Publication and editorial feedback experiences of doctoral students in counselor education: a phenomenological inquiry

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PUBLICATION AND EDITORIAL FEEDBACK EXPERIENCES OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN COUNSELOR EDUCATION: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY

by

Injung Lee

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Rehabilitation and Counselor Education in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

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Thesis Supervisors: Associate Professor David K. Duys
Associate Professor Susannah M. Wood
To my teachers, friends, and family
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ABSTRACT

Preparing doctoral students to be well-rounded researchers who are capable of conducting research and publishing articles in refereed journals is one of the most critical objectives of counselor education programs. Despite this, the lack of scholarly productivity among counseling scholars, including counselor educators and doctoral students, continues to be a problem in the profession. Also, research on doctoral students’ research and publication has been scarce in counseling literature. Moreover, the current literature largely fails to communicate the perspectives of doctoral students, as it reflects only the counselor educators’ perspectives on research training.

This phenomenological study investigated the shared experiences of twelve doctoral students in CACREP-accredited programs, regarding research and publication, including the editorial feedback process. The research question that informed and guided this study was: What are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs during the publication and editorial feedback process? This study specifically aimed to examine doctoral student researchers’ challenges, the support they received, critical incidents that occurred, as well as their meaning-making of those experiences during the entire process of research and publication.

Data collection included two rounds of semi-structured interviews, two online focus groups, and written responses to two open-ended questions. Data analysis followed the procedures of phenomenological data reduction, including open-coding and horizontalization. Through individual case summaries and the seven themes that were derived from the twelve participants’ stories, this study illustrated how doctoral students made meaning of their experience with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process. The findings that
emerged included the research climate/culture of both the counselor education profession and counselor education programs, as well as the support and resources that doctoral students received or needed. The findings also indicated doctoral students’ motivations to conduct research, and their learning experiences that contributed to their development as independent researchers. Finally, the meaning making of being a doctoral student researcher was described. Based upon these research findings, implications were provided for doctoral students, counselor educators, counselor education programs, journal editorial boards, and future research.

*Keywords:* Doctoral students, research, publication, editorial feedback, counselor education
Conducting research and disseminating the findings of that research are highly valued by those within the counseling profession. These scholarly competencies are considered essential steps for individual success, as well as the advancement of the profession at large. However, doctoral students in counselor education programs are exposed to a learning environment that requires them to juggle various responsibilities, including counseling, supervising, teaching, researching, and maintaining a host of leadership roles and service activities. Due to the unique characteristics of the profession of counselor education, doctoral students often do not engage in research and publication when compared to those of other academic disciplines.

Given the importance of scholarly commitment in the field of counselor education, as well as the struggles that doctoral students often face with regard to research and publication, providing adequate training to these students is critical. However, counseling literature largely lacks research on research training for doctoral students. Moreover, there is no research that specifically focuses on doctoral students’ publication and editorial feedback.

This study examined the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs, specifically with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process. Through two rounds of semi-structured interviews, two online focus groups, and written responses to open-ended questions, participating doctoral students shared the challenges and successes that they experienced during this process. The findings revealed counseling doctoral students’ unique journeys to become independent researchers who are well-rounded members of the academic community. Being proactive in building their own learning experience, doctoral students learned the culture and language of the publication and editorial process, becoming more proficient as future researchers and counselor educators.
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Conducting research and disseminating the findings of that research are the professional responsibilities of all counseling professionals (Lambie, Sias, Davis, Lawson, & Akos, 2008). ACA Code of Ethics (2014) states that “counselors who conduct research are encouraged to contribute to the knowledge base of the profession and promote a clearer understanding of the conditions that lead to a healthy and more just society” (p. 15). When counseling practitioners and counselor educators conduct and disseminate research, the counseling profession progresses (Kaplan & Gladding, 2011). Traditionally, publication in a peer-reviewed journal is often considered the most highly valued qualification for counselor educators, as well as doctoral students seeking tenure-track faculty positions (Barrio Minton, Fernando, & Ray, 2008; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Magnuson, Norem, & Lonneman-Doroff, 2009). As future leaders of this profession, doctoral students in counselor education programs are encouraged to develop research skills and publish articles in refereed counseling journals (American Counseling Association [ACA], 2014; Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2015). CACREP 2016 standards Section 6. B. 4. specify that a competent doctoral student “demonstrates professional writing skills necessary for journal and newsletter publication” (CACREP, 2015, p. 57). Therefore, it is critical that counselor educators in doctoral programs promote the development of competent new researchers (Cannon, 2017; Welfare & Sackett, 2011). Although research training is mostly highlighted in doctoral programs, learning about research, and learning how to evaluate that research, occurs as early as the master’s preparation.
**Master’s Level Preparation**

Master’s-level training programs provide their students with initial exposure to research. However, they often focus more on developing students’ skills as practitioners rather than as researchers (Borders, Wester, Fickling, & Adamson, 2014). Therefore, master’s students were often expected to become ‘consumers’ of research, benefiting from reading and understanding its findings (Granello & Hazler, 1998). Granello and Granello (1998) argued that “students must become active consumers of the outcome research in counseling throughout their graduate training” (p. 232). Through an application of what they learned from the latest research, assessment of the effectiveness of interventions and being accountable were two major themes emphasized throughout the master’s level curriculum, and literature has suggested the ways that these themes can be infused into specific courses (e.g., Anderson & Heppner, 1986; Granello & Granello, 1998; Sexton & Whiston, 1996).

CACREP Standards Section 2. F. 8. specified Research and Program Evaluation as one of the eight common core areas that are essential for curriculums of accredited programs, required of both entry-level and doctoral-level students (CACREP, 2015). However, there is no detailed description of what is expected specifically from master’s level students in terms of research. American School Counselor Association (ASCA) National Model (2012) also did not explicitly emphasize research training of master’s students, though it highlighted the use of data in intervention planning and documentation of counseling outcomes for accountability.

Moreover, in many CACREP-accredited master’s programs, writing a thesis is not a graduation requirement. Carney, Cobia, and Shannon (1998) examined the final evaluation methods of 128 CACREP-accredited master’s programs and found that only 19.5% of the programs that participated in their study adopted a thesis or research project for their master’s-level final evaluation method. Being consistent with the lack of master’s thesis in the majority of
counseling programs, there is little empirical evidence on master’s level theses and publication of those theses in counselor education literature (i.e. ACA division journals). Furthermore, master’s-level publication is not visible in the current counseling literature, although there exist master’s students who collaborate with faculty members to conduct research and publish articles.

Counseling Practitioners’ Engagement with Research

Although little is known about master’s students research engagement while they are in master’s programs, research has suggested the evidence of how these students go on to consume and produce research as practitioners after graduation. Bauman et al. (2002) reported that approximately 78% of school counselors in their study read more than one article for their practices. Moreover, counseling practitioners have engaged in research in order to resolve practical issues in local settings (Creswell, 2013). This practitioner-based research is often called action research (Huber & Savage, 2009), providing a bridge between practice and research (Rowell, 2005).

Falco, Bauman, Sumnicht, and Engelstad (2011) found that 19% of the articles published in Professional School Counseling (PSC) journal had first authors who were working at public/private school, private practice, or others. Although the percentage was relatively small compared to the percentage of authors affiliated with a university, the practitioner-authors wrote practical/conceptual articles (i.e. action research) (57.1%) and research articles (i.e. empirical research) (25.2%). As ASCA National Model emphasized research and outcome-based practice as an essential part of school counseling practice, school counselors have valued data-driven practices and action research (Hatch & Chen-Hayes, 2008; Young & Kaffenberger, 2011). However, counselors with other specialty areas (e.g., mental health, rehabilitation counseling) were relatively less engaged in research compared to school counselors. Journal of Mental
Health Counseling (JMHC) had approximately 14% of non-university-affiliated first authors (Crockett, Byrd, & Erford, 2012), and Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin (RCB) had an even lower percentage of first authors (6-9%) working in nonacademic settings (Lenz, Darnell, Fitzgerald, & Brownlee, 2014). Research suggested that more practitioners need to engage in action, applied, and outcome research by collaborating with counselor educators to address issues unique to their settings (Erford, Giguere, & Ciarlone, 2015; Falco et al., 2011; Huber & Savage, 2009).

Doctoral Level Preparation

While master’s level research training often focuses on understanding research in order to apply it to one’s practice, doctoral level research training focuses more heavily on students’ ability to produce research. More specifically, every step of the research process is underscored in doctoral programs, such as writing a literature review, constructing research questions, and drafting a manuscript for publication (Borders et al., 2014). The 2016 CACREP Standards Section 6.B.4. provides details on the content required for doctoral research training, including diverse research designs and data analysis methods, as well as scholarly writing for publication, conference proposals, and grant proposals (CACREP, 2015). However, the specific details with regard to research training offered by CACREP-accredited doctoral programs are inconsistent, despite the training guidelines suggested by the 2016 CACREP Standards (Borders et al., 2014; Okech, Astramovich, Johnson, Hoskins, & Rubel, 2006; Goodrich, Shin, & Smith, 2011).

Borders et al. (2014) examined research training practices in CACREP-accredited doctoral programs. In many programs, only basic statistical analyses were required (e.g., t-tests through regression) for quantitative research designs, while more complex analysis methods (e.g., multivariate) or longitudinal designs were less frequently covered. Similarly, for qualitative
designs, traditional approaches (e.g., grounded-theory, phenomenology) were taught more frequently compared to newer approaches (e.g., consensual qualitative research [CQR]). Limited attention was given to measurement and psychometric topics. Research process topics were often covered by extracurricular activities, including research teams and apprenticeships, though these were not required for all doctoral students. Writing grant proposals was also a topic that many programs covered less frequently. Programs with limited required research courses prohibited doctoral students from developing the ability to conduct sound counseling research (CACREP, 2015), resulting in flaws and limitations found in current published research (Wester, Borders, Boul, & Horton, 2013).

Despite the importance that counselor education programs place on research and publication, many doctoral students are not actively involved in the research and publication process (Borders et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Zimpfer, 1993). Zimpfer (1993) reported, for instance, that only 26% of counselor education doctoral graduates had published articles within a year and a half of their graduation. Similarly, in the study conducted by Lambie and Vaccaro (2011), only 30.3% of the counselor education doctoral students reported having a scholarly publication during their doctoral training. According to Borders et al. (2014), approximately 43% of doctoral programs do not provide their students with official opportunities to involve themselves in research until the students begin either their 3rd year or their dissertation process. With this evidence, it is clear that facilitating doctoral students’ development as productive researchers remains a problem in counselor education.

Hands-on and low-challenge research experience early in one’s doctoral program is critical for a constructive research training environment (Borders et al., 2014; Gelso, 2006; Okech et al., 2006). Some doctoral students engage in collaborative research with faculty as part
of their graduate assistantship, an extension of a class project, or an extracurricular opportunity (Welfare & Sackett, 2011). However, many counselor education training programs failed to provide those opportunities (Borders et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Paradise & Dufrene, 2010). Goodrich et al. (2011) reported that 62.5% of doctoral programs that they examined did not have any formalized research teams in their department. Similarly, Borders et al. (2014) reported that while half of the programs provide students with a structured research experience during their first year, one third of the students’ research opportunities for research involvement was “serendipitous” (p. 157). These research opportunities depended on the students’ initiative and/or whether their faculty advisor was involved in the research process. The lack of applied experiences creates a disconnect between doctoral students’ professional development and their ability to turn the experiences into scholarly inquiry (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018).

**Doctoral Students’ Dissertation**

The most consistent requirement across doctoral counseling programs is the dissertation, which is the culminating experience of doctoral students’ training (Borders, Wester, Fickling, & Adamson, 2015). Previous inquiries on doctoral students’ research mostly focused on doctoral dissertations (Borders et al., 2015; Flynn, Chasek, Harper, Murphy, & Jorgensen, 2012; Richards, Dykeman, & Bender, 2018). According to Richards et al. (2018), the most frequently covered dissertation topics in counselor education included a) counselor education (20.6%), b) school counseling (14.4%), or c) multiculturalism/diversity/multicultural counseling (13.8%). Quantitative research designs were more frequently used than qualitative designs (Borders et al., 2015; Richards et al., 2018). Particularly, the vast majority of dissertations adopted correlational/cross-sectional design (Richards et al., 2018). Moreover, most counselor educators in the study of Borders et al. (2015) expressed concerns about the rigor of their students’
dissertations, and often encouraged their students to gain more research experience before beginning their dissertations.

Flynn et al. (2012) explored the dissertation experiences of counseling doctoral graduates using consensual qualitative research. They examined the overall dissertation process for counselor education students, sources of support, students’ needs, and how interpersonal factors related to the dissertation process. The main themes were identified as: environmental impact, competing influences, personality traits, chair and committee influences, and barriers. Flynn et al.’s study suggested counselor educators to explore personal and environmental factors that might affect their students’ dissertation process, either motivating or preventing, in order to help them cope with potential crises that might arise while completing their dissertations. Furthermore, positive and supportive relationships between the chair and student, as well as increased chair and committee involvement, facilitated the students’ completion of their dissertations.

**Doctoral Students’ Publication**

According to Jalongo, Boyer, and Ebbeck (2014), publishing articles is a form of tacit knowledge that cannot be acquired through direct instruction. The authors argued that both informal mentoring experiences, as well as students’ personal endeavors, are required for publication. Kamler (2008) also emphasized that doctoral students’ publications are possible when “serious institutional attention” is given, and “skilled support from knowledgeable supervisors” is presented (p. 284). Nevertheless, counseling literature has paid limited attention to doctoral publications. Although several studies covered the topic of doctoral students’ research in the field of counselor education (e.g., Kuo, Woo, & Bang, 2017; Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011), they often only examined those factors that
contribute to research-related variables (e.g., research productivity, research identity, research self-efficacy), rather than directly focusing on doctoral students’ ‘publication experiences.’

