

# Preliminary Development of an Emic Measure of Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience

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This study offers an emic definition and measure of Christian counselor mentoring. Christian counselor mentoring is conceptualized as a mutual relationship between a Christian with vocational experience and a mentee. The mentor serves by providing an example of how to root vocational and personal expression in a biblical telos, by demonstrating self-limiting, offering encouragement, and collaborating with the mentee. This definition is emic in that the indigenous writing and culture of Christianity is analysed and allowed to dictate the purpose and structure of the mentoring construct. Based on this conceptualization, we constructed the Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience Scale (CCMES). Exploratory and parallel factor analysis of data collected from a convenience sample of Christian counseling students (N = 53) provided preliminary confirmation of a 10-item, two-factor measure. Measure reliability and validity are discussed. Implications for educators and mentors include details of specific mentoring actions that enhance Christian practitioner development.

Mentoring by an experienced mentor has been established as a critical aspect of clinical training for Christian counselors who seek to honor their spiritual worldview in their clinical work (Hall et al., 2009; Sorenson et al., 2004). Mentoring is a broader experience than supervision, and supervision alone does not fulfill a mentoring role (Johnson et al., 2014; Sorenson et al., 2004). Therefore, measuring the quality of mentoring, not just supervision, that a Christian counseling student experiences is a worthy pursuit to help assist in clinical development. This study sought to develop an empirically investigated measure of mentoring for Christian counseling students, utilizing an emic perspective.

## Author Note

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## Mentoring and Current Measurement

Mentoring has a solid conceptual base due to keen interest in this construct across industries. Definitions are diverse, ranging from "the simple and romantic images of Greek mythology's Mentor...to the complex, multivariate processes of structured human interaction within institutional contexts" (Beyene et al., 2002, p. 87). A brief overview of mentoring is warranted, beginning with Jacobi (1991), who noted five aspects of mentoring: (a) achievement or acquisition of knowledge; (b) three actions: emotional/psychological support, direct assistance with development, and role modeling; (c) reciprocal benefits to both parties; (d) direct personal interactions; and (e) mentor as more experienced. Clark et al. (2000) concur, concluding from their broad literature review that mentoring includes a personal relationship with an older or at least more experienced person who acts as a guide, teacher, and role model to a younger protégé. Beyene et al. (2002) emphasized the complex mutual and relational context of these men-

tor-protégé engagements. Chiroma and Cloete (2015) provided a helpful, broad definition:

Mentoring can therefore be seen as a developmental process which can occur both naturally and officially, to allow an individual to share his or her experience, knowledge and skills with another individual in order to benefit (mostly) the latter's personal and/or professional development. (p. 2)

Mentoring has long maintained the broad goal of development across career and psychosocial aspects, which are critical to the counseling endeavor (Hall & Maltby, 2013).

Mentoring is unique from supervision. As stated, mentoring attends to broad psychosocial aspects of development that are unorganized by clinical and professional requirements, unlike supervision (Johnson, 2007). Instead, mentoring is concerned with "modeling being fully human" in the present realm of attention (Siberine & Kimball, 2019, p. 40), extending the relationship beyond the supervision hour, formative feedback, and other supervisory functions. Mentoring relationships may also persist across time and across differing spheres of life and may be maintained by persons who are not professionals within the mentee's particular discipline. It is, however, not uncommon for professionals to mentor younger peers.

Mentoring and its relational and functional utility are well documented, both within and beyond the counseling profession (e.g., in medicine, in business; e.g., Berk et al., 2005; Beyene et al., 2002; Sorenson et al., 2004). Counseling and psychology research have continued to emphasize the importance of mentorship in student development (e.g., Garzon et al., 2014; Hall & Maltby, 2013); yet, they are limited to describing mentorship through qualitative investigation (e.g., Hall et al., 2009). Despite mentoring's perceived value, the quantitative measurement of mentoring is sparse, with scholars often choosing, instead, to discuss or describe mentoring. Within the Christian subset of counselors who highly espouse mentoring, it is necessary to establish a measure of mentorship to provide baselines and facilitate improvement.

Berk et al. (2005) attempted to develop a measure of mentoring in medicine by consolidating the broad mentoring literature. Their measure defined spheres of activity the mentor may influence (e.g., method or strategy and job

change). It allowed the protégé to rate the mentor on a 6-point Likert scale on 12 items of positive or desirable characteristics and responsibilities. Validity and reliability were not reported because the measure allows for mentoring to be specified across multiple disciplines, making statistical analysis difficult.

Loosemore (2020) proposed a measure of mentoring for Christian counselors focused on the core elements of mentorship discussed by Johnson et al. (2014) and Sorenson et al. (2004). The core elements identified in the measure are common to many discussions of mentoring and include an enduring personal relationship, technical assistance for interventions and career success, role modeling, emotional support, and acting as a safe harbor for the mentee. Loosemore (2020) found that mentorship of Christian counselors was instrumental in their satisfaction and activity of Christian integrative practice, suggesting that mentorship is essential to counselor development. However, Loosemore's measure has yet to be validated. Further, the foundational principles of mentorship used to measure mentoring in the Christian sample were drawn from a psychological paradigm. The resulting measure of mentoring may not capture the specific developmental needs of Christian counselors who seek to honor their spiritual worldview in their clinical work. A measure designed from an insider or "emic" Christian perspective is more likely to achieve these ends. The present study sought to develop the first emic mentoring measure specific to the field of Christian counseling.

