Chief Professional Conduct and Culture) will only continue, and the CAF must be ready with tangible action (Brewster 2021; Burke and Brewster 2021; Government of Canada 2020).

The participants of both the initial interviews and the validation study had some key recommendations to ensure the success of the Framework for Women Mentorship in the Canadian Armed Forces (FWM-CAF):

- To succeed, a mentorship program must be supported both in rhetoric and tangible action, not only by senior leaders, but by unit level leadership. The participants often discussed the lip-service from the leadership towards mentoring, but the lack of tangible support towards programs. Mentorship support should include statements from leaders at all levels but should also include the devotion of time and resources to such programs. Unit level leaders should be encouraged by senior leadership to set aside time and resources for mentorship programs including time for mentorship meetings, discussing the benefits of the mentorship program, encouraging sign-ups, and assigning or facilitating the work of (a) program coordinator(s).
- A mentorship program should be fully supported by the CAF and be outside the chain of command. A program outside the chain of command would allow for more confidentiality contributing to the development of trust necessary for mentorship. Operating outside the chain of command would also allow for a more open relationship between the mentor and mentee, as consequence of both the heightened confidentiality and the removal of the mentor from decisions to do with the mentee's advancement (or other conflicts of interest).
- Training on mentorship as separate from leadership is key to program success. Many participants expressed that the conflation of leadership, coaching, and mentorship in the military is confusing and misleading, as supported by the literature. Training early in the career about what mentorship is within the military context is important more generally. The FWM-CAF and any other specific mentorship programs should include training for how to be a mentor and mentee. Training should include elements of the mentorship program, how to interact within the mentorship pairing, basic mentorship strategies, goal setting, and some basic resources available to military members.

- Pairing of mentors and mentees should be specialized to the mentee's career stage and goals. The mentee should have clearly defined goals (developed through prior training on mentorship) before the mentorship relationship begins and adjust those goals over time and with the mentor's capabilities in mind. Different mentors may be needed for different stages of the mentee's career. Depending on mentees' goals and career stage, it is possible that mentors will have quite different careers than mentees and may not even be in the same service branch. It is important for a mentorship coordinator to take into consideration whether a mentee should be paired with a similar or different mentor to facilitate goals.
- Mentees should have more than one mentor throughout their career. As discussed above, different types of mentors may be needed for the different career stages a mentee should go through. Mentees could potentially have more than one mentor at the same time. Evaluation of whether a new mentor should be assigned can happen every couple of years as a general rule. However, mentors and mentees should both be able to request a new pairing for any reason, including lack of fit, issues with the relationship, changing goals, or harassment.
- Mentees should eventually become mentors. A hallmark of a sustainable program is that mentees from that program want to participate in mentorship themselves. Some mentees will be able to also be mentors at the start of the program if they are already experienced in their career. Older members who are currently at a lower rank, or newer/younger members as low ranked as master corporal (or equivalent rank) may already have something to offer as mentors. The program should not be rigid about when a mentee can also be a mentor. For example, a lower ranking service-member might be the best to mentor a higher-ranking or older service-member depending on the goals of the mentee. Even higher-ranking service-members can desire mentorship in certain areas and should not be barred from being mentees.
- Maintaining a relationship with past mentors and mentees should be encouraged if desired by the parties. A sustainable mentorship program should encourage ongoing relationships which create a network of support for the program. Maintaining relationships with past mentors and mentees also has the poten-

tial to facilitate new and fruitful pairings within the network.

- Veterans should be included in the mentorship program as both mentors and mentees. Including veterans as part of the mentorship program could allow them to be mentored in career and life management areas as they transition out of the military and could allow for veterans to mentor those currently transitioning. veterans have important knowledge about how the CAF and services available after transition function that other service-members may not have. veterans might also benefit from mentorship by other service members, and continued interaction with a supportive military community could encourage re-enlistment if appropriate.

The aim of this research was to create a validated framework—the FWM-CAF—for a culturally competent mentorship program for women in the CAF. Overall, participants were excited about the prospect of the FWM-CAF but wanted to make sure that it could be appropriately tailored to the military community and servicewomen in particular. Participants expressed hope that mentorship program could help to change the culture of the CAF and could create a supportive network of women.