There are several articles that investigate doctoral students’ publication experiences across academic disciplines in social sciences (e.g., Jalongo et al., 2014; Song, 2014). These studies had meaningful implications for training doctoral students to become scholars, reflecting as they did the students’ voices. However, Jalongo et al. (2014) mainly examined doctoral students’ perceptions of successful publications instead of their lived experiences regarding the publication process. Song (2014) only focused on non-native English-speaking doctoral students’ publication experiences in the United States, highlighting their unique concerns such as the power differentials and varying academic expectations from their home countries. In summary, across disciplines, there is a lack of research that thoroughly detailed the shared experiences of doctoral student researchers.

Considering the important role of scholarly publication in counselor education and emerging scholars’ training needs, a more holistic understanding of doctoral students’ research and publication experiences is needed in the counselor education literature. Understanding how student writers develop, and how their academic growth can be facilitated, is imperative, as it helps counselor educators effectively prepare doctoral students sustain a successful research career (Lamar & Helm, 2017). Therefore, the current study will examine what doctoral student researchers experienced while developing their manuscripts, submitting them for publication, and accommodating editorial feedback.

**The Role of Feedback**

*Feedback in Doctoral Programs.* Feedback in advanced academic training is imperative, as it allows students to engage in critical thinking and writing, and invites them to undergo a
process of discovery through revision (Kumar & Stracke, 2007). Through feedback, students can understand what is expected of professional writing in academia (Singh, 2016). Given that the majority of work in counselor education preparation programs is written, including papers which could lead to publication, one would expect that the literature is replete with information about how faculty give feedback on students’ academic writing, as well as how students react to that feedback. However, little is known about what feedback students receive in programs (e.g., class assignments, dissertations), nor on how students react to this feedback. Especially in the counseling profession, research on feedback mostly focused on that which is provided in clinical supervision (e.g., Avent, Wahesh, Purgason, Borders, & Mobley, 2015; Motley, Reese, & Campos, 2014).

Nevertheless, understanding students’ perceptions of and attitudes toward feedback is important because they are closely associated with the students’ development as professional writers. Kumar and Stracke (2007) found that the doctoral students who had positive attitudes toward negative feedback had substantial revisions in their subsequent draft, which allowed them to examine it from a fresh perspective, ultimately improving their writing. Moreover, Can and Walker (2011) noted that doctoral students who lost confidence and motivation after receiving critical feedback were likely to refrain from asking for further feedback, which risked stunting their writing competency.

**Feedback in the Publication Process.** Most submitted manuscripts have to navigate and respond to editorial feedback before being accepted for publication, as manuscripts are rarely accepted outright after the initial submission without any revision (McGowan & Scholl, 2004). In a peer-review system, which is often double-blinded, manuscripts are reviewed by two editorial board members after an initial screening process (Milsom, 2009). Once both editorial
board reviews are completed, the manuscripts are sent to the editor for final decisions and the author(s) receive editorial decision letters that include specific comments provided by the editor and the reviewers (Milsom, 2009). Given the strong association between students’ attitudes toward feedback received during academic training and their motivation to improve their writings, how doctoral student researchers react to feedback from a journal review board might be critical both to their success in publication (i.e. manuscripts being accepted) and their development as competent authors.

Mercer (2013) examined the responses of six female researchers who received rejections early in their career while working in the Education department of an English university. In this study, most participants were not aware of how common rejections are in the publication process. Moreover, they complained about the inconsistent editorial feedback across reviewers. Considering the frustrations and challenges experienced by the young faculty members in this study, it stands to reason that doctoral student researchers might experience even more challenges responding to and accommodating editorial feedback.

Little is known about what doctoral student researchers experience with regard to the editorial feedback process. Since the ability to effectively respond to editorial feedback is required for students to develop as competent researchers, a more comprehensive examination of doctoral students’ publication experiences—including that of the editorial feedback process—is needed. This study will explore the challenges, coping strategies, critical incidents, opportunities, and received support doctoral students experienced on their journey to become independent researchers. This will provide a better context from which to examine the inherent processes that influence how likely students are to becoming independent researchers who will help guide the counselor education profession into the future.
Statement of the Problem

Encouraging doctoral students to conduct research and publish articles in refereed journals is one of the main goals of counselor education programs. Despite this, there has been little focus on doctoral students’ research and publication in the current literature. Moreover, doctoral students’ lack of research engagement has been a prevalent issue for the counseling profession (Bishop & Bieschke, 1998; Reisetter et al., 2004). Although researchers have dedicated time to examining the current research training practices and identifying factors that contribute to doctoral students’ research competence, they have nonetheless largely failed to communicate the perspectives of doctoral students. A clearer understanding of the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers is needed in order to identify and respond to the unique concerns that these students might have with regard to research and publication. As such, this inquiry will investigate the shared experiences of counselor education doctoral students concerning the publication process. Their challenges, support received, critical incidents, as well as their meaning-making of those experiences during the entire process of publication, will be explored, from the development of their manuscripts to responding to editorial feedback. Since little is known about the publication experiences of counseling doctoral students, the qualitative research method was considered most appropriate (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 1990). Among the various methodological frameworks available, the phenomenological approach will be adopted because this study will aim to understand and describe the “nature and significance” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 39) of doctoral student researchers in counselor education.

Research Question

The research question of this study is “what are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs with the publication and editorial feedback process?”
Significance of Research

There exists little inquiry into the lived experiences of counseling doctoral students, specifically with regard to research and publication. Although previous studies have examined the contributing factors to doctoral students’ research productivity, researcher identity, and research self-efficacy, they did not attend to what student researchers actually experience during their research process specifically with regard to feedback. Literature pertaining to the scholarly publication of doctoral students is even harder to find in counselor education, while other academic disciplines in social science have highlighted doctoral publications through continued inquiries. This study will attempt to address the gap in the current literature by illustrating doctoral students’ lived experiences and meaning-making of their publication process, including the role of feedback in that process. The findings from this study may help counselor educators and training programs provide better learning environments for students who aim to engage in scholarly publication. Moreover, it is hoped that the results of this study may aid the research and publication process of future doctoral students, providing strategies for coping with in-program and editorial feedback on their research and writing.

Definitions of Key Terms

To ensure consistency, the theoretical and operational definitions of the following terms are outlined below:

Scholarly Publications

*Scholarly publications,* in this study, will refer to *journal articles,* which are usually reports of “empirical studies, literature reviews, theoretical articles, methodological articles, or case studies” (American Psychological Association [APA], 2010, p. 9). More specifically, scholars agree that the scholarly publications should be a) original articles not previously
published, b) reviewed by colleagues in academia before being accepted or rejected by a journal, and c) retrievable for future reference (APA, 2010).

**Publication Process**

*Publication process,* in this study, will encompass a broad range of activities pertaining to publishing articles in refereed journals. It includes preparing manuscripts for submission, submitting the manuscript to a relevant outlet, as well as navigating and responding to editorial feedback after the review board makes a decision on the manuscript (e.g., reject, major revision, minor revision, accept).

**Peer Review**

*Peer-review,* in this study, will be defined as a double-blinded (i.e. authors and reviewers are not identifiable to each other) manuscript review process commonly used in refereed journals. In a peer-review system, submitted manuscripts are sent to two reviewers after an initial screening process (Milsom, 2009). Once the assigned reviewers complete reviewing, the journal editor makes a final decision on the manuscript incorporating the reviewers’ feedback. Then, the author(s) receive an editorial decision letter with specific comments provided by the editor and the reviewers (Milsom, 2009).

**Doctoral Student Researchers**

*Doctoral student researchers,* in this study, will be characterized as individuals who are currently enrolled in counselor education doctoral programs (i.e. CACREP-accredited programs), having a professional identity as a researcher. Both individuals with previous research/publication experiences as doctoral students and individuals who are currently involved in research/publication process will be considered as doctoral student researchers.
Programmatic Feedback

Programmatic feedback, in this study, will be defined as any comments, edits, or marks that students receive on their academic writing (e.g., class assignments, research proposal, manuscripts, thesis/dissertation), provided by class instructors, academic advisors, or thesis supervisors. As in Can’s study (2009), programmatic feedback will include both formative and summative evaluations.

Editorial Feedback

Editorial feedback, in this study, will be defined as comments, edits, or marks that submitted manuscripts receive by journal editors and/or editorial review boards. Editorial feedback will include both in-text feedback (comments written in the text, mostly in the margin, of the draft) and letter-like feedback (more general feedback on the entire manuscript, summarizing main concerns of reviewers and/or the editor) (Kumar & Stracke, 2007, p. 463).
CHAPTER II.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter II will provide relevant literature to support the foundation of this study. The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore the lived experiences of counselor education doctoral students with regard to publication and editorial feedback. Literature relevant across academic disciplines in social sciences, not limited to counseling literature, was reviewed to provide a clear rationale to investigate the experiences of doctoral student researchers. This chapter includes four major sections and several subsections. The four main sections of this literature review are as follows: a) doctoral students in counselor education, b) research and publication in counselor education, c) research training in CACREP-accredited programs, and d) scholarly publication in refereed journals.

Doctoral Students in Counselor Education

The doctorate in counselor education serves to prepare individuals for teaching, research, and service to advocate for the counseling profession (Sears & Davis, 2003). The pursuit of a doctoral degree in counselor education and supervision is a commitment that requires years of persistent dedication, and often necessitates students’ personal and professional sacrifices (Hinkle, Iarussi, Schermer, & Yensel, 2014). Nevertheless, counselor education has placed little emphasis on doctoral students’ experience, despite its importance to the field of counseling (Goodrich et al., 2011). Considering the importance of those students in the counseling profession, illuminating their experience during their doctoral programs is significant and beneficial to counselor educators, counselors and the entire counseling profession (Hughes & Kleist, 2005).
Doctoral Students’ Lived Experiences

Hughes and Kleist (2005) explored the lived experiences of first-semester doctoral students in counselor education, specifically focusing on the students’ thoughts and feelings with regard to beginning doctoral study. Using a grounded-theory approach, the authors aimed to develop an initial theory of these students’ experiences. Counselor education doctoral students went through three common stages of *vicissitudes, integration,* and *confirmation.* First, as they began their doctoral studies, the students felt strong anxiety derived from uncertainty. Especially, a variety of experiences made them very introspective about themselves, which often led to feelings of self-doubt and uncertainty. They coped with this turbulence of thoughts and emotions by using belief in self. Second, the students attempted to integrate themselves into the doctoral program, navigating program expectations. They learned about the meaning of being a doctoral student through communicating with senior students and faculty members. Finally, the students obtained confirmation of themselves by the end of the first semester. They felt confident in their abilities and qualifications by experiencing multiple responsibilities as a doctoral student as well as receiving direct and indirect feedback from faculty members and peers. They became “more comfortable with becoming the doctoral student” (Hughes & Kleist, 2005, p. 104). This research has significance as it provided an initial understanding of counselor education doctoral students’ experiences. However, this study had a relatively small sample size ($n = 4$) and only focused on students’ early experiences in their programs. The authors called for further investigation of doctoral students’ experiences during the entire process of doctoral education.

Protivnak and Foss (2009) provided a more extensive understanding of doctoral students’ experiences in counselor education. Based on a large-scale qualitative sample ($n = 141$), this study aimed to understand the lived experiences of diverse groups of doctoral students. The research questions specifically focused on the themes influencing the students’ experiences:
departmental culture, mentoring, academics, support systems, and personal issues. Some students had positive experiences with regard to the aforementioned five domains. However, other students struggled with and were frustrated by unfavorable learning environments, such as competitive and political departmental culture as well as lack of mentoring and support from faculty. Compromised interpersonal relationships (e.g., family, friends) and concerns in personal life (e.g., poor time management, financial/health problems) also negatively affected doctoral students’ experiences. One participant stated, “Learning to self-advocate was necessary in order to survive” in the doctoral program (Protivnak & Foss, 2009, p. 246). Protivnak and Foss’s study made students’ voices heard to help counselor educators better understand their students’ lives, especially what makes their experiences better or worse. Nevertheless, this study also had a limitation because it did not describe the students’ lives in detail, solely relying on the students’ survey responses to open-ended questions.

Later research focused more on examining doctoral students’ experiences with regard to specific concerns (e.g., multiple roles and relationships, attrition). Dickens, Ebrahim, and Herlihy (2016) examined counselor education doctoral students’ experiences related to multiple roles and relationships. In an interpretive phenomenological framework, the authors specifically focused on challenges experienced by ten doctoral students in terms of roles and relationships. The findings indicated that most students severely struggled with their multiple roles and relationships, often feeling overwhelmed by demanding responsibilities. Not having clear instruction regarding those responsibilities also made it difficult for them to navigate. The students needed more information and education in order to cope with the crisis and use their challenges as developmental opportunities. However, the presence of power differentials in multiple relationships often created both intra- and inter-personal conflicts, making their
experiences within their doctoral programs even more challenging. This study provided
counselor educators with insight into unique challenges that doctoral students in counselor
education programs experience, in order to facilitate their successful development as
professionals.

Willis and Carmichael (2011) also focused on counselor education doctoral students’
challenges through an examination of the students who withdrew during the late stage of a
doctoral program. The authors explored the students’ negative experiences that might have led to
their attrition. Except for one participant, who left the program with his/her own will, the
majority of the students dropped out, experiencing a combination of emotional and institutional
barriers. Problematic chair relationships emerged as an important barrier that ultimately led them
to drop out.

Recent studies have also focused on the experiences of under-represented subgroups in
counselor education, including racial minority students (e.g., Baker & Moore, 2015; Henfield,
Owens, & Witherspoon, 2011; Henfield, Woo, & Washington, 2013), international students (e.g.,
Jang, Woo, & Henfield, 2014; Park, Lee, & Wood, 2017; Woo, Jang, & Henfield, 2015), and
students with children (e.g., Holm, Prosek, & Godwin Weisberger, 2015; Pierce & Herlihy,
2013). These studies showed how those students experience additional challenges with regard to
their unique status or situation, in addition to the challenges that counselor education doctoral
students share. Considering the importance of doctoral students as potential leaders of the
profession, research should continue to examine these students’ lived experiences, in order to
better meet their unique developmental needs.
Doctoral Students’ Professional Development

Aforementioned studies that examined doctoral students’ experiences found that these students not only experience a constellation of challenges, but also a transformation process leading to their development as professionals. Researchers have suggested stage models of counselors’ development (Littrell, Lee-Borden, Lorenz, 1979; Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Skovholt & Rønnestad, 1992; Stoltenberg & McNeill, 2010). Skovholt and Rønnestad (1992), who examined counselor development in a broader scope, noted that counselors’ development continues throughout the lifespan. Their qualitative study described eight stages: a) conventional, b) transition to professional training, c) imitation of experts, d) conditional autonomy, e) exploration, f) integration, g) individualization, and h) integrity. They suggested that counselors rely more on internal authority rather than external authority as they professionally evolve and the development occurs through an interaction with diverse environments over a long period.