### **An Emic View of Mentoring for Christians**

Knabb and Wang (2021) suggested that, by pursuing a universal perspective of psychological constructs (in this case, of mentoring), "psychology of religion researchers may fall short in capturing the unique experiences that differentiate the various world religions" (p. 69). These authors argued that emic measure construction will "better define, on a granular level, Christians' unique psychological experiences" (p. 69). Finally, they contended that indigenous psychology that uses sacred texts and religious writing allows a culture's conceptualizations to emerge and inform psychological studies. Here, we note the value of indigenous psychology, or "from-within" construction of knowledge, that

allows pertinent cultural meaning to inform the very construct to be measured (Creswell, 2013). When “from-within” construction occurs, discovery and interpretation rely upon a worldview. Christians believe and rely upon an interpretation of life through a grand narrative, which forms a worldview that includes Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation.

A coherent indigenous or “from-within” understanding of Christian mentoring begins by recognizing that the Bible does not use the terms mentor or mentoring. Instead, the Bible speaks of teachers, friends, comforters, guides, and models (Siberine & Kimball, 2019), who help to exhort, hold accountable, instruct, challenge, encourage, sharpen, invite, and love others toward maturity (for example, Deut. 31:7-8, Prov. 1-9, Ruth 2:17-3:16, John 1, Luke 10:25-37, Gal. 2:11-13, Eph. 6:21, 1 and 2 Tim.). As Wilson (1998) pointed out, attempts to capture biblical ideas of helping Christians develop have utilized a wide variety of descriptors: spiritual friend, spiritual director, faith mentor, facilitator, spiritual mentor, mentor, coach, teacher, and more. Therefore, we returned to the biblical text to discern pertinent elements of person-to-person engagements that bring about personal and professional change and growth. Subsequently, we used the elements to form an operational definition of Christian mentoring, from which we constructed the Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience Scale (CCMES). Defining Christian mentoring in this manner provided a specific and coherent understanding of mentoring in the Christian life (Wakeman, 2012), rather than binding Christian mentoring to psychological or other definitions.

### **A Biblical View of Mentoring**

Our examination of the biblical text yielded consistent themes that highlight the purpose and expression of personal relationships. The Bible is replete with relational examples where development is of prime concern. The term mentor does not appear in Scripture. However, Chua and Lessing (2013) noted the high volume of one-to-one relationships (pairs) that demonstrate a co-laboring and growth orientation, often facilitated by the more mature member. These include Moses and Joshua (Deut. 31), Naomi and Ruth (Ruth 2), Paul and Timothy (2 Tim. 2), Jesus and Zacchaeus (Luke 19), and Paul and

Peter (Gal. 2). Biblical relationships that focus on growth exist beyond pairs (as in many instances of discipleship), but these instances often focus on generalized teaching and growth (e.g., Matt. 16:24), rather than person-tailored change. Our examination found relational pairs as the primary context for tailored interactions that usher in one person’s development. These tailored interactions are of primary concern to our current task and do not diminish the impact of larger relational contexts, which serve purposes other than mentoring. Twelve themes emerged from the biblical text and illuminate paired engagements that generate development (see Table 1). Critically, the biblical themes generally align with Chiroma and Cloete’s definition (above) of mentoring, but extend the construct beyond their etic conceptualization by detailing relational-spiritual dynamics and an interpretive foundation essential to Christian experience.

The relationship between the Apostle Paul and Timothy clearly demonstrates multiple mentoring themes from Table 1. In Paul’s writing, he demonstrates gracious and truthful exhortations toward Timothy (Theme 10), within which a Christ-centered telos is promoted (Theme 12). Paul actively encourages Timothy (Theme 7), uses his own brokenness as an example (Theme 4), and urges collaboration with the Spirit of God (Theme 3).

From the 12 themes, we propose the following operational definition of Christian mentoring that can be applied to specific contexts: Christian mentoring is an affectionate and mutual relationship between a Christian with vocational experience and maturity and a mentee. The mentor serves to provide a lived example of rooting the telos and expression of personal and vocational life in the kingdom of God and relationship with Christ, exhorting the mentee to follow. The mentor helps the mentee toward this telos by demonstrating self-limiting behaviors, such as humility, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and focus on the needs of the mentee. In this process, the mentor draws on personal experience to provide direct instruction, safety, comfort, encouragement, correction, and collaboration.