Appendix

Interview Guide

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to join me to talk about your experience as a mentor/mentee, either informal or formal, in the Canadian Armed Forces. My name is Linna Tam-Seto and I'm a researcher from the Centre for International Defence Policy at Queen's University.

Before we begin, I am wondering if you have any questions about the study as described in the Letter of Information. *Review and confirm the consent provided in the Informed Consent (i.e., consent for audio recording; consent for use of quotes; consent to contact for future research).*

I would also like to reiterate the confidentiality of this interview. If at any time you do not wish to provide an answer or comment, you are free to decline without any repercussions. With your consent, an audio recording will be taken of today's interview to ensure that I don't miss anything important. Please know that this recording will not be accessible to anyone outside of the immediate research team. No participant in this study will be identified at any time (reports, datasets, publications). [Start recording].

Questions are used as prompts for the interviewer to ensure that salient points are addressed during critical incident recall.

- Can you tell me about your experience with mentorship?
- How did you get interested in mentorship?
- What kind of work have you done in this area? (For example, as mentor, program development, program implementation.)
- Can you share a story or situation of positive or ineffective mentorship? Either that you have experienced or are aware of?
- Consider: what was effective about this situation?
- Can you share a story or situation of ineffective mentorship? Either that you have experienced or are aware of?
- Consider: what was ineffective about this situation?

Additional areas for consideration during interview. Verbatim ques-

tions may not be required if information provided during critical incident recall.

- What do you think are the benefits of mentorship for women in the CAF? Consider: opportunities for personal growth, career development, retention, job satisfaction
- What do you think are the challenges of mentorship for women in the CAF? Consider: organizational factors, lack of time, lack of resources, no interest
- What do you think are some gender-related considerations necessary for a mentorship program? Consider: mental burden of women, same gender matching, roles outside of work (e.g., family demands)
- What do you think are some culturally related considerations necessary for a mentorship program? Consider: military culture, difference in rank/arm, ethnicity, religion
- What are some individual factors that you think would impact mentorship participation? Consider: factors that facilitate and hinder
- What are some organizational factors that you think would impact a mentorship program? Consider: factors that facilitate and hinder
- What would an ideal mentorship program look like for women in the CAF?

Is there anything else you would like to share about your knowledge and expertise on mentorship or a mentoring program what we have not discussed?

Thank you for your time. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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Dr. Linna Tam-Seto holds a PhD in Rehabilitation Science and is a registered occupational therapist with experience working in child, adolescent, and family mental health and supporting evidence-based professional practice. Linna's research interests include understanding the health and well-being of Canada's military members, veterans, public safety personnel, and their families with a focus on life transitions and changes. At the time of this Martello Paper, Linna was the inaugural Postdoctoral Research Fellow with the Canadian Defence and Security Network completing her work at the Centre for International and Defence Policy at Queen's University. Currently, Linna is Assistant Professor, Trauma and Recovery Research Unit, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioural Neuroscience, at McMaster University and leading research to better understand the experiences of military sexual misconduct on survivors, families, and military culture. Linna Tam-Seto is the principal investigator for this Martello paper.

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This study explores the possibility of a mentorship program for women in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Through a six-phase study including a scoping review, interviews, resource mining and review, framework development, resource development, and validation, the Framework for Women Mentorship in the CAF (FWM-CAF) was created. This Martello paper lays out the creation of the framework using the interview data from 28 initial interviewees (mostly women) and eight additional validation interviewees (an equal number of men and women). After an extensive scoping review of the literature on mentorship in military, military adjacent and policing organizations, interviews were held with subject matter experts in mentorship as well as Canadian service-women and Veterans who had served or are serving as mentors and mentees. The interview data revealed overall support for the idea of program specifically for women in the CAF, as interviewees expressed their positive experiences with the network and community-building that mentorship can provide, especially in male-dominated organizations such as the military. This research presents a ready-to-use, customizable framework for women's mentorship in the CAF (the FWM-CAF) and provides a roadmap for the creation of sustainable, functional program which could benefit the recruitment and retention of women and other minority groups in the military.

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