Stoltenberg’s (1981) specifically focused on counselors’ development during supervision, proposing that qualitative differences exist rather than quantitative differences in skills and knowledge among each developmental level. This model described four developmental levels; each level explained counselor characteristics and optimal supervision environments. His model has continued to develop over time. Stoltenberg and Delworth (1987) were inspired by Stoltenberg’s previous work and continued to develop and eventually consolidated into Integrated Developmental Model (IDM) with Stoltenberg, McNeill, and Delworth (1998). The model first described three levels but was revised as a four-level model by Stoltenberg and McNeill (2010). The IDM, which is one of the most researched models in supervision, has level 1, level 2, level 3 and level 3i, which is a final integrative level; however, the levels are domain
specific (Stoltenberg & McNeill, 2010). This developmental model suggested that, as counselors develop, they have higher levels of motivation, autonomy and awareness.

**Researcher Identity Development**

Researchers have aimed to provide a structured understanding of not only how counseling students develop, but also how they see themselves in terms of professional development. Professional identity involves “understanding one’s roles and responsibilities as a counseling professional, the sense of satisfaction and pride in the profession, and presenting the profession” (Woo, 2013, p. 16). Counselors’ professional identity is complicated and develops based on a variety of developmental tasks; these tasks involve interpersonal and intrapersonal interactions (Auxier, Hughes, & Kline, 2003). More specifically, it is influenced by personal characteristics, professional training, and the expectations of the professional community (i.e. behaviors, thoughts, actions, and beliefs) (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015b). A strong professional identity is important, as it is often associated with an increased knowledge of ethical practices, as well as a personal awareness of the counseling professionals’ distinguished role in the community (Ponton & Duba, 2009). Limberg et al. (2013) stated that counselor educators’ professional identity mostly develops while they are studying in doctoral programs.

Gibson, Dollarhide, and Moss (2010) stated that how an individual behaves, acts, and thinks as a professional counselor is significantly influenced by his or her professional identity. Thus, it is assumed that an individual’s researcher identity will have a significant impact on his or her thoughts and behaviors as a researcher. Researcher identity is defined as “an individual’s self-concept as a researcher and includes the process of understanding experiences, increasing awareness, and incorporating both into the sense of self” (Lamar & Helm, 2017, p. 4). It also involves “strong implications for which topics and methods will be important to the researcher”
As evidence-based practice has become an important focus of the counseling profession, researcher identity has emerged as one critical component of counseling students’ professional development (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015b; Reisetter et al., 2004). Lamar and Helm (2017) argued that a strong researcher identity facilitates students’ commitment to research, which ultimately advances the profession by emphasizing the rigor of research. They also noted that research skill development did not automatically translate to the development of researcher identity, although previous research (e.g., Wester & Borders, 2014) and CACREP 2016 Standards mostly highlight only the research skills needed by doctoral students.

The current literature on researcher identity development primarily focuses on doctoral students (e.g., Lamar & Helm, 2017; Lambie, Hayes, Griffith, Limberg, & Mullen, 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). However, researcher identity development of master’s students is also important, since master’s training serves as a foundation of future doctoral training (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a). Therefore, Jorgensen and Duncan (2015a) investigated the researcher identity of master’s level counseling students and practitioners. Based on their previous phenomenological inquiry (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015b), this study proposed an emergent theory of master’s level counselors’ researcher identity. The theory of the researcher identity model suggested that interactions among causal conditions (e.g., professional identity development), intervening conditions (e.g., external facilitators, internal facilitators, faculty, beliefs about research), and contextual conditions (e.g., undergraduate major, area of specialization) triggered counselors’ researcher identity development, which leads to changes in their conceptualization of research and professional identity. Their different attitudes toward research resulted in research behaviors, such as “reading journal articles, being a part of
Lamar and Helm (2017) examined, through a phenomenological inquiry, counselor education doctoral students’ experiences of researcher identity development. Seven themes were derived from eight doctoral students’ experiences: a) developing confidence as a researcher, b) owning researcher identity, c) developing a researcher voice, d) juggling the researcher identity with other identities, e) journeying as a researcher, f) learning opportunities, and g) supporting researcher identity development. The students struggled with internalizing their researcher identity and sometimes searched for a balance between different identities, both professional and personal. They viewed researcher identity development as a lifelong process. Learning opportunities and supporting researcher identity development emerged as two factors that contributed to the doctoral students’ researcher identity development. Learning opportunities included research classes, participation in research projects, research-related discussions, and independent learning opportunities. Hands-on learning opportunities were preferred. Faculty members’ encouragement, reassurance, assistance, and nurturance were identified as main sources of support that the doctoral students experienced.

Studies that assessed the researcher identities of doctoral students are more prevalent than those assessing the researcher identities of master’s students (e.g., Lambie et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Reisetter et al., 2004). Lambie and Vaccaro (2011) found that 3rd-year doctoral students, compared to 1st- and 2nd-year students, had higher research self-efficacy associated with higher interest in research and more publication experience. Similarly, Lambie et al. (2014) identified positive relationships between research self-efficacy, interest in research, and research knowledge. The findings from these studies suggested that counselor educators need to create a
positive research climate for their students, providing research-specific mentoring and appropriate research opportunities. Reisetter et al. (2004) reported that an introductory course in qualitative methods contributed to doctoral students’ researcher identity development. The students felt competent as researchers while studying qualitative research methods, which they perceived as more approachable compared to quantitative methods. This finding is aligned with the findings from the previous studies, where students’ research self-efficacy was closely related to interest in research as well as research engagement.

Doctoral students in counselor education programs experience challenges unique to their training and roles. Considering the importance of these students as future leaders of the counseling profession, it is critical for counselor educators to help them cope with their challenges, ultimately facilitating their professional development. Numerous developmental models described how counselors-in-training evolve into professionals; however, little is known about doctoral students’ development as researchers. Although previous studies examined what factors facilitate students’ researcher identity development, literature on counselor education doctoral students’ research experiences is limited.

**Research and Publication in Counselor Education**

Lambie et al. (2008) stated that the “dissemination of research findings and sharing clinical perspectives are foundational to counselor education and in enhancing the profession of counseling” (p. 18). Therefore, publication in peer-reviewed journals is often considered the most highly valued objective for counselor educators (Barrio Minton et al., 2008; Ramsey, Cavallaro, Kiselica, & Zila, 2002). Accordingly, doctoral students in counselor education programs aspiring to attain tenure-track faculty positions are strongly encouraged to publish articles in referred journals (Lambie et al., 2013; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Magnuson et al.,
2009). They are expected to demonstrate strong research skills as future counselor educators in order to be marketable by future employees (Belar, 2000; Kuo et al., 2017).

Barrio Minton et al. (2008) provided a snapshot of counseling research from 1997 to 2006, by examining publication venues, article types, and authorship orders of articles. They reviewed 1547 articles published by 317 faculty members in 49 CACREP-accredited doctoral programs. Their findings indicated that there has been a steady increase in terms of the numbers of articles that counselor educators published during 10 years. Also, approximately 60% of the articles were published to 15 ACA division journals (e.g., The Family Journal, Professional School Counseling, Counselor Education and Supervision, Journal of Counseling & Development). Theory or practice articles were the most frequently published (45.6%), followed by quantitative or mixed method articles (43.9%). Qualitative or other articles (10.5%) were relatively rare during this period. Erford et al. (2011) reviewed articles published in Journal of Counseling & Development and also found that qualitative research methods have been less used in counseling research. However, the percentage of qualitative research articles continued to grow; approximately 28% of the articles published in used qualitative research design in the late 2000s, while the percentage was only 2% in the 1990s (Erford et al., 2011). Currently 38% of the articles in Journal of Counseling & Development used qualitative designs (Hays, Wood, Dahl, & Kirk-Jenkins, 2015).

Also, researchers have conducted content- or meta-analysis on publication patterns to inform professionals what are being published, by whom, in ACA division journals: Journal of Counseling & Development (JCD; Erford et al., 2011), Counselor Education and Supervision (CES; Crockett et al., 2010), Professional School Counseling (PSC; Erford et al., 2015), Journal
of Mental Health Counseling (JMHC; Crockett et al., 2012), and Rehabilitation Counseling Bulletin (RCB; Chen et al., 2014).

Concerns regarding Research and Publication in Counselor Education

There have been continued concerns in terms of the quantity and quality of published articles in counselor education. According to Barrio Minton et al. (2008), counselor education faculty members published, on average, 0.49 articles in a refereed journal every year. Moreover, almost 20% of faculty even did not publish any article during 10-year period (Barrio Minton et al., 2008). Similarly, Lambie, Ascher, Sivo, and Hayes (2014) reported that almost half of the counselor educators in CACREP-accredited programs published two or fewer articles during a 6-year period. Compared to the clinical psychology program, where faculty members publish 1.62 articles per year (Stewart et al., 2007), limited productivity shown by counselor education faculty members might indicate a significant problem for the advancement of the profession.

In addition to low productivity among scholars in counselor education, there remain a number of other issues that continue to negatively impact research and publication in counseling profession (Black & Helm, 2010; Kline & Farrell, 2005). These problems include sampling errors, inappropriate statistical analysis, a lack of research questions, a lack of statistical power, missing psychometric information for measures, and excessive dependency on descriptive methods (Borders et al., 2014; Cannon, 2017; Crockett, Byrd, Erford, & Hays, 2010; Fong & Malone, 1994; Wester & Borders, 2014; Wester et al., 2013). Such problems were found in both quantitative and qualitative articles.

Crockett et al. (2010) explored the patterns of articles accepted for publication from 1985 to 2009 in Counselor Education and Supervision journal. The findings from their study indicated that approximately 60% of the articles published during the 25-year period were descriptive
studies, while only 10% were intervention studies. Given the importance of demonstrating what works in counselor education and supervision, this study suggests that more intervention studies need to be conducted. Similarly, Ray et al. (2011) reported that only 6% of all counseling research articles published in 15 ACA division-affiliated journals from 1998 to 2007 explored the effectiveness of a counseling intervention, despite the continuous call for the evidence-based practice.

Wester et al. (2013) examined the quality of 38 quantitative articles published between 2009 and 2010. Almost 80% of the articles adopted descriptive methods (which are relatively simple statistical analyses) and there were only few experimental or outcome-based studies. Furthermore, the authors pointed out that the lack of theoretical grounding for research questions and the failure to report psychometric information about measures, were problems of current counseling research (Wester et al., 2013). Researchers argued that the lack of quality research in counseling has prevented research from informing counselors’ practices (Sink & Mvududu, 2010; Wester et al., 2013). In terms of qualitative articles, adopting a theoretical approach that was not consistent with the purpose of the research has been identified as one of the most common errors among 45 qualitative manuscripts submitted to the Counselor Education and Supervision journal over a 1-year period (Kline & Farrell, 2005).

Despite the importance of conducting sound research and publishing articles to refereed journals, there have been continued problems in terms of the quality of published articles in ACA division journals. A substantial percentage of the articles relied on descriptive methods and there is a dearth of intervention studies. Also, qualitative studies are still limited in the current literature, although the percentage of these studies is increasing compared to the past. Limited scholarly productivity of faculty and student researchers is another concern. All these problems
found in the counseling literature called attention to the research training practice in CACREP-accredited programs.

**Research Training in CACREP-Accredited Programs**

Given the role of research in counselor education, as well as the recurring problems of productivity and quality research, it is critical that counselor educators effectively train doctoral students as competent researchers. National standards, such as those of the CACREP (2015), the ACA Codes of ethics (2014), and the ACES Strategic Planning Committee (2007), each highlight how important it is to provide research training for doctoral students, thus fostering their competencies in research and publication. Having a breadth and depth of knowledge, as well as a diversified skill set, continue to be deemed essential by those within counseling research (Wester & Borders, 2014). This section will review literature on past and current research training in counselor education programs.

**Master’s Research Training**

CACREP 2016 Standards Section 2. F. 8. specified *Research and Program Evaluation* as one out of eight common core areas essential for curriculums of accredited programs, required of both entry-level and doctoral-level students (CACREP, 2015). More specifically, all graduate students in CACREP-accredited counseling programs need to be knowledgeable in the following areas: a) the role of research in the counseling profession, b) evidence-based counseling practices, c) needs assessments, d) development of outcome measures for counseling programs, e) evaluation of counseling interventions and programs, f) qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods, g) designs used in research and program evaluation, h) statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation, i) analysis and use of data in counseling, as well as j) ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the
results of research and/or program evaluation. However, the CACREP Standards did not provide any information on research competencies specifically expected from master’s-level students.

ASCA National Model (2012) provided a more specific focal point of master’s-level research training, highlighting the use of research in intervention planning and documentation of counseling outcomes. Master’s-level research training often focused on teaching the students how to consume research rather than produce it (Borders et al., 2014; Granello & Hazler, 1998). However, since master’s-level training programs aimed to develop students’ skills as practitioners, students seldom had research experience before they began doctoral training (Borders et al., 2014). Moreover, most students in master’s programs do not consider research to be an essential clinical competency (Gerig, 2012; Huber & Savage, 2009). According to Sexton, Whiston, Bleuer, and Waltz (1997), counselors often failed to use outcome research in their clinical practices because they believed it to be both impractical to apply and hard to understand.