### **The Current Study**

Drawing on this definition of Christian mentoring, we developed a measure of Christian coun-

**Table 1***Emergent Biblical Themes of Development in Relationships*

Theme	Summary	Support (biblical/scholarly)
1. Incarnational demonstration	Modeling Jesus' character, presence, and care. Embodied and empathic relationship.	John 1:14; Heb. 4:15-16; 2 Tim. Siberine and Kimball (2019)
2. Servanthood	Older/mature is serving the younger/immature, and authority is used for the other's benefit.	Phil. 2:3-4; Mark 10:35-45; Isa. 53; John 13; Rom. 15:1; Gal. 6:10
3. Collaboration with the Spirit	Mentor shows dependence on the Spirit for guidance and growth of mentee. Enacts that Christ's resources are available through the Spirit.	John 14:26; 2 Tim. 1:6-7, 13-14; Eph. 1-3; Rom. 8:16; 1 John 3:1-2 Boa (2001)
4. Admitting and utilizing personal brokenness	Acknowledging weakness, its humbling impact and recognition of Christ's power in these instances. Weakness producing godly character.	Mark 14:38; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 1:26-27; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 14:1-4; 2 Cor. 12:6-10; Matt. 16:23; 2 Tim. 1:9
5. Mutually affectionate relationship	Mutual and emotionally engaged; sustenance and giving of dignity is reciprocal. Context for challenge/care.	1 Sam. 18; John 13; Deut. 31; 2 Tim. 2; John 21
6. Demonstrates transforming insight into action	For example, showing awareness of cultural moments and effective responses. In the moment demonstration and education to the mentee.	Deut. 31; Ruth 2:17-3:16; 2 Kings 2; John 9; Acts 3, 17
7. Teach, encourage, and strengthen	Action taken to teach, encourage, and strengthen the other. Image of "iron sharpening iron." Wisdom imparted with intentionality and deliberation.	Prov. 27:17, 9:9; Ps. 119:130; 2 Tim. 1:6-12; Gal. 2:11-14; 2 Cor.; Heb. 3:13
8. Other's personal relationship with Christ is promoted	Calls to the mentee to know, and live, in relationship with God and persevere in faith.	John 14:23; Heb. 4:15; 1 John 5:3; Rev. 3:20; 2 Tim. 1; 1 Pet.
9. Demonstrates love for Christ	Mentor exposes love of Christ, describes it and its implications. Visibly responds in kind.	Eph. 3:16-19; Phil. 2:4-8; Rom. 5:6-8; John 1:13-25; Luke 7
10. Gracious and truthful exhortation	Admonish, urge, and speak plainly in grace to direct and challenge, hoping to reorient other's actions and motivations of heart.	Heb. 3:13; Tit. 2:15; 2 Tim. 4; Heb. 10:24; Matt. 4:23-24; Luke 5:15 Vine (1996)
11. Focus on personal transformation	Other actions (such as Theme 10) are designed to achieve transformation that blesses mentee and others. Humility held with vision for change.	Phil. 2:3-4; Gal. 5:24-25; Col. 3:1-3; Eph. 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 2:15; Rom. 12
12. Biblical purposes provide interpretive foundation	Christ-centered telos is used by mentor to explain and orient the other in the biblical narrative. Impacts thought and action.	1 Tim. 1:1-3; Matt. 16:22-23 Reading of Bible holistically Wakeman (2012)

selors' mentoring experiences that is sensitive to the relational, spiritual, and technical aspects of Christian counselor development and provided preliminary evidence of psychometric validity. In order to investigate the structure, validity, and possible utility of the final Christian Counselors' Mentoring Experience Scale (CCMES), we collected data from Christian counselors in training.

In order to establish convergent and discriminant validity for the CCMES, we compared it with current measures of mentoring, supervision, and related psychological variables. First, we considered the relational sensitivity of the CCMES. An etic measure of mentoring effectiveness (Mentorship Effectiveness Scale; MES) enabled exploration between an emic and etic measure of mentoring (Berk et al., 2005). We predicted a medium positive correlation due to the convergence of the relational aspects of the mentoring construct, while expecting that the emic spirituality of the CCMES would prevent a strong correlation. Counselor supervision also contains inherent relational qualities. The Brief Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory (BSWAI-T; Sabella et al., 2020) allowed access to the similar relational alliance held within mentoring and supervision; yet, the CCMES also accounts for emic constructs that are dissimilar to the relational alliance. We predicted a medium positive correlation between the CCMES and adapted BSWAI-T. To further establish the relationship sensitivity of the CCMES, we measured students' perceptions of their mentor's excessive self-focus using Hendin and Cheek's (1997) Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HNS). Excessive self-focus would inhibit mentors attending to the relational needs of the student. We predicted a small negative correlation with the CCMES; this would suggest the CCMES is able to discriminate the quality of relational attentiveness within mentoring. Next, we wished to discriminate the CCMES from measures of counselor performance. We predicted a small positive correlation between self-rated counselor competence using the Counselor Competence Scale-Revised (CCS-R; Lambie et al., 2020) and the CCMES. The literature suggests positive mentoring experience should improve counselor competence (e.g., Sorenson et al., 2004), but competence depends upon many other variables.