Several studies, although mostly outdated, have suggested effective research training for master’s level students, focusing more on the use of research rather than conducting (e.g., Anderson & Heppner, 1986; Granello & Granello, 1998; Sexton & Whiston, 1996). Anderson and Heppner (1986) introduced several approaches that can be useful when teaching master’s students to learn the relevance of research findings, as well as how to apply the findings and research methods. Similarly, Sexton and Whiston (1996) suggested that counselors should be able to identify implications from the research findings, integrate the findings into their practice, and be aware of available resources from the literature. Finally, Granello and Granello (1998) presented several ways to show how outcome research can be infused into specific master’s courses, such as introduction to counseling, theories of counseling, assessment, legal and ethical issues, as well as practicum and internship. Assessment of the effectiveness of interventions and
being accountable were major themes emphasized throughout the curriculum. They argued that “students must become active consumers of the outcome research in counseling throughout their graduate training” (Granello & Granello, 1998, p. 232).

More recently, Steele and Rawl (2015) explored master’s level students’ perceptions on their preparedness across CACREP research-related objectives, as well as their attitudes toward research, specifically quantitative research. Using a survey design, this study found that the master’s students moderately agreed that their training programs prepared them in terms of research related objectives established by CACREP standards. However, the students showed overall low research self-efficacy. The findings suggested that master’s level training programs need to focus more on increasing the students’ research self-efficacy. This study also provided several approaches to improve research training for master’s students, adopted from studies on doctoral research training (e.g., Hollingsworth & Fassinger, 2002; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011).

**Doctoral Research Training**

Compared to master’s level research training, there are more conceptual and empirical articles pertaining to doctoral level research training in counselor education. Doctoral level research training focused more on the role of researcher as a producer, while master’s level research training often focused more on the consumer role. More specifically, every step of the research process was underscored, such as writing a literature review, constructing research questions, and drafting a manuscript for publication (Borders et al., 2014). The 2016 CACREP Standards also provides requirements for doctoral level research training. Section 6. A. describes doctoral programs “extend the knowledge base of the counseling profession in a climate of scholarly inquiry, prepare students to inform professional practice by generating new knowledge for the profession, support faculty and students in publishing and/or presenting the results of
scholarly inquiry” (CACREP, 2015, p. 38). Section 6. B. 4 provides more details on the content required for doctoral research training, which are: a) research designs relevant to research questions, b) quantitative research designs and data analysis, c) qualitative research designs and data analysis, d) research practices and processes, e) instrument design, f) program evaluation, g) research questions relevant to research and publication, h) professional writing for publication, i) conference proposal writing, j) design and evaluation of proposals for IRB review, k) grant proposal writing, and l) research ethics. However, there is a great variance in specific details of research training offered by CACREP-accredited doctoral programs, despite the training guidelines suggested by the CACREP Standards (Borders et al., 2014; Okech et al., 2006; Goodrich et al., 2011).

Okech et al. (2006) investigated the perceptions of counselor educators in CACREP-accredited programs on their own doctoral research training. Their training experiences varied according to year of graduation and types of institution they graduated from. Recent graduates had more confidence in both quantitative and qualitative research designs, while graduates from the 1970s and 1980s were rarely trained with qualitative methods. However, regardless of eras, quantitative research methods were taught more than twice as often as compared to the qualitative methods, in terms of required credit hours. They argued that numerous doctoral programs do not adequately train their students to conduct research.

More recently, Borders et al. (2014) examined the research training practices of CACREP-accredited doctoral programs. Faculty members in 38 programs participated in this survey study, which explored the research topics taught, instructor characteristics, available hands-on research experiences, and faculty’s overall satisfaction on their training. In many programs, only basic statistical analyses were required (e.g., t-tests through regression) for
quantitative research designs, while more complex analysis methods (e.g., multivariate) or longitudinal designs were less frequently covered. Similarly, for qualitative designs, traditional approaches (e.g., grounded-theory, phenomenology) were taught more frequently compared to newer approaches (e.g., consensual qualitative research [CQR]). Limited attention was given to measurement and psychometric topics. Research process topics were often covered by non-course activities, including research teams and apprenticeships, though these were not required for all doctoral students. Writing grant proposals was also a topic less frequently covered by many programs. In addition, counselor education research methods courses (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, sampling, and measurement) were mostly taught outside the counseling departments, lacking relevance for counseling doctoral students’ interests. However, Borders et al. reported that counselor education programs have provided courses that cover the topics of research ethics (e.g., research integrity and IRB policies) as well as research process (e.g., literature review, construction of research questions, and writing for publication), which are not typically covered by other academic disciplines.

Gelso (2006) suggested that hands-on and low-challenge research experience early in one’s doctoral program is critical for a constructive research training environment. Nevertheless, counseling doctoral students in general do not have sufficient research training nor opportunities for conducting research (Paradise & Dufrene, 2010). A large number of counselor education training programs provided limited immediate immersion in research-oriented experiences, such as research teams and research apprenticeships (Borders et al., 2014; Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011). According to Goodrich et al. (2011), 37.5% of CACREP-accredited doctoral programs established research teams for their students’ research training; however, 62.5% of the programs did not have any formalized teams in their department. The lack of applied experiences create
disconnection between doctoral students’ professional development and their abilities to turn the experiences into scholarly inquiry (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Inadequate research training experiences made recent counselor education doctoral graduates often lack the necessary research skill set for the professoriate (Barrio Minton, Myers, & Morganfield, 2012).

Faculty members have been regarded as one of the most influential figures in students’ research training (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015; Kuo et al., 2017). Jorgensen and Duncan (2015) found that faculty members had a significant impact on counseling students’ researcher identity development. They argued that faculty members needed to encourage their students to consume research and engage in research group projects that are mentored by faculty members. Kuo et al. (2017) also insisted that faculty members should assist students’ research engagement and develop plans to provide their students with more effective research mentoring. They emphasized that faculty members should proactively address their students’ unique research training needs. Counselor educators were also encouraged to provide their students with sufficient guidance and support during the entire research process (Association for Counselor Education and Supervision [ACES] Strategic Planning Committee, 2007).

However, faculty members in counselor education programs were often exposed to numerous work-related stressors throughout their careers (Moate, Gnilka, West, & Bruns, 2016; Sorcinelli, 1994). These stressors included not only pressures to publish articles, secure grants, and evaluate their students (Dunn, Whelton, & Sharpe, 2006), but also fulfill tenure/promotion requirements, role expectations, as well as maintain interpersonal relationships with students and colleagues (Hill, 2009; Magnuson et al., 2009). Given such overwhelming responsibilities, counselor educators often struggled with time constraints (Lackritz, 2004; Moate et al., 2016; Sorcinelli, 1994). In particular, new faculty members in counselor education reported unique
challenges related to time constraints in the form of research and teaching, unrealistic expectations, lack of support and resources, insufficient recognition of the scope of their work, as well as sacrifice of their personal lives due to demanding work responsibilities (Sorcinelli, 1994). In other words, counselor educators have been typically over-loaded and have struggled with time constraints, which resulted in them being unable to effectively support their students’ research development.

In addition to the excessive workload of counselor educators, limitations in doctoral students’ research training may be associated with current research training guidelines provided by CACREP standards, which tend to be overly general, vague, and unclear (Thombs et al., 2004; Walker et al., 2008). Therefore, more specific direction is needed to address concerns about the quality of research and training in the counseling profession (Wester & Borders, 2014). However, current literature on counselor education and training primarily reflects the perceptions and opinions of counselor educators (e.g., Borders et al., 2014; Borders et al., 2015; Okech et al., 2006), with very little regard to doctoral students’ voices. Doctoral students’ research experiences and their perspectives therefore need to be further explored, providing more than simply a snapshot of “what has been taught, and how” in CACREP-accredited doctoral programs.

Dissertation

The most consistent requirement across doctoral counseling programs is the dissertation, which is the culminating experience of doctoral students’ training (Borders et al., 2015). The dissertation serves as a foundation of new doctoral graduates’ research agenda (Adkison-Bradley, 2013). It reflects doctoral students’ research interests and their maturity as scholars (Zankas, Phillips, Tansey, & Smith, 2014). Borders et al. (2015) investigated dissertations
submitted from 2011-2014 in CACREP-accredited counseling doctoral programs. Faculty members from 38 programs completed the survey. The researchers examined the dissertation formats (e.g., traditional four- or five-chapter formats), methodologies, composition of dissertation committees, and faculty’s satisfaction on their students’ dissertation products. Approximately 95% of the dissertations adopted the traditional four- or five-chapter formats, although submission of manuscripts to refereed journals was one alternative form. More than half of the doctoral students (54%) used quantitative research designs, but qualitative methods were also substantially used (40%). Mixed methods were rarely used (5%). Dissertation committees often consisted of three to five members, with almost 80% of programs requiring inclusion of non-counselor education faculty. Faculty members expressed overall satisfaction of their students’ dissertation products and processes; however, they agreed that the rigor needed to increase. Also, they wished their students had had more research experiences before they wrote their dissertations.

Richards et al. (2018) provided more details about content, methodology, and design selections in 160 dissertations completed during the 2013 calendar year, from 39 CACREP-accredited doctoral programs. The most frequently covered topics included a) counselor education (20.6%), school counseling (14.4%), and multiculturalism/ diversity/ multicultural counseling (13.8%). In terms of methodology, approximately 57.5% of the dissertations adopted quantitative research designs, while less than half as many dissertations used qualitative research designs (25.6%). Particularly, 73.9% of the dissertations that adopted quantitative methodology used correlational/cross-sectional design. There was no significant difference in this trend, depending on the type of degree (i.e. PhD, EdD).
Flynn et al. (2012) investigated the dissertation experiences of 42 graduates from CACREP-accredited programs. A consensus qualitative research design identified six domains pertaining to doctoral students’ dissertation process: a) impact of environment, b) competing influences, c) personality traits, d) chair influence, e) committee function, and f) barriers to completion. The research findings suggested an emergent theory that reflected the interconnectedness of the dissertation process across internal, relational, and professional factors. Flynn et al. concluded the dissertation process as one of “creating relationships with the dissertation chair and members of the dissertation committee, establishing self-directed goals, paying attention to the competing influences of work and family life, and collaborating with the chair in establishing deadlines” (p. 251).

Doctoral students experience a variety of constraints associated with writing dissertations, as they often work to complete their dissertations within a certain time span, in order to meet time to degree (TTD) requirements. One participant in Flynn et al. (2012) said, “I knew I had a clock running. I had to finish. There was no way I wanted to drag it, take a year off and still not be done” (p. 247). Flynn et al. pointed out that many doctoral students remain as ABD (all but dissertation) status. Harsch (2008) examined the factors related to delays in dissertation completion of doctoral students in counselor education programs: lower levels of emotional support, financial concerns, being overwhelmed with structural requirements, as well as dissatisfaction with the dissertation. Perfectionism and procrastination were also identified as barriers to doctoral students’ dissertation completion (Pullen, 2003).

Previous inquiries on doctoral students’ research mostly focused on doctoral dissertations (Borders et al., 2015; Flynn et al., 2012; Richards et al., 2018). However, little is known about research training for doctoral students specifically focusing on manuscript development and
publication processes. Adkison-Bradley (2013) suggested that counselor educators and training programs should require curricula that focus primarily on academic writing for publication distinguished from dissertation writing. Kline and Farrell (2005) also argued that counselor education programs need to use course requirements that more systematically prepare prospective counselor educators to write for publication. To date, there is no counseling literature about doctoral students’ training or research experiences regarding the publication process. More information is needed about how doctoral students actually write a manuscript for publication and handle editorial feedback.

**The Role of Feedback**

One of the primary goals of doctoral education is to develop students’ academic writing skills (Eyres et al., 2001). Written feedback on academic writing is essential in higher education, as it encourages students to engage in critical thinking and writing (Kumar & Stracke, 2007). Can and Walker (2011) stated that, “Written feedback is one of the most important instructional communication methods between doctoral students and other members of the academic community” (p. 530). Moreover, written feedback leads to a better writing product (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000). Despite this, little is known about feedback on academic writing in counselor education literature. Feedback in counselor education often refers to ‘oral feedback’ on the students’ clinical competences, with the vast majority of literature that mentions feedback in counselor education journals (e.g., Counselor Education and Supervision, Journal of Counselor Preparation and Supervision) examining supervisory feedback (e.g, Avent et al., 2015; Borders et al., 2017; Hulse & Robert, 2014; Wahesh et al., 2017). In order to facilitate counseling students’ development as competent authors in refereed journals, more information is needed on
the feedback that students receive in programs (e.g., for class assignments, dissertations), as well as how students react to this feedback.

**Programmatic Feedback**

Although there is scant literature on written feedback in counselor education, researchers in other academic disciplines have examined written feedback on students’ academic writing. Singh (2016) examined graduate students’ needs and preferences for written feedback on their academic writing from course instructors and thesis supervisors. Findings indicated that they appreciated straightforward and specific feedback that provided clear instructions. Students also preferred feedback that recommended other related resources. The authors suggested that, in order for them to provide more effective feedback, instructors and thesis supervisors working with doctoral students need to understand their students’ needs and preferences for feedback.

Can and Walker (2011) investigated social science doctoral students’ perceptions of and attitudes toward written feedback on their academic writing. This study described the relationships between students’ perceptions and attitudes, their revision decisions, and other relevant factors with regard to feedback. Using a mixed methods approach, the authors investigated feedback on various kinds of academic writing (e.g., conference proposals, grant proposals, dissertations, and journal articles) from a variety of sources (e.g., supervisors, instructors, and editors). The authors noted that doctoral students who lost confidence and motivation after receiving critical feedback were likely to refrain from asking for further feedback. Moreover, the effect of feedback on the students’ emotions, self-confidence, and motivations influenced their willingness to continue revising their work, especially when they did not agree with the feedback they were provided.
Kumar and Stracke (2007) investigated the influences of written feedback on three drafts of PhD dissertation in Applied Linguistics. They authors coded the written feedback and analyzed it based on three functions: referential, directive, and expressive. Referential feedback, concerned with editorial and organizational issues, was perceived as the easiest to address. Directive feedback involved suggestions, questions, and instructions. This type of feedback often encouraged students to engage in additional reading and/or provide more content to clarify ideas. The doctoral students found expressive feedback the most helpful. Expressive feedback encompassed praise, criticism, and the supervisor’s opinions. Even negative feedback (e.g., statements such as “How do you know?” and “You cannot just claim it.”) provided the students the opportunity to write a more thorough and critical manuscript after substantial revisions. The findings from this study also indicated that the relationship between the thesis supervisor and the student researcher had a direct impact on the effectiveness of the feedback, ultimately introducing the student to what it will be like to work in the larger academic community.

**Editorial Feedback**

Most submitted manuscripts have to navigate and respond to editorial feedback before being accepted for publication, as journals rarely agree to publish an initial submission of a manuscript without further revisions (McGowan & Scholl, 2004). However, across disciplines, little is known about the process of navigating and responding to editorial feedback. In their aforementioned study, Can and Walker (2011) examined doctoral students’ emotional responses to a journal editor as well as their subsequent revision decision. They found that the participants’ strong motivations for growth significantly affected some of their revision decisions especially when they did not agree with the feedback. However, when the negative emotions in response to feedback increased, the students were more likely to consider external issues (e.g., punishment,
reward, authority, and power relationships) while making revision decisions. One participant said, “Sometimes journal reviewers give you snotty feedback. It’s very, kind of rude, kind of harsh, more putting you down and, you know, kind of makes you wonder if there is some other agenda.” Given that 62% of the students in this study reported negative emotions after receiving critical feedback, examining the process of navigating and responding to editorial feedback—especially when it is negative—might serve to enlighten the overall experiences of doctoral student researchers.

Mercer (2013) examined the responses of six female researchers who received rejections early in their career while working in the Education department of an English university. In this study, five out of six participants expressed frustration at having to grapple with the rejections of the publication process. Moreover, they complained about the inconsistent editorial feedback from reviewers. One participant of this study argued that some reviews revealed “a fundamental misunderstanding” of what she wanted to achieve (p. 129). However, the participant who already experienced several rejections from journal editors felt comfortable about the rejection that her manuscript had received. Also, she perceived the editorial feedback to be very credible. These findings indicate that researchers can respond very differently when dealing with editorial feedback.

**Students’ Response to Feedback**

Considering the role that feedback plays in higher education (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000), it is essential that students’ reactions to feedback on their academic writing be understood more fully. Can and Walker (2007) argued that receiver’s perceptions and attitudes toward feedback influence its effectiveness. Similarly, Gagné (1985) noted that the effect of feedback is not solely
determined by the content and format of feedback, though it is also influenced by learner characteristics.

Caffarella and Barnett (2000) examined 45 doctoral students’ responses to critical feedback from their course instructors. Critical comments were considered to be very effective overall; however, low quality or contradictory feedback made the students highly emotional and even frustrated. As the doctoral students received ongoing feedback for their works, their confidence increased. The authors suggested that instructors need to be clear about the purposes and benefits of providing critical feedback to their students. Kumar and Stracke (2007) found that the doctoral students who had positive attitudes toward negative feedback had substantial revisions in the draft, which allowed them to examine their work from a fresh perspective, ultimately improving their future writing. On the other hand, the students who had negative attitudes toward critical feedback were less likely to ask for additional guidance (Can & Walker, 2011).

These findings indicated that how doctoral student researchers react to feedback can be important in determining their success in the publication process (i.e. getting their manuscripts accepted). The frustrations and challenges experienced by the young faculty members in Mercer’s study (2013) imply that doctoral student researchers might experience even more challenges when responding to and accommodating editorial feedback. Although aforementioned studies shed light on the process of navigating and responding to editorial feedback, a more comprehensive examination of doctoral students’ experiences is needed.

**Doctoral Students’ Publication**

Previous studies found that many doctoral students were not actively involved in research and publication (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Zimpfer, 1993). Publishing journal articles is not an
easy process for graduate students, as it involves multiple layers of complicated procedures (Forman, 1988). According to Zimpfer (1993), for instance, only 26% of counselor education doctoral graduates published articles during their training. More recent literature also indicated similar findings. In Lambie and Vaccaro (2011), only 30.3% of counselor education doctoral students reported that they had published a scholarly work. Early engagement in research and publication is critical for those doctoral students seeking to develop as scholars, as it is an effective means of developing research autonomy (Mowbray & Halse, 2010). Moreover, research suggested that doctoral students’ scholarly productivity predicts their future research productivity after graduation (Barnard-Brak, Saxon, & Johnson, 2011; Horta & Santos, 2016). Horta and Santos (2016) found that publishing during doctoral studies also predicted doctoral students’ yearly citations, citations throughout their career, as well as collaboration with international scholars. However, there is a dearth of literature surrounding the publications of counselor education doctoral students that reflect those students’ limited engagement in the publication process.

There are several articles that highlight this topic in social science literature. Jalongo et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative study on the publication process of doctoral students in colleges of education in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Thirty doctoral students at different stages in their degree completion (e.g., from first year students to students who had defended their dissertations) participated in focus group interviews and shared their experiences and perspectives regarding the publication process. The findings suggested strategies for effective publication training, including: providing classes and continued instruction on scholarly writing for publication, designing assignments that can be useful for publication, and offering more opportunities for peer and faculty review of manuscripts. However, this study did not
disclose the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers; rather, it mainly examined doctoral students’ perceptions of successful publication (e.g., “When you think about submitting your work to anonymous peer review, what prevents you from trying? Conversely, what encourages you to attempt to publish your work?”). The participants without any publication experiences were also included in this study, providing assumptions for what they anticipate they will need. Moreover, participant from diverse academic disciplines limited how applicable their implications were to a specific academic discipline, such as counselor education. Furthermore, this study entirely relied on the focus group as the only data collection method, threatening overall trustworthiness.

Song (2014) examined the publication experiences of non-native English-speaking doctoral students in the United States. Using diverse sources of data, the author investigated the difficulties and successes that the students experienced, their strategies to overcome the difficulties and secure publications in English, and any sociopolitical influences that affected their publication process. Students from diverse academic disciplines (e.g., sciences, social sciences) participated in this study; while this study reflected different research and publication norms, the experiences of these students had commonalities. For instance, the students had to meet the complicated publication requirements by both U.S. and home academic cultures. Also, the power differential between the students and their advisors during the collaboration process was an issue that all participants had to face. They used academic research networks, as well as linguistic/textual strategies, to respond to these difficulties. Song suggested that professionals should help the non-native doctoral students identify and effectively deal with power-infused relationships, in order to provide more facilitative learning environments for these students.
Although there are a few studies that have examined the publication experiences of doctoral students in the social sciences, no articles were found on this topic in counselor education. Publishing articles is valued, as it expands the knowledge base of the profession; however, it is not easy for doctoral student researchers to have publication experiences before graduation, regardless of academic discipline. A thorough examination of doctoral student researchers’ lived experiences will provide practical implications not only for counselor educators but also faculty members in other fields.

**Summary of Literature Review**

Doctoral students in counselor education programs experience challenges that are unique to their training and roles. Counselor educators need to assist with these challenges, which will ultimately facilitate the doctoral students’ professional development. Research and publication are highly valued in doctoral training, as they each expand the knowledge base of the profession. However, counseling doctoral students are insufficiently prepared to become independent researchers after graduation. Given continued problems with the quality of published articles, with an over-reliance upon descriptive studies, in addition to the limited scholarly productivity of faculty and student researchers, providing doctoral scholars with relevant and adequate research training is crucial for the future of the counseling profession. However, current literature on counselor education and training primarily reflects the perceptions and opinions of counselor educators, rather than the voices of doctoral students themselves.

In order to facilitate the professional development of doctoral student researchers with unique training needs, the lived experiences of these individuals need be understood in more depth. Despite this, there is no available literature in counselor education that discusses the publication experiences of doctoral students. A thorough examination of doctoral student
researchers’ lived experiences will provide practical implications not only for counselor educators but also faculty members in other fields. In particular, navigating and responding to editorial feedback is an essential process that most authors will need to deal with at some point during their academic career. Previous research findings indicated that the way that doctoral student researchers react to feedback can determine their success in the publication process (i.e. manuscripts being accepted). Thus, this study will investigate the publication experiences of doctoral students, including how they respond to and navigate editorial feedback.
CHAPTER III.

METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 will review the purpose of this study and provide the rationale for the research’s design and tradition; this chapter will also include the theoretical paradigm that this study was based upon. The role of the researcher in this qualitative inquiry, specifically in this phenomenology, was also be explored, as well as the data collection and analysis methods adopted for this study. This chapter will conclude by illustrating the strategies used to ensure trustworthiness as well as potential limitations in methodology.

**Purpose and Qualitative Research Design**

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers in counselor education. The research question guiding this study is “what are the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs with the publication and editorial feedback process?” Since the goal of this study is to provide an in-depth understanding of what doctoral students in counselor education programs experience regarding publication and feedback processes—and how they make meaning of these processes—this study adopted a qualitative research design to appropriately answer the questions.

Qualitative research adopts “interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2013, p. 44). It is considered appropriate when a problem is insufficiently explored and needs more investigation (Creswell, 2013; Hunt, 2011; Patton, 1990). Qualitative research also enables more detailed and in-depth exploration of existing areas (Hunt, 2011).

Qualitative research focuses on the lived experiences of people (Berrios & Lucca, 2006), specifically highlighting the voices of underrepresented people (Creswell, 2013). Instead of
relying on predetermined hypotheses from the literature, qualitative research addresses a problem based on the findings that are derived from the data, allowing researchers to have a more detailed understanding of the problem (Berríos & Lucca, 2006; Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, qualitative research skills (e.g., reflexivity, social advocacy, and interviewing) align well with the goals and values of the counseling profession (Hays & Singh, 2012; Morrow, 2005; Singh & Shelton, 2011).

**Approach and Paradigm**

**Phenomenology**

Qualitative researchers should select a research tradition that is consistent with their research orientation and purpose, and to reflect the tradition to the entire research process, as it contributes to the overall trustworthiness of the study (Kline, 2008). This study adopted a phenomenological approach from a diverse platform of research traditions of qualitative research. Phenomenology aims to understand the essence of what participants commonly experience during a phenomenon (Hays & Wood, 2011; Kline, 2008; Patton, 1990). Phenomenology is a tradition particularly congruent with counseling, its detailed illustration of common client experiences considered a natural characteristic of the counseling practice (Hays & Wood, 2011).

Phenomenological researchers attempt to describe participants’ experiences, as well as the context and situations that influenced those experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Moreover, phenomenology focuses on both the essence of the participants’ lived experiences and the variations of those experiences (Moustakas, 1994). In other words, phenomenology values the subjective experiences of individuals, and the connection between those individuals and the
wider world (Hays & Singh, 2011). Using a phenomenology, this study sought to provide a
deeper understanding of the individual and collective internal experiences of doctoral student
researchers who engaged in publication processes, as well as how they perceive those
experiences (Wertz, 2005). The following section describes the theoretical framework that this
study was based upon.

**Interpretivism**

A paradigm is the “shared understandings of reality, that is, worldviews—complete,
complex ways of seeing and sets of assumptions about the world and actions within it” (Rossman
& Rallis, 2012, p. 35). An interpretivist paradigm was chosen for this study. This paradigm
assumes multiple realities, which are constructed by the lived experiences of individuals
(Creswell, 2013; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). From this perspective, it is impossible to partition out
an objective reality from those research participants who experience the reality (Ponterotto,
2005). In addition to its subjective worldviews, this paradigm seeks to understand the world as it
is, with status quo assumptions (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

In the interpretivist paradigm, the interaction between the researcher and the researched is
important (Ponterotto, 2005), as the reality is co-constructed through the interaction (Creswell,
2013). Individual values are respected, with human beings identified as an agency that creates
the everyday world (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). This paradigm uses an inductive method of
evolving ideas through interviewing, observing, and analyzing texts (Creswell, 2013). Étic
perspectives was adopted in this study in order to present generalizable aspects of the
participants’ experiences (Choudhuri, Glauser, & Perego, 2004). Etic refers to “universal laws
and behaviors that transcend nations and cultures and apply to all humans,” while emic means
“constructs or behaviors that are unique to an individual, sociocultural context that are not

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generalizable” (Ponterotto, 2005, p. 128). Data was coded and categorized using the researcher’s words, instead of the participants’ responses.

**Role of the Researcher**

The researcher is a key instrument in qualitative research (Creswell, 2013; Hunt, 2012; Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Researchers can be affected by engaging in qualitative approach, just as they can be affected by literature and any beliefs, biases, and experiences they may have (Kline, 2008). Thus, the impact of the researchers’ own expectations or values should be minimized while describing the participants’ experiences (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). In phenomenology, researchers highlight the essence of participants’ lived experiences, genuinely exploring while at the same time excluding any presumptions, they may have about the phenomenon itself (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Moustakas’s (1994) *epoche* process, which means “the pure state of being required for fresh perceiving and experiencing” (p. 86), emphasized that researchers should set aside their preconceptions and biases about the researched.

Again, researchers need to bracket their personal experiences by describing them in detail well before they delve into the experiences of others (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). More specifically, they should examine any feelings, perspectives, or potential biases that may influence the research process (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The researchers seek to “understand the phenomenon through the eyes of those who have direct, immediate experience with it,” bracketing their own assumptions (Hays & Wood, 2011, p. 291). Hunt (2011) noted that researchers need to clearly explain their roles in the study, as well as their assumptions and prejudices, and then describe how they addressed these issues (i.e. trustworthiness strategies).


*Researcher-as-instrument* statement (RAIS) includes the worldviews, attitudes, biases, and experiences of the researcher; it is offered so that readers can consider the researcher’s potential influence on the entire study (Morrow, 2005). My own experiences as a doctoral student researcher for the last three years piqued my interest in doctoral students’ publication experiences. Conducting research and publishing articles, which challenged me and matured my identity as a researcher and student, also made me aware of my own assumptions regarding the commonalities that exist among doctoral student researchers in counselor education. I believed that doctoral students would have more difficulty while conducting research and publishing articles when compared to faculty members. I also thought that the environment provided by faculty and department members – supportive or otherwise – would have a significant impact on the experiences and growth of students. My assumptions and underlying beliefs led me to investigate how the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers strengthen their voices in research training. I am eager to advocate for the advanced research and publication training experiences of counselor education doctoral students, which I believe will have a profound effect on the advancement of the counseling profession overall. My RAIS is presented in the Appendix A section of this dissertation.