Supplementing these hypotheses, we placed value on discerning how sensitive the new emic measure is to counselors' actions and expectations. Students' feelings about the risk of disclosure were measured by the risk subscale of Vogel and Wester's (2003) Disclosure Expectations Scale (DES). The propensity one has toward not disclosing due to negative expectations would inhibit the mutuality of a successful mentoring partnership. Therefore, higher felt risk should predict a negative correlation with mentoring experience and subsequently show the CCMES' sensitivity to counselor participation (Siberine & Kimball, 2019; Vogel & Wester, 2003). Next, we measured counselors' ability to relax and be creative in counseling, as measured by Daker et al.'s (2020) Creativity Anxiety Scale (CAS). Due to the afforded safety and support of mentorship, we expected students' anxiety around creative intervention to have a small negative correlation with a positive mentoring experience (CCMES). In addition, we investigated the mentor's willingness to self-disclose using an adapted self-disclosure scale (MSDS; Wanberg et al., 2007) to see if the CCMES is sensitive to mentor actions. We predicted that mentor self-disclosure would positively correlate with mentoring experience due to the relationship strengthening impact of self-disclosure.

Next, we included a short measure of well-being to discern if positive Christian mentoring experiences related to well-being. We predicted a very small positive correlation, given research suggesting mentoring facilitates professional growth (e.g., Hall et al., 2009), while recognizing well-being accounts for much more than growth. We consider a small correlation evidence of discriminant validity. Finally, we included individual items to directly assess convergence between participant experiences/perceptions and the CCMES. They included "To what degree did you have to figure out how to practically integrate your Christianity into your counseling practice by yourself?" (0 = *Completely alone* to 10 = *Completely in supportive relationship*), "How confident do you feel with your approach to counseling as a Christian?" (0 = *No confidence* to 10 = *Highly confident*), and "Would you consider your counseling mentor a good example of a biblical mentor?" (0 = *Not at all* to 10 = *To the utmost*).

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

We used a convenience sample by advertising the study to current final year students within three master's in counseling degree programs. Each program holds an overtly Christian worldview and proposes to help students with the task of Christian integration. Interested students navigated to an online informed consent and subsequent survey that included the study measures, demographic questions, and the two screening questions: "Would you agree that you had at least one mentor in Christian counseling to date? This mentor may be a supervisor, professor, pastor, or other" and "Please confirm that you are a counseling student in your final year/participating in internship." Participants provided an email address if they wished to enter a random drawing of two \$50 Amazon gift cards, and no other identifying information was collected. Institutional review board (IRB) approval was attained and surveys were completed in April 2021 and data were transferred to IBM SPSS for analysis. The sample consisted of 53 participants, 14 aged 18-25 (26%), 17 aged 26-30 (32%), 11 aged 31-35 (21%), and 11 reported being 36+ (21%). Sixteen (30%) participants were male, and 37 (70%) were female. Most participants indicated they were White (47, 89%), while smaller numbers indicated they were African American (2, 4%), multiracial (2, 4%), and Hispanic/Asian (2, 4%). Christian denominations included nondenominational (20, 38%), Presbyterian (13, 25%), Reformed (9, 17%), Baptist (5, 9%), Pentecostal (2, 4%), and other (4, 8%).

### Measures

#### **Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience Scale (CCMES)**

The initial 24 items of the CCMES were designed by applying the operational definition of Christian mentoring to an understanding of counselor development. Two trial items were developed for each of the 12 themes to allow for analysis and selection of the most effective items. Two expert reviewers assisted in feedback and revisions. Reviewers were counselor educators versed in literature on student development, integrative Christian clinical practice, and evangelical theology. Each item is rated by participants on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 =

*Not at all* to 7 = *Always*, with the following prompt: "How much have you experienced each of the following with a mentor in Christian counseling?"

#### **Mentorship Effectiveness Scale (MES)**

The MES is a 12-item measure of a mentee's perception of the mentor's effectiveness (Berk et al., 2005). Berk et al. developed the original scale to consolidate and operationalize a broad literature on mentoring. They applied the scale to nursing and did not use standardized procedures to validate the scale, as each mentee-mentor pair could indicate different professional roles within the measure. Their scale construction was rigorous, included peer-review, and used a Likert scale, resulting in a consistent, useful, and face-valid scale. The specific modifiers were removed for this study, leaving the 12 items. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .93.

#### **Counselor Competencies Scale-Revised (CCS-R)**

The CCS-R is a 23-item measure of counselor competence that is usually scored by a student's professor/supervisor (Lambie et al., 2020). Lambie et al. (2018) confirmed the two factors of skills and dispositions, with Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of .96 for the full scale and interrater reliability of .84. This suggests a robust, consistent, and easy to utilize scale. The decision was made to alter the scale prompt for self-report. Therefore, the validity and reliability of the CCS-R are unknown when used in this manner; yet, the measure serves the purpose of this study to discern the students' experiences and perceptions. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .93.

#### **Brief Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee (BSWAI-T)**

The BSWAI-T is a 5-item measure derived from the widely used SWAI (Sabella et al., 2020) that measures supervisory working alliance. Sabella et al. found the BSWAI-T to have strong internal consistency ( $\alpha > .91$ ) and a two-factor structure that includes client focus and rapport, allowing the measure to capture essential components of supervision. They recommended the BSWAI-T as a valid, reliable, and low burden measure of supervisory working alliance that is useful in studies incorporating multiple constructs. We changed the BSWAI-T prompt to

"Indicate the frequency with which the behavior would/does describe your work with your mentor if they were to/do supervise you." The new prompt allowed an investigation of the correlation between the predicted or actual supervisory experience and mentoring experience. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .86.