Throughout the research process, I continued to be mindful of any assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes that might affect the data collection and analysis, employing multiple strategies to illuminate my own personal perspectives and experiences as a doctoral student researcher. In addition to bracketing my assumptions before I access the participants’ experiences, several trustworthiness strategies helped me address the issue of researcher biases. First, the data was collected from various sources, including two semi-structured interviews, an online focus group, and writing prompts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Continued reflexive journaling of the researcher...
also helped ensure the trustworthiness of this study. The strategies used to address researcher biases, thereby contributing to the rigor of the study, were more thoroughly discussed in the trustworthiness section.

Participants

According to Hays and Wood (2011), phenomenology researchers need to carefully select participants who have direct experience with the phenomenon, rather than simply those who have perspectives on the experience. Doctoral students currently enrolled in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs were invited to participate in this study. The participants were expected to have experience with conducting research and submitting their manuscripts for publication as solo or first authors (i.e. corresponding authors) for refereed counseling journals during their doctoral programs. Song’s (2014) study also used similar inclusion criterion, providing a rationale for this selection: “being the first author means that regardless of the discipline, the author partly or fully participated in the writing process” (p. 60). While the type and amount of research experiences vary, all participants were required to have experiences regarding manuscript submission/correspondence with journal editorial boards. More specifically, one or more of the submitted manuscripts that received a decision (rejected/in revision/accepted after major revision) from the review board were considered inclusion criteria, in order to ensure that every participant has an experience with interacting with journal editorial boards. All counseling, psychology, and education-related journals were considered eligible outlets. Regardless of the size of the research team, their experiences of developing and submitting scholarly manuscripts, as well as dealing with editorial feedback as lead authors were explored. The inclusion criteria used in this study were as follows:
• Participants have been current doctoral students in CACREP-accredited programs;
• They have submitted one or more manuscript to refereed journals during their doctoral programs and received editorial feedback;
• They have been the first or solo author of the manuscript.

Twelve current counselor education doctoral students participated in this study. The phenomenological approach uses a variety of sample sizes, ranging from 3 to 4 participants to 10 to 15 (Creswell, 2013). Previous studies revealed that sample sizes of phenomenological studies are typically not very large due to the in-depth nature of the study, suggesting sample sizes ranging from 2 to 10 (Cilesiz, 2011; Hinojosa & Carney, 2016; Woolmore-Goodwin, Kloseck, Zecevic, Fogarty, & Gutmanis, 2016). Flynn and Korcuska (2018) reviewed all phenomenology articles published in Journal of Counseling & Development, Counselor Education and Supervision, and Journal of Multicultural Counseling & Development from 2001 to 2015. They found the mean sample size across the articles to be 11.9, with 43.9% of the articles using sample sizes from 4 to 9.

**Sampling Procedures**

Flynn and Korcuska (2018) emphasized the importance of providing a rationale for sampling procedures in order to ensure that the qualitative study has credibility. This study adopted the purposive sampling method, as it allows researchers to select individuals who can provide a generous amount of information on the target phenomenon (Hays & Wood, 2011; Patton, 1990). Thus, the researcher targeted counselor education doctoral students who had experience with submitting manuscripts and receiving feedback from journal editorial boards as lead authors. Specifically, the stratified purposeful sampling method was used in this study to represent a variety of perspectives on the publication process (Patton, 1990). A stratified sample
of students captured variations and enabled comparison between subgroups (Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Patton, 1990). This sample included students who, as first or solo authors, a) have manuscript(s) already accepted/in press/published, b) have manuscript(s) in revision or under review, and c) have only experienced flat-out rejection of their manuscript(s). Most participants had multiple manuscripts or projects at various stages of the publication process; some manuscripts had been accepted/published, others were in revision/under review, and others had been rejected. Since all three strata of the experience are not completely exclusive to each other, the researcher verified that each stratum involved at least three to four participants out of the total twelve. The participant demographics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Demographic Information of Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Master’s degree</th>
<th>Research experience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>NCACES</td>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrea</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>NARACES</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>RMACES</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>NCACES</td>
<td>CMHC</td>
<td>Master’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo</td>
<td>40+</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>R1</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>NCACES</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>SACES</td>
<td>CMHC</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
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<td>White</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Online/Part-time</td>
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<td>CMHC</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>R2</td>
<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>SACES</td>
<td>CMHC</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lila</td>
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<td>On-campus/Full-time</td>
<td>SACES</td>
<td>CMHC</td>
<td>Both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note. R1 = Research university, very high research activity, R2 = Research university, high research activity, Other = Doctoral/research university, RC = Rehabilitation counseling, SC = School counseling, CMHC = Clinical mental health counseling.

The twelve doctoral students participating in this study represented nine CACREP-accredited counselor education programs nationwide. The national sample included participants from the North Atlantic (n = 1), North Central (n = 4), Southern (n = 5), and Rocky Mountain (n = 2) regional divisions of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES). Six participants (50%) were from Research 1 institutions (Carnegie category classification of current university), four of them (33.3%) were from Research 2 institutions, and two of them (16.7%) indicated their programs as ‘others.’ Except for the one participant who was a part-time student enrolled in an online program, eleven of the participants (91.17%) reported that they were full-time students on-campus.

Nine participants (75%) were women, and three (25%) were men. Ten (83.3%) identified as White, and two (16.7%) identified as Black. Seven (58.3%) participants were doctoral candidates at the dissertation stage. Second year students represented 33.3% (n = 4) of the participants, with third year students representing 50% (n = 6), and fourth year students representing 16.7% (n = 2). Eight participants (66.7%) had earned their master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling, three (25%) in school counseling, and one (0.83%) in rehabilitation counseling. Of the eight doctoral students (66.7%) who reported that they had previous research experience, four of them (33.3%) gained research experience during both their master’s and undergraduate programs, two of them (16.7%) during their master’s programs, and the remaining two (16.7%) during their undergraduate programs. Four participants (33.3%) reported that they did not have any research experience before beginning their doctoral programs.
Upon Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the researcher distributed a recruiting email to potential participants using two counseling listservs, CESNET and CounsGrad. This recruiting email included a brief description of the study, as well as a Qualtrics link to an electronic consent form and a demographic questionnaire. The email also informed potential participants that they would be given a gift card as compensation. Counseling graduate students who were interested in participating in the study agreed to the consent form by clicking *I agree to participate in this study* and completing the provided demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire included questions about the participants’ gender, age, year in the program, professional identity, bachelor’s major, previous research experience during their bachelor’s program and master’s program, as well as their research projects (past or current) and authorship orders (e.g., manuscripts published/in press/accepted, in revision, under review, rejected, in preparation). Also, information about their doctoral program was requested, including enrollment status (i.e. full-time/part-time), on-campus/online status, and Carnegie classification of their institutions. The potential participants were asked to provide their e-mail address so that the researcher of this study could schedule interviews. They were informed that confidentiality would be secured throughout the entire research process by the use of pseudonyms and the concealment of any identifiable information.

Among the individuals who provided their e-mail address, those who satisfied the inclusion criteria were individually contacted by the researcher for an initial interview. Those who did not meet the inclusion criteria were also informed that they would not participate in this study. Moreover, the researcher made sure that the sample was diverse in terms of research experience; the sample included participants with published articles, participants experiencing revision and resubmission of their manuscripts, and participants who had only experienced
rejections. There were more potential participants who had had several articles already published, compared to those potential participants who had only experienced rejection. In an attempt to maintain a balance among all types of research experience, the researcher ceased recruiting those participants who had already been published or had had their manuscripts accepted. In response, the researcher recruited more participants who could share their experiences with rejection. Twelve qualifying individuals were recruited; six of them had manuscript(s) published/accepted, eight of them had manuscript(s) in revision or under review, and eight of them had experienced rejection, all as a first/solo author. Among them, three participants had experienced only flat-out rejection, without any manuscripts published/accepted.

Data Collection

After determining the phenomenon of interest and bracketing her assumptions, the researcher collected data from the participants based on their direct experiences with the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). In order to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, data was collected from various sources, including two semi-structured individual interviews, an online focus group, and written responses.

Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews has been the most frequently used sources of data in counseling research (Hunt, 2011). Two semi-structured interviews (e.g., initial and follow-up) were completed within a one-month time frame. The interview protocol was developed based upon a review of the current literature, the researcher’s personal experiences as a counseling doctoral student, and guiding research questions. Feedback from dissertation committee members, as well as that of an expert reviewer, was solicited in order to provide more perspectives on the protocols. The expert reviewer has been a counselor educator at a CACREP-Accredited program for over twenty years.
Also, a pilot interview was conducted to refine the interview questions and protocols (Creswell, 2013).

Moustakas (1994) suggested two overarching questions for the phenomenological interviews: a) “What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon?” and b) “What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences of the phenomenon?” In other words, what the participants experienced and how they experienced it are central to this inquiry, ultimately providing all essence of the experience (Creswell, 2013). Hunt (2011) noted that asking fewer and broader questions, rather than asking multiple closed questions, allows researchers to obtain richer information from the interviews. Therefore, the interview protocol of this study focused on exploring doctoral student researchers’ experiences and their meaning making, from broad perspectives. Examples of the interview questions were as follows: a) “Please describe your process of developing manuscripts”, b) “Please describe how you navigated and responded to the editorial feedback from journals”, c) “What did you learn about the process for publication and/or yourself as a researcher?” and d) “What would you suggest for counselor educators and counselor education programs to facilitate research and publication of doctoral students?” The details of initial and follow-up interview questions that were used in this study are presented in Appendix F.

A total of 24 individual interviews were completed over the course of this study. Each initial interview lasted approximately 40-100 minutes in length, and each follow-up interview lasted approximately 10-30 minutes. The interviews were completed from December 2018 to January 2019. The interval between each initial and follow-up interview was capped at 2-3 weeks, in order to minimize the potential change in students’ situations (e.g., manuscript(s) accepted between the interviews). The interviews were facilitated via phone call, Zoom, or in-
person, depending upon the availability of the interviewees. The interview protocol was sent to all participants before each interview to ensure that they had enough time to review the questions and reflect upon their experiences. At the beginning of the initial interview, the researcher reviewed the consent form, specifically the policies on audio-recording and the use of pseudonyms that were assigned to participants’ data for confidentiality purposes. Whenever the interviewees did not understand the questions and needed prompts during the interview process, the researcher asked probing questions to facilitate responses.

After the initial interview, all interviewees were given a copy of their interview transcript and were asked to review it as a member check. Through the member checking process, the interviewees edited the transcript or highlighted the parts that they thought were particularly important. The follow-up interviews were conducted based upon the first interview, asking the participants to reflect upon the meaning of their experiences (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). As with the initial interview, the researcher sent the follow-up interview protocol to the interviewees to ensure that they had enough time to prepare their responses. Reflecting upon their previous interview, the interviewees added, expanded upon, or amended their intended answers so that the interviews themselves could more accurately convey their lived experiences.

**Online Focus Groups (Video Conference)**

Two online focus groups were used to collect data based on the active interaction of the participants. Such focus groups “generate new understanding or explanations as individuals react and respond to what others say” (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 189). After the two individual interviews, the participants were invited to participate in one of two video conferences (e.g., Zoom meeting). Those who felt uncomfortable participating in the video conference were given
the opportunity to refuse beforehand. Participants were informed that the conversation will be audio-recorded for transcribing purposes, and that the data will be analyzed accordingly.

The researcher conducted two separate focus groups, in order to accommodate the schedule of as many participants as possible. Both focus groups included three participants, respectively, and lasted for approximately one hour each. The questions for the focus groups were very similar in focus to those asked during the individual interviews, though the wording had become more succinct over the course of multiple individual interviews (Jorgensen & Duncan, 2015a). The attendees discussed their own experiences regarding the previous interview questions. Four open-ended questions were provided by the researcher to facilitate discussion. The researcher paraphrased and summarized the conversations, though not in a way that encumbered upon the interviewees’ responses. During the interview, the researcher also took notes to highlight important themes that emerge from the focus groups. The focus group questions that were used in this study are presented in Appendix G.

**Written Responses**

Van Manen (1990) cited formally written responses as one source of data that may be collected in phenomenology. Thus, the researcher requested the participants to provide written responses to two open-ended questions, which were offered after two individual interviews and the online focus groups. Broad wrap-up questions were given to the participants to facilitate their final reflections as doctoral student researchers (e.g., “How do you make meaning of your experience with the publication and editorial feedback process?”, “What does being a doctoral student researcher mean to you?”). The participants were asked to provide paragraph-length answers for each question. The questions for written responses are presented in Appendix H.
Data Analysis

In this study, Moustakas’s (1994) Transcendental Phenomenological Reduction was adopted for data analysis. The first step of the Transcendental Phenomenological Reduction is bracketing, which places the focus of research in brackets and sets everything else aside, in order to make sure that the entire research process is guided by the topic and/or research questions. Horizonalizing, which is the second step, means that statements that are considered to be repetitive or irrelevant to the topic and/or research questions should be deleted, leaving only the horizons (i.e. the consistent components of the phenomenon). These horizons are considered by the researcher to be of equal value. The third step of the reduction is clustering, which means the process of deriving themes from the horizons. The last step is organizing, which involves a coherent textural description of phenomenon based on the horizons and the themes.

Before analyzing data, the researcher first prepared and organized data, transcribing all of the individual interviews, as well as the online focus group interviews (Creswell, 2013). After the first-round interviews took place, the researcher began and completed the process of transcribing the interviews. A web-based transcribing software (Temi) was used to assist the transcribing process. After the software produced an initial draft of each transcript, the researcher listened to each audio recording three times in order to edit the transcripts and generate follow-up questions. The follow-up questions asked for clarification of any unclear parts, as well as further explanation and meaning-making of significant parts. The researcher shared a copy of the transcript with each interviewee, inviting feedback for the transcripts. During the follow-up interviews or through an e-mail correspondence, the interviewees modified the parts of the transcript that were not accurately presented. They added more explanation when necessary in order to ensure that their intended meanings were appropriately conveyed. The follow-up
interviews took place two to three weeks after the initial interviews and were transcribed for data analysis. Focus group interviews were also transcribed, the researcher’s observations of the members’ interactions were included in the transcripts (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2014). After the audio data was translated into written documents and verified by the interviewees through member-checking, the researcher read through the transcripts several times to familiarize herself with the interviews as a whole (Agar, 1980).

The researcher then began the coding process. Coding refers to the process of “reducing the data into meaningful segments and assigning names for the segments” (Creswell, 2013, p. 180). Coding strategies range from using “prefigured” categories to “emergent” categories (Crabtree & Miller, 1992, p. 151). This study adopted emergent categories, rather than prefigured categories, so that the codes themselves could fully reflect the participants’ perspectives (Creswell, 2013). While recalling the interview process, the researcher assigned names to each code, adding comments that reflected her interpretations of the interviewees’ meaning-making. The codes were named based upon the *etic* perspectives, which reflected the researcher’s interpretivist paradigm (Creswell, 2013). Each individual interview transcript, and subsequent written responses, were coded. The transcripts of two online focus groups were also coded and considered each focus group as a whole instead of distinguishing who said what. After which, all nonrepetitive and nonoverlapping statements representing the experiences of doctoral student researchers were identified through the process of *horizontalization* (Moustakas, 1994).

Saturation of data was identified throughout the data analysis process, even from the initial interviewing stages. When the researcher completed interviewing the 6th participant, she recognized that, while participant experiences had several similarities, there was still new information being provided. When she interviewed the 10th participant, she noticed that most
participants’ stories largely overlapped with the previous data. When she interviewed the 12th participant, she recognized that the data was saturated. Her perception on this data saturation was reinforced through subsequent data analysis stages, including transcribing, coding, and data reduction (horizontalization). When the researcher completed horizontalization of 6 out of 12 participant transcripts, she found that the data reached 90% saturation. When she completed 10 of the participant transcripts, the data was almost 95% saturated, with approximately 5% of the new information being added by new participant experiences. Finally, when the researcher completed the initial data reduction of the 12th participant’s transcript, she reached the point of saturation, and no new information emerged.

The next step of data reduction involved creating themes. Themes, which are also called categories, are defined as “broad units of information that consist of several codes aggregated to form a common idea” (Creswell, 2013, p. 186). In order to develop themes, the researcher must first identify significant code segments. Creswell (2013) explained that these segments involve a) information that researchers expect to find before they begin the study, b) information that they did not expect to find, and c) conceptually interesting or unusual information. Based on these code segments, the researcher developed 73 categories; within each category, the evidence from the different data sources was aggregated (e.g., interview transcripts, written responses). Further data reduction constructed 7 themes and 28 subthemes.

The last step of data analysis involved interpretation and representation of the data. Essentially, it is at this point that the researcher made sense of the data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). According to Moustakas (1994), researchers relate and cluster invariant meaning units to describe the meaning and depth of the intended experience; this process renders a textural description. Researchers incorporate multiple meanings and tensions within the textural
description, which then leads to a structural description. That is, phenomenological researchers provide both the essence of participants’ experiences and their meaning-making of those experiences. Using significant statements directly from the data, the researcher described what participants experienced and how they had experienced them.

**Trustworthiness**

*Trustworthiness*, often referred to as rigor of a study, involves the systematic approach to research design and data analysis, interpretation, and presentation (Hays et al., 2016). Trustworthiness is closely connected with the quality of the study (Morrow, 2005). The congruent trustworthiness procedures for the phenomenological research tradition include *epochè/bracketing*, auditing, triangulation, member checking, reflexivity, auditing, and thick and rich descriptions (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Member checking, reflexivity, and auditing were cited as the most highly used trustworthiness procedures in previous literature (Hays et al., 2016; Woo & Heo, 2013). Hill et al. (2005) recommended researcher reflexivity, reflexive journaling, triangulation, member checking, and thick and rich description as trustworthiness strategies. Hays and Wood (2011) identified member checking, triangulation of data sources, and thick description as essential trustworthiness strategies. Among such a diverse range of trustworthiness strategies, this study adopted reflexive journaling, triangulation of data, member checking, thick description of the research procedure, expert reviewing of interview questions, and piloting of interviews. This decision was based upon the current counseling literature.

**Reflexive Journaling**

Researchers write about “their experiences, reactions, and emerging awareness of any assumptions or biases that come to the fore” (Morrow, 2005, p. 254). The researcher continued to write in her journals at every significant step of the procedure, beginning with the data
collection process. After each individual and focus group interviews, during and after the transcription of those interviews, as well as during the coding process, the researcher described her thoughts, feelings, concerns, and questions. The researcher aimed to contribute to the rigor of the study by bracketing her personal experiences and thoughts. The examples of the reflexive journaling are presented in Appendix I.

**Triangulation of the Data**

Triangulating the data from three different sources (i.e. individual interviews, video conference/online focus groups, and written responses) aimed to improve the credibility of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990). The information collected from the different sources did not vary in terms of focus, but was implemented in order to reinforce the integrity of the themes and categories that were derived from the data. Evidence from diversified data sources (rather than, for instance, semi-structured interviews alone) aimed to increase the trustworthiness of the study. In this study, neither the data collected from the focus groups nor the written responses revealed any new information that had not already been offered during the individual interviews. In other words, the different sources of data collectively validated the participants’ stories.

**Member-Checking**

Including participants in the data analysis and review processes can be used to establish the trustworthiness of the study, and may also help to ensure that the voices of the participants are represented appropriately (Hunt, 2011). Participants can be actively engaged in the member-checking process, adding new thoughts and experiences that emerge while reviewing their transcripts, or while being interviewed again after reading the transcripts (Morrow, 2005).
The participants in the current study also had the opportunity to review the transcripts from their individual interviews, as well as the themes that emerged from the data, and offer feedback based on what they read or saw (Hunt, 2011). In addition, after reviewing the transcripts, they had an opportunity to request that certain information that they did not want to share be concealed. They also reviewed their own case summaries and provided feedback, in order to more accurately represent their experiences and meaning-making of them. All of these active and open communications with the participants contributed to the rigor of this study.

**Thick Description**

Researchers are responsible for making sure that the readers are fully aware of what steps were taken to ensure the overall quality and trustworthiness of the study (Hunt, 2011). Choudhuri et al. (2004) stated that the methodology section of a manuscript be thoroughly written, as this will decrease the chances that a reader will leave a question unanswered because he or she is confused. Therefore, the method section of this study provided a detailed description of the data collection and analysis procedures.

**Expert Reviewer**

Before the researcher began the process of collecting data, an expert reviewer was asked to provide feedback of the interview protocols. The reviewer is a counselor educator in a CACREP-accredited counselor education program in the United States, who has been working as a faculty member for over twenty years. She has taught doctoral-level research courses and has served as chair and co-chair for numerous doctoral dissertations and master’s theses, all of which ensured her expertise in student researchers’ development. The researcher revised the interview protocols after receiving feedback from this expert reviewer and hearing suggestions from the dissertation committee members.
Pilot Interview

A pilot interview was conducted prior to individual interviews in order to increase the trustworthiness of the study. Sampson (2004) argued that a pilot could improve the quality of qualitative studies by minimizing researcher risk and waste of resources. She emphasized the importance of conducting a fully-prepared pilot. Therefore, the pilot in this study followed the same procedure as the main interviews, with an interviewee who met the inclusion criteria. The interviewee was a current doctoral student at a CACREP-Accredited counselor education program with publication experience as the solo author. After a one-hour pilot interview, the questions and procedures were further refined to flow more smoothly and reduce miscommunication.
CHAPTER IV.

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers in counselor education programs. Twelve current doctoral students in CACREP-accredited counseling programs participated in this study. The participants represented nine different programs nationwide. Data was collected through a series of two semi-structured individual interviews, two online focus group interviews, and written responses to two open-ended questions. A total of 24 individual interviews, two online focus group interviews, as well as 12 written responses to two open-ended questions, were analyzed using a within-case and cross-case approach. The purpose of this chapter was to provide readers with an overview of twelve participants’ individual experiences (within-case), as well as 7 emerging themes and 28 subthemes (cross-case), which best represent the lived experiences across participants.

The researcher used a metaphor of learning how to ride a bike to represent doctoral students’ development in their research and publication process. This metaphor of bike riding was inspired by a story that Alex, one of the participants of this study, shared during the interview process. Alex explained that teaching doctoral students how to do research and publish articles is comparable to “teaching a kid to ride a bike.” The 7 emergent themes included: a) bike riding terrains (climate/culture of doing research), b) learning to balance by learning to fall (learning from experience and mistakes), c) pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike (skills required/obtained during the process), d) learning the rules of the road (editorial feedback experience), e) learning with training wheels (mentoring, scaffolding, and resources), f) reasons to ride a bike (motivations for doing research), and g) runner’s high (achievement and identity).
Within-Case Analysis

In order to understand the publication and editorial feedback experiences of doctoral students in counselor education programs, the following information was collected from two individual interviews: a) the climate/culture of their programs with regard to research, b) challenges and successes experienced, c) support received, and d) further support needed. The next section specifically described the stories of each participant, including their demographic information and a summary of their experiences with regard to research and publication. The Table 2 shows the participants’ manuscripts and previous research experience. The information on the manuscripts included each manuscript’s progress in the publication process (e.g., published/in press/accepted, in revision, under review, and rejected), the type of the manuscripts, as well as the authorship that the participants hold in each manuscript.

Table 2

Participants’ Manuscripts at Different Stages of Publication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Published/ In press/ Accepted</th>
<th>In revision</th>
<th>Under review</th>
<th>Rejected</th>
<th>In progress</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrea</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Concept (1st) Quant (2nd)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jo</td>
<td>Concept (5th) Concept (1st) Mixed (1st) Mixed (2nd) Qual (1st)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Concept (1st) Concept (1st) Quant (2nd)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quant (1st)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lila</td>
<td>Quant (1st) Concept (1st) Quant (1st) Mixed (1st)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Molly</td>
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Table 3—continued

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Qual (1st)</th>
<th>Qual (3rd)</th>
<th>Qual (5th)</th>
<th>Quant (3rd)</th>
<th>Concept (2nd)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rachel</td>
<td>Qual (1st)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Concept (2nd)</td>
<td>Concept (1st)</td>
<td>Concept (1st)</td>
<td>Concept (1st)</td>
<td>Concept (1st)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. Concept = Conceptual manuscript, Quant = Quantitative research manuscript, Qual = Qualitative research manuscript, Mixed = Mixed-method research manuscript.

Alex’s Story

Alex is a doctoral candidate in a counselor education program at a research university that is categorized as Research 1. His institution is in the North Central region of the ACES. He is a 36-year-old White male and obtained his master’s degree in Rehabilitation Counseling. Alex’s research interests include life care planning, and he published two conceptual articles as the first author during his doctoral studies. Looking back, Alex shared that his time as a doctoral student researcher was “not great,” despite the fact that he learned a great deal about the publication and editorial feedback experience.

Though Alex’s program placed a very high emphasis on research, Alex recalled that, in reality, his faculty members and peers were not actively pursuing their own research, nor were they very interested in discussing it. As such, Alex found it difficult to find opportunities to engage in research. He shared, “We’re in the building where research is supposed to happen, but I can’t tell you what people are working or who’s doing what. I don’t know who’s publishing or what’s happening.” Having entered the doctoral program without any previous research experience, Alex had expected to learn and work under more experienced researchers (e.g., faculty members); however, over time he realized that he would not receive adequate support during his program with regard to research. Alex attributed the lack of support to a “bad timing.”
Indeed, when he first came to the program, the department was short-staffed and faculty members were too busy to advise students on their research. Alex eventually lost interest in research due to a general lack of experience, knowledge, and support. He told himself, “I don’t know how to do this. This is dumb. I’m not going to do this stuff.”

Alex revealed that he had to “figure it out” by himself with regard to research. The path to accept this realization was, he said, very frustrating, as no one actively supported him to pursue his own research interests during his program. Finding collaborators, as well, was another challenge because there were no peers who shared his own research interests. Thus, Alex had to go outside of his program to find people with whom he could collaborate. While the journey to learn the research and publication process was difficult, Alex eventually came to realize that he enjoyed the process overall.

Identifying the reasons for what he was doing during his research and publication process was especially important to Alex. While doing research, he continuously asked himself, “Is this useful? Is this valuable? Is it important?” Giving back to the field and to the community, it seemed, was Alex’s primary motivation for pursuing his own research interests, relaying that his philosophy of research rests upon the belief that, “Really good scholarship asks a question that really has an impact on the way people behave and what they do.” Rather than doing research for jobs, tenure/promotions, fame, recognition, or personal status, Alex wanted to continue asking questions that can benefit the community at large.

Alex also specifically emphasized the importance of relationships in research, saying, “Research means finding out who people are, what they are doing, knowing how they work, and what kinds of questions they are asking, so that I can ask useful things.” He wanted to approach research as a member of the community, rather than someone who sits in an ivory tower far
beyond the interests and needs of others. Alex also prioritized relationships when considering the publication process, saying, “Publishing is not only about making good science, but the politics of navigating relationships. It is writing in a way that matches the interests and styles of the audience, editors, and reviewers.”

**Andrea’s Story**

Andrea is currently a doctoral candidate in a counselor education program at a Research 1 institution in the North Atlantic region of the ACES. She obtained her master’s degree in School Counseling. She is a 37-year-old White female. She is now preparing to transition from graduate school to become a counselor educator. Andrea’s research interests include the professional development of counselors. During her doctoral studies, she published a conceptual article as the first author. She currently has two articles under review: a quantitative article for which she is the first author, and a qualitative article for which she is the second author. She gained research experience as an undergraduate student, though this was several years ago.