#### **Mentor Self-Disclosure Scale (MSDS)**

The MSDS includes 5 items that serve as a self-report of one's mentor's disclosures (Wanberg et al., 2007). Wanberg et al. confirmed a single factor structure, but did not provide consistency or reliability data. As an exploratory measure, the MSDS served the purposes of the present study. The MSDS was carefully reworded to facilitate other-reporting of disclosure without changing core item content. Two independent reviewers subsequently offered alterations and, after revisions, confirmed face validity of the adapted items. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .85.

#### **The Hypersensitivity Narcissism Scale (HSNS)**

The HSNS is a 10-item scale designed to illuminate behaviors that are hypersensitive and self-focused and have the potential to undermine mutuality in relationships (Hendin & Cheek, 1997). Across four samples, Hendin and Cheek found Cronbach's alpha varied between .62 and .76 and correlations with prior measures of narcissism were satisfactory. Originally a self-report measure, we reworded items to allow for other-reporting of mentors' self-focused behaviors and emotions. Again, independent reviewers affirmed item face validity. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .93.

#### **Disclosure Expectations Scale—Risk Subscale (DESR)**

The DES is an 8-item scale designed to measure the clients' anticipated risk and utility of self-disclosure in a counseling relationship (Vogel & Wester, 2003). Vogel and Wester's factor analysis confirmed the two-factor structure of the scale, with Cronbach's alpha of .74 for the Anticipated Risk subscale and .83 for the Anticipated Utility subscale. Support for each subscale was supported through correlational data, and the DES is confirmed as a helpful and concise measure for anticipated risk and utility in counseling, which is proximal to the experience of mentoring. Only the Risk subscale was

used in the present study. Cronbach's alpha for the Risk subscale in the present study was .72.

#### **Creativity Anxiety Scale (CAS)**

The CAS specifically measures anxiety related to the creative process (Daker et al., 2020), which is inherent in the Christians' counseling process (Greggo, 2016). The 16-item CAS includes eight control and eight creativity items and demonstrated strong internal consistency ( $\alpha > .93$  for each subscale) and construct validity (Daker et al., 2020). The control items were not utilized as they are primarily concerned with "anxiety when acting according to instruction," which is not of interest in the present study. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .92.

#### **Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (SWEMWBS)**

The 7-item SWEMWBS improved upon the psychometric vulnerability of the original Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS), with the goal of capturing positive mental health in a brief measure (Stewart-Brown et al., 2009; Tennant et al., 2007). Stewart-Brown et al. (2009) utilized a Rasch Measurement Model to delineate the 7 items, which showed strong internal consistency ( $\alpha = .85$ ) and suggests the SWEMWBS adequately measures psychological and eudaimonic well-being. Cronbach's alpha for the present study was .72.

## **Results**

### **Preliminary Analyses**

The data were cleaned and screened for suitability for exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Despite the relatively small sample size, the data fit the conditions set forth by de Winter et al. (2009), under which EFA is viable as a factor extraction method. The conditions include a low number of factors ( $f$ ), high communalities ( $\lambda$ ), and sufficient variables ( $p$ ). They suggest "A small sample solution ( $N = 17$ ,  $\lambda = .8$ ,  $f = 3$ ,  $p = 24$ ) was markedly robust against single small distortions" and deviations do not automatically disqualify EFA (p. 168). This study had  $N = 53$ ,  $p$  (number of variables) = 24, the number of factors were anticipated to be low, and only five of 24 communalities were below .72, with  $M\lambda = .76$ . Little's MCAR test demonstrated data were missing completely at random ( $\chi^2 [318, p = 1] = 72.8$ ), and missing values were imputed using

the EM algorithm in SPSS. The data showed significant skewness and kurtosis for the CCMES items. Log 10 transformations were conducted, and final absolute skewness and kurtosis values were below absolute 1, meaning item distributions resembled normal, except for Item 18, which remained mildly kurtotic (-1.27). Bartlett's test ( $\chi^2 [276, p > .001] = 1179$ ) suggested there were appropriate correlations between the items and factor analysis is warranted. Multicollinearity was assessed and found acceptable.

**Item Selection**

To determine the number of meaningful factors associated with the 24 items, the authors utilized a parallel analysis and scree plots. These methods allow identification of factors associated with the measure that have eigenvalues occurring beyond what is expected at random (Lim & Jahng, 2019). The primary factor from the dataset (eigenvalue of 12.38) was substantially higher than those generated from a random data set (2.37) and an online parallel analysis estimator (2.5) (Patil et al., 2017). The second factor from the data set (eigenvalue of 2.6) was beyond the second factors from the random data set (2.27) and online estimator (2.2). This analysis suggests a two-factor solution for the dataset. Thus, the authors used an EFA using maximum likelihood extraction on the 24 items and retained the highest loading item from each theme that loaded onto one of

the two extracted factors. This process protected the CCMES against potentially spurious or poorly represented factors. Two themes did not load onto the extracted factors: "Strengthen, encourage and teach" and "Demonstrating love of Christ," resulting in 10 usable items. A final EFA examined the final 10 items, finding loadings from .64 to .94, which are considered "very good" (and above) loadings (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2013, p. 654), and the two factors account for 72% of variance. The goodness-of-fit statistics for this final analysis were  $\chi^2 (26, N = 53) = 53.92, p = .001$ . Five items strongly loaded on the first factor, which centered around enacting a humble, direct, and guiding relationship; the remaining 5 items loaded on the second factor, which centered around integrating Christian faith personally and professionally. The authors named the factors Humble and Direct Relationship and Enacted Christian Life. The factors, corresponding items, loadings, means, and standard deviations can be seen in Table 2 and seven of the eight directional hypotheses were upheld.

**Measure Reliability and Validity**

Cronbach's alpha for the 10 items was .91, for factor 1 was .89, and for factor 2 was .91, suggesting good internal consistency. The 10-item CCMES was correlated with the eight study variables (seen in Table 3) and seven of eight directional hypotheses were upheld.

**Table 2**

*Final Items and Factors From the CCMES Exploratory Factor Analysis*

Item	Loading	M	SD
<b>Factor 1: Humble and Direct Relationship</b>			
Consistently meeting me where I needed them to.	.94	5.38	1.24
Someone who treated me as an equal.	.79	5.96	1.16
Showed their ability to acknowledge limitations or faults.	.76	5.66	1.3
Engagement in a meaningful personal relationship.	.69	5.38	1.24
The provision of direct and honest feedback.	.64	5.96	1.2
<b>Factor 2: Enacted Christian Life</b>			
Help to discern how sin impacts a client's life.	.89	5.02	1.6
Attention to my own development of a Godly character.	.85	5.2	1.39
Support in my personal relationship with God.	.84	5.49	1.38
Instruction on living out my Christian values in counseling.	.78	5.49	1.34
Help to see the full biblical story as the context for counseling.	.73	5.23	1.66

The CCMES was expected to correlate most strongly with the MES (mentoring effectiveness). However, the stronger correlation is between the BSWAI-T (supervisory alliance) and the CCMES. The CCMES and the HSNS negatively correlated as predicted, showing Christian counseling mentoring experience is negatively correlated with mentors that were experienced as hypersensitive and self-focused. These findings align with expectations showing the CCMES is measuring formative relational constructs. Very slight convergence is seen between the SWEMWBS and CCMES and between the CCS-R and CCMES. These limited correlations show that the CCMES measures constructs discriminant from personal or professional well-being and counseling performance. Yet, the slight convergence of these measures is not surprising, given prior assertions that relationship and identity formation, which are key to mentoring, are also pertinent factors in counselor development and well-being (Myers & Sweeney, 2008; Sorenson et al., 2004). The negative correlation between the CAS and CCMES suggests the CCMES is accessing counselors' experiences of safety and the opportunity to develop creativity. Together, these findings suggest the CCMES is sensitive to the quality of mentoring relationships and detects mentoring that creates safe-

ty and confidence. However, an unexpected positive correlation exists between the DESR and the CCMES, showing that a counselor's anticipation of risk with disclosure correlated with better mentoring experiences.

Further positive correlations were noted between the CCMES and the three personal opinion items provided to participants. A small to medium significant correlation existed between the CCMES and confidence with one's approach to counseling as a Christian ( $r = .29$ ,  $p = .03$ , 95% CI [.02 to .52]), and a moderate to strong correlation existed between the assessment that their mentor in Christian counseling was also an example of a biblical mentor ( $r = .65$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.46 to .78]). Correlations between the constructs of biblical mentor and Christian counseling mentor and the benefit of mentoring to counselor confidence support the face validity of the CCMES as an emic measure of Christian counseling mentorship.

Participants also showed a small positive correlation between Christian mentoring experience and having to "figure out how to practically integrate your Christianity into your counseling practice by yourself" ( $r = .22$ ,  $p = .11$ , 95% CI [-.05 to .46]). This may seem contrary to expectations; yet, further investigation found two significant correlations exist between "figuring out

**Table 3**

*Intercorrelations Between Study Variables*

Study variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. SWEMWBS		.04	.2	-.06	-.06	-.24	-.27	-.42**	.18
2. MES			.23	.78**	.48**	-.3*	.01	-.3*	.51**
3. CCS-R				.27	.15	-.15	.02	-.37**	.16
4. BSWAI-T					.4**	-.35**	.1	-.26	.57**
5. MSDS						-.05	-.02	-.1	.36**
6. HSNS							.09	.37**	-.35**
7. DESR								.22	.36**
8. CAS									-.32*
9. CCMES10									

Note: SWEMWBS = Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale; MES = Mentorship Effectiveness Scale; CCS-R = Counselor Competencies Scale-Revised; BSWAI-T = Brief Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory-Trainee; MSDS = Mentor Self-Disclosure Scale; HSNS = Hypersensitivity Narcissism Scale; DESR = Disclosure Expectations Scale-Risk Subscale; CAS = Creativity Anxiety Scale; CCMES10 = Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience Scale. \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

integration by one’s self” and the CCMES items, where mentors focus on the mentee’s “development of a Godly character” ( $r = .35, p < .001$ ) and help the mentee to “see the full biblical story as the context for counseling” ( $r = .29, p = .049$ ). These items expose mentoring experiences that evoke feelings of being responsible and agentic within the complex process of learning to counsel from one’s own worldview.

Finally, a multiple regression discerned the relative contributions of the study variables on participant confidence with their approach to Christian counseling (See Table 4). Two variables significantly predicted Christian counselor mentoring experience, expected disclosure risk (DESR), and mentoring experience (CCMES). This finding suggests the CCMES is distinctly accessing factors related to confidence building in Christian counselors.

**Discussion**

This study proposed and analyzed a measure of Christian counselor mentoring experience. We developed an emic construct of Christian counselor mentoring based on biblical study and prior scholarship. This resulted in 12 themes regarding the relational development of others, which were combined to form an operational definition of Christian mentoring. We then developed 24 items related to Christian counseling mentoring experience that were reduced to 10 items that loaded on the two factors (Humble and Direct Relationship and Enacted Christian Life). Analysis of the final CCMES provides preliminary evidence that it may have practical

utility for Christian counselors, as it appears to uniquely capture aspects of mentoring experience not accounted for by other measures. While further development of the measure is needed, it is our contention that the benefit of the measure is the emic design that maps carefully onto Christians’ lived experiences.

The two-factor solution for the 10-item CCMES held analytically and theoretically, yet requires a confirmatory factor analysis. Such a step is recommended for further study and to clarify the utility of the CCMES. The current exploratory factor analysis found two factors that organized the themes of Christian mentoring presented based on biblical analysis and prior scholarship (e.g., Garzon et al., 2014; Hall et al., 2009; Sorenson et al., 2004). The factors are not novel, but reassert their necessity regarding a specifically Christian experience of mentoring. The emic language of the biblical themes is not complex. Mentoring is a relational and spiritual act that is concerned for the welfare and growth of the mentee. Factor 1 (Humble and Direct Relationship) appears fairly generic, a core developmental experience of attuned relationships. What makes the CCMES distinctly emic to Christianity is attuned relationship within a worldview context (Johnson, 2011) that changes its expression, as seen in the second factor (Enacted Christian Life). The two factors are linked as relational attention attends to uniquely Christian perspectives on life, development, and, subsequently, mentoring.

The construct validity of the two factors and CCMES received support when correlated with

**Table 4**

*Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Counselor Confidence*

Variable	b	SEb	β	t
Mentor Effectiveness (MES)	-.08	.05	-.35	-1.6
Counseling Competence (CCSR)	.03	.02	.17	1.3
Supervisory Alliance (BSWAI-T)	.05	.09	.14	.61
Mentor Disclosure (MSDS)	.02	.05	.06	.43
Disclosure Expectations Risk (DESR)	-.17	.07	-.32	-2.4*
Christian Counselor Mentoring Experience Scale (CCMES)	.06	.03	.36	2.2*

Note. \* $p < .05$ . Overall results:  $F(6, 46) = 2.5, p = .04, R^2 = .25$ .

other measures. As hypothesized, Christian mentoring experience correlated with both supervisory alliance and perceived mentor effectiveness, indicating some convergence, while the CCMES still discriminately attended to other constructs. A small negative correlation between mentoring experience and mentor hypersensitivity and self-focus suggests the CCMES is attending to relational behaviors important to mentoring, but is not overly sensitive to this construct. The CCMES appears to capture the relational aspects of mentoring and other constructs. These findings align with the CCMES' two factor structure.

Analysis also found the CCMES measure is sensitive to mentor actions, such as demonstrations of vulnerability, lending further support to its validity. A mentor's willingness to self-disclose (MSDS) correlated with Christian mentoring experience (CCMES). Again, the limited correlation suggests the CCMES also attends to variables beyond sensitive mentor actions. Next, the discriminant validity of the CCMES is seen through low positive correlations with the measures of counselor's development (CCS-R) and personal well-being (SWEMWBS). Negative or strongly positive correlations would indicate that the CCMES was overly sensitive to well-being and counselor development. Instead, the CCMES attends to them as a small part of an emic construction of mentoring, which aligns with the authors' emic development of the measure. Interestingly, creative anxiety in counseling (CAS) had a significant negative relationship to mentoring experience (CCMES). This evidence bolsters the suggestion that the CCMES is sensitive to developmental advances and felt security associated with mentoring (Beyene et al., 2002) that are required to creatively apply a Christian faith to the counseling context (Greggo, 2016).

The one correlation that countered the authors' hypotheses was the relationship between mentoring experience and the mentee's felt risk (DESR) when sharing personal information with a counselor. The authors expected that participants who were able to develop strong mentoring relationships, where exposing weaknesses and need is normative, would also feel less risk associated with sharing with a counselor. Rejection of this hypothesis may be explained by (a) student counselors' increased emotional

awareness of the anxiety inherent in the counseling process, (b) the known range of client willingness to disclose based on client differences (Kahn et al., 2001), or (c) the idea that trusting may be less of a generalized action and more of something to be uniquely built in every dyad, no matter someone's understanding or propensity to trust (Campbell & Stanton, 2019). It is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions from this correlation and may have been beneficial to directly ask participants "How difficult do you find it to disclose personal information to your mentor?"

The second factor—Enacted Christian Life—requires further discussion. Direct measures of spirituality and relationship with God, such as the Communion with God Scale (CGS; Knabb & Wang, 2021), were not included in the study and would have assisted in establishing the construct validity of the CCMES. Subsequently, we visually examined and discussed the language used in the CGS by Knabb and Wang (2021). There may be significant overlap between the CGS and CCMES in the language used to explore experiences of God. The CGS measures a direct communion with God; similarly, the CCMES appears to measure a mentoring relationship, where the mentor acts "as an example" of God and helps the mentee apply their relationship with God vocationally. We suggest that the CCMES may capture a *relationship with God—vocational* intersect in Christian counselor development. This suggestion warrants further investigation and may help validate the emic construction of the CCMES. Furthermore, the relationship between the CCMES and participants considering their counseling mentor a good example of a biblical mentor suggests the CCMES is sensitive to an emic Christian understanding of development.

The individual study items yield further insight into the functioning of the CCMES. The positive correlation of the CCMES with participants' reported degree of "figuring out how to practically integrate by themselves" suggests the CCMES, as currently constructed, gives little attention to the development of practical Christian interventions as a gauge of good mentoring. The positive correlations between participants "figuring out how to practically integrate by themselves" and mentors emphasizing the mentees' development of a godly character and an awareness of the full biblical story in coun-

selling may be explained as follows. If a mentor exposes a mentee to increased self-awareness, confusion, and potential dissonance between their character development, the biblical story, and the moment-to-moment experience of the counseling room, it follows that the mentee may feel stretched to “figure this out by themselves.” This may appear to limit the utility of the CCMES; however, prior literature on Christian counselor development consistently prioritizes personal development as the bedrock for practical expression (e.g., Greggo, 2016; Loosemore, 2020). Rather, the CCMES focuses on underlying developmental needs and relationships that facilitate growth in practical interventions. This small correlation warrants further investigation and has direct relevance to mentoring, teaching, and supervisory practice.

### Limitations and Future Research

The authors wish to note several limitations and considerations for further research. First, this study utilized a small convenience sample and confirmatory analysis is required to verify the CCMES. We recommend broad replication with larger and diverse samples, especially to address the over representation of female counseling students. Others may apply the CCMES in geographically, racially, and denominationally homogenous or heterogenous contexts to allow for comparison and discussion. Response bias is also of concern among Christian samples who tend to self-enhance (Gebauer et al., 2017), and this may be controlled for in later research. Second, the authors’ analytical work was paired with a limited selection of measures to assess construct validity, and the second factor that centered around enacting a relationship with God requires further investigation. Third, repetition of the current study will help confirm the factor structure, which is susceptible to researcher interpretation, despite the use of previously established criteria for interpretation (de Winter et al., 2009). Fourth, we note that the CCMES is grounded in an exploratory emic analysis of the Bible conducted from a Protestant theological position. The resultant themes, operational definition of Christian mentoring, and application to counseling are open to question and improvement. An investigation of Christian mentoring from Catholic or other Christian traditions may provide further insight and adapta-

tion that allows for a more robust application to counselors from other denominations and traditions. Fifth, the CCMES items lack coherence in verb tense. To increase coherence and utility with a single prompt, revisions are suggested and should be used in further validation of the instrument (see Appendix). Sixth, researchers are encouraged to assess the practical utility of the CCMES and its potential contribution to improved counselor training and client outcomes. The authors welcome academic dialogue in the pursuit of a measure of Christian counseling mentoring experience that is theoretically and psychometrically rigorous.

### Conclusion

We invite educators and clinicians in Christian contexts to use the preliminary CCMES, provided they use caution regarding interpretation. The CCMES offers an emic measure of Christian counseling mentoring experience to support changes in staff-student/mentor-mentee relationships. Mentor and mentee can use each item of the CCMES to prompt self-reflection, discussion, and actions toward co-creating successful mentoring relationships. The two factors offer further detail about the parameters or functions pertinent to address in a relationship. Educators may also find the CCMES and Christian mentoring definition informative as they design courses or programs with student development in mind. The authors invite practical applications of the CCMES that will provide feedback for measure development. Recent literature has avoided the definition of Christian mentoring. We hope that the definition presented can provide a starting point for further scholarly development.

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## Appendix

### Re-Worded CCMES 10-Item Measure

#### Factor 1: Humble and Direct Relationship

Consistently meets me where I need them to.

Treats me as an equal.

Shows their ability to acknowledge limitations and faults.

Engages in a meaningful personal relationship with me.

Provides direct and honest feedback.

#### Factor 2: Enacted Christian Life

Helps me to discern how sin impacts a client's life.

Pays attention to my development of a godly character.

Supports me in my personal relationship with God. Instructs me on living out my Christian values in counseling.

Helps me see the full biblical story as the context for counseling.