Her department was very supportive of research, and as such there were several opportunities to engage in research, including research teams and research assistantships. However, not many faculty members involved students in their research, and therefore it was difficult for certain students to take advantage of research opportunities unless they proactively sought them out. Fortunately, Andrea was able to serve as a research assistant and join a faculty member’s research team, though these experiences have not yet led to publication. Andrea shared, “Research wasn’t happening really and wasn’t becoming publications, I decided to do some on my own.” Faculty members were supportive of students researching independently, and were willing to serve as consultants when students ran into problems or had questions. In response to this, Andrea said, “I was definitely surprised that there wasn’t more collaboration
between faculty and students.” In order to get published before graduation, Andrea and her peers teamed up to do research on their own rather than simply waiting for faculty members’ availability. Andrea found collaborating with her peers to be a very positive experience. As doctoral students who needed publications, she and her colleagues bonded over having similar motivations distinct from the priorities of their faculty members.

At first, Andrea was not confident about the research and publication process, and continuously asked herself, “Will my work be good enough?” But Andrea soon realized, however, that the best way to learn this process was by doing it. Over the course of her research, her advisor has been very helpful, walking through the process with Andrea and providing feedback when needed. Her advisor also helped her navigate and respond to editorial feedback. She learned how to be more confident in herself without questioning her own capabilities. These experiences have given her a better understanding of the research and publication process. Andrea said that the experience of going through the editorial feedback process, and the perseverance she gained because of that process, led her to success as a doctoral student researcher. Andrea reported that she enjoyed the process of research and publication, and believed that her research will help her during job search. Andrea also said that “being able to use research to help practitioners and counselors-in-training” is also motivating her to conduct research.

Jane’s Story

Jane is a doctoral candidate in a counselor education program at a research institution located in the Rocky Mountain region of the ACES. She is a 30-year-old White female and is in the third year of her doctoral program. She studied school counseling for her master’s degree. Her institution used to be a Research 1 institution, but recently it has been classified as a
Research 2. Jane has previous research experience as an undergraduate student. Jane’s research interests include therapeutic relationships as well as the counseling/psychotherapy process. She is passionate about qualitative research methodologies and has two qualitative manuscripts that are published, one as the solo author and the other as the fourth author. Jane is also a solo author of one other qualitative manuscript, which is in revision. She is working on two other projects, including a conceptual manuscript as the first author, as well as a quantitative manuscript as the second author.

Jane described the research climate of her program as one that was not very supportive of students’ research opportunities. The faculty members, who were mostly tenured, were not motivated to do research, and largely did not involve their students in their research. Moreover, her department has been short-staffed, and faculty members were over-loaded. As research opportunities were very seldom available, Jane had to actively seek out opportunities. Jane felt frustrated with this environment because she had initially decided to enter the program in order to receive guidance for her research within the counseling field; however, she realized over time that there was a discrepancy between her expectation and the reality. Jane had to get her needs met in other ways, such as working with people outside of her program or working independently. Her research assistantship in another department, for instance, allowed her to experience interdisciplinary research firsthand, connecting her research with practice.

Besides the lack of mentorship that was available for her through her program, Jane also experienced challenges in the editorial process. As a researcher who was passionate about qualitative methodologies, Jane mentioned that some reviewers were not very familiar with relatively newer approaches in qualitative research (e.g., narrative inquiries) and their editorial feedback sometimes was not very relevant or applicable. She shared, “Sometimes people aren’t
ready or aren’t as versed in things that are well-established in other fields. I think counseling is pretty far behind, especially in qualitative research.” Since not all reviewers and editors had sound knowledge and understanding of qualitative methodologies, Jane had to advocate for herself and educate the editorial board that what she was doing was methodologically sound. Despite all the challenges that Jane experienced during her publication and editorial process, she continued to work hard and improve her learning environment. She was internally motivated and had a passion for moving the field of counseling forward. Jane did not identify herself as a doctoral student researcher, but rather just a researcher, saying, “the title doctoral student researcher does not align with my beliefs and philosophy. I consider myself a researcher or a researcher-in-process.” Although she acknowledged that doctoral student researchers are still learning and growing, she believed that they have the capability to conduct research as independent researchers, and that their work should not be devalued because of their temporary status as students. Jane stated, “I do think that master’s students and doctoral students, and undergrad students have things, really important things to say and that it shouldn't be so weighted on status.” She added, “Why is it that I don't have something important to say as somebody else who's a professor?”

Lily’s Story

Lily is a second-year doctoral student in a counselor education program at an institution that places a very high emphasis on research. Her institution is classified as Research 1 and is in the North Central region of the ACES. Lily is a 27-year-old White female who obtained her master’s degree in mental health counseling. She had research experience as a master’s student. Since becoming a doctoral student, she has continuously collaborated with her master’s advisor on presentations and publications. Her research areas include supervision, trauma, as well as
ethics in counseling. She has a book chapter in press as the first author and a manuscript under review as the second author. Her other manuscript was recently rejected and is currently in preparation to be resubmitted to another journal. All of these manuscripts are conceptual. Lily also has three ongoing research projects, for which she is collaborating with her previous and current colleagues.

Overall, Lily perceived her program’s research climate as very positive. In her program, research was highly valued and encouraged. The faculty members were supportive of their students’ research and always willing to provide help. She also had opportunities to collaborate with her colleagues. Specifically, her advisor provided her with attentive guidance, walking her collaboratively through the research process. Also, when Lily experienced any challenges, she knew that she could reach out to faculty members and ask for help. Moreover, her research experience as a master’s student also helped her development as a researcher. Lily’s master’s advisor also worked as a research mentor, often writing and presenting with her at conferences.

Lily had a passion for research and enjoyed the research process. She also obtained an increased self-awareness and developed her researcher identity during her program. During the editorial process, she was open to feedback, without taking it personally, and appreciated the opportunity to grow as a researcher. Lily obtained more resilience as she experienced more editorial feedback. She thought, “I’ll revise that, that’s not bad. It’s not a bad idea. It’s not a bad study. I just have to tailor it to make more sense.”

Lily described that being a doctoral student researcher is similar to “a work in progress,” as it is a learning experience. She believed that doctoral student researchers are capable of contributing to the field, but emphasized that they should be so open to growth, open to learning, and open to feedback. Lily believed that the true meaning of her research is her ability to bring to
life the voices of her research participants, connecting these voices with readers, audiences, and other researchers. She said it was exciting to “relate the voice of participants to an audience who thought that it really mattered.”

**Jo’s Story**

Jo is a third-year doctoral student currently enrolled in a counselor education program at a research institution in the North Central region of the ACES. Her institution is a Research 1 institution and her program is a full-time, on-campus program. She is White and over forty. She studied School Counseling for her master’s degree. She did not have any research experience as an undergraduate or master’s student. Jo’s research interest centers on mental health-related issues in school counseling, a topic that she said is currently lacking in counseling journals. She is the fifth author of one conceptual article under review, and the first author of an article that has been rejected from a journal. She does not currently have articles published, accepted, or in the revision process.

Research was highly valued in her program, and as such classes were styled in a way that encouraged students to research independently over the course of the program. Despite this, Jo did not believe that she was sufficiently supported by her program. Jo tried to research on her own because she believed that this was what she was supposed to do, even though she felt that she did not have anyone to help her. Also, she did not have the opportunity to collaborate with peers. She shared, “I kind of learned the hard way the mistakes that you should avoid in doing research.” Though Jo learned a great deal about the research and publication process through her mistakes, she wished she could have had more support throughout the research process.

Jo shared that it was difficult for her to be transparent in terms of what she already knew about her research interest, and what she needed additional support on from faculty members. Jo
shared, “I really feel stuck and I, I’m embarrassed by statistics. I’m afraid to tell professors because, like I said earlier, I think they expect me to know more than I do.” Jo felt embarrassed to have to reveal what information she lacked, and hoped that she would figure it out eventually. As time passed, however, she realized that she needed further guidance. Clearly, Jo would have liked the opportunity to receive additional mentoring, support, or guidance from faculty members during her research process; her professors, however, were already stretched too thin and thus did not have time for mentoring. Jo shared, “I think they know that we need research mentoring and I think they know that we need more support than we’re getting, but with budget cuts, there just isn’t enough faculty and so it’s just something that we all have to live with.” Jo also attributed this lack of transparency in her relationships with faculty members to the hierarchy that exists in academia. She shared, “The faculty members are the ones holding the knowledge, it feels like you have to perform all the time and you can’t be really vulnerable and honest, like just talking to them like people.”

As a doctoral student, Jo experienced a steep learning curve, through which she discovered research and publications are intrinsic to the profession. Regardless of the challenges she experienced, Jo said, “I don’t give up and I’m not giving up.” Despite all the challenges that she experienced during the research and publication process, she intended to persevere in order to get her project published. In response to the unique challenges she has faced in her own program, Jo added that doctoral students like herself need more exposure to and experience with research from the outset of their program. Jo hoped that she can use her research to inform school counseling practices. She said, “We do need to find a way to make research more accessible to the community and the K-12 schools, not just for us reading our own journals.”
Blake’s Story

Blake is a second-year doctoral student in a counselor education program at a research institution that is located in the Southern region of the ACES. His institution is classified as Research 2. He is a 26-year-old White male who studied mental health counseling during his master’s program. Blake garnered research experience both as a master’s student and as an undergraduate. Blake’s two main research interests are innovative approaches to substance abuse counseling, as well as social justice and multiculturalism. Integrating these topics into counselor training is another essential component of his research. He wrote two conceptual articles as the first author during his doctoral program, one of which is published and the other in press. He has another manuscript currently under review as a solo author, which was initially rejected from another journal. In addition, he has one ongoing research project using qualitative methods, and is on a research team for a quantitative project at the time of this study.

The culture of his department with regard to research has been supportive and encouraging of Blake. He has felt empowered to be autonomous in his research pursuits as well as to collaborate with others. While research was also not a mandatory component of the program, it was highly encouraged. Similar to the departments of other participants, Blake’s department had experienced a recent change in research climate. With new faculty members entering his program, students have had more opportunities to engage in research projects. Although Blake’s institution was not identified as Research 1, new faculty members did encourage their students to do research, and invited such students to take part in their projects. Despite these opportunities, however, the students in Blake’ program did not have access to financial support to do research, which was a barrier to initiating new research projects. Due to this fact as well as limited opportunities to join pre-existing research projects, Blake prioritized writing conceptual articles rather than empirical ones. Additionally, Blake reported difficulties
prioritizing research due to other responsibilities and opportunities such as “being a TA, doing clinical work, supervising master’s students, and other GA responsibilities.”

Overall, Blake had a very positive research experience collaborating with his faculty members. As Blake shared many common interests with a newer faculty member, Blake was able to receive encouragement and support in brainstorming ideas for possible research and conceptual articles. Through this relationship, he was also able to receive feedback on his writing, and advice on navigating how to submit an article. Blake’s advisor also shared common interests, and he has worked together with her on two research projects. She has been supportive in Blake pursuing his research interests. Despite all the support Blake has received, he wished that he could have contributed more to faculty members’ ongoing projects, sharing, “I still feel like it’s me usually initiating it or asking to be on something.” He has been collaborating with others in some projects in progress, yet he felt the burden was on him to make sure projects are completed. Blake shared, “Collaboration is great, but what happens is when you’re relying on other people, it may never happen.”

Blake’s motivations to pursue research included his passion for contributing to the field, a natural joy found in writing, and a desire to become more competitive in the job market. One of the greatest achievements that he has made is locating his own self-efficacy as a researcher. He learned that the research process is not as daunting or as terrible as he had anticipated, but rather that it as an incredibly rewarding and enriching experience. Blake believed that his current research would serve as the foundation for his future career, and that he was well-prepared to one day become a faculty member who regularly advises and mentors students like himself. Blake was optimistic about the dissertation research and future research endeavors as a faculty member.
Rebecca’s Story

Rebecca is a 32-year-old doctoral candidate in a counselor education program which belongs to the Rocky Mountain region of the ACES. She is White and is in her fourth year of her doctoral program. Her institution is a teaching institution, which is classified as ‘Master’s colleges & universities: Larger programs’ by the Carnegie classification. Her program is an online program and she is living in another state that belongs to the Southern region of the ACES. Rebecca obtained her master’s degree in clinical mental health counseling. She reported that she did not have any previous research experience before beginning her doctoral program. Rebecca’s research interests include the use of distance learning in counseling programs, as well as counseling military families and children. She has one conceptual article published as the second author. Also, she is the first author of a manuscript that uses the qualitative method; the article was rejected, and she has not resubmitted it to another journal.

Rebecca shared that research was not a high priority in her program, as it placed a higher emphasis on teaching, counseling, and supervision. As such, she had to very actively seek out research opportunities in order to be involved in research. Her peers were not very interested in conducting research other than for class assignments, and her advisor did not provide sufficient support on her research. Her advisor reviewed her manuscript that had begun in his class, and also provided feedback, but there was no follow-up to these meetings during the publication process. Rebecca said, “There wasn’t a lot of guidance, aside from what you got in class, there wasn’t a lot of outside guidance.” Moreover, there was a significant discrepancy between the editorial feedback that she received from the journal editor and the feedback that she received from her advisor. In response to these challenges, Rebecca has begun currently collaborating with a faculty member at a different university on a research project. The faculty member has become a predominant mentor in her life and provided her with hands-on research opportunities
often. She shared, “It’s not like we were talking about it and not doing it, we were talking about it and doing it. So, the doing for me really helped.”

While she was proud of herself for seeking out the research and publication process on her own, Rebecca nonetheless regretted that her program did not have enough faculty members with publication experience who could have made this process easier. Also, she reported that the editorial feedback that she experienced was not “collegial”, “collaborative”, or “mentoring”, but just harsh. Rebecca wished that the editorial feedback that was provided was more supportive of doctoral student researchers, saying, “Obviously we're in, we're not like great yet because we're still learning.”

Rebecca was passionate about the topic of counseling military families and children, and hoped to one day contribute to the current body of literature, as she believed that there was not currently sufficient research on this topic. She also believed that conducting research was one way of demonstrating her advocacy for marginalized populations. Rebecca stated, “I think that research is a part of advocating for marginalized populations and different things, I really believe strongly in that and so that’s what motivates me.”

**John’s Story**

John is a doctoral candidate in a counselor education program at an institution classified as Research 2, which is located in the Southern region of the ACES. He is a 26-year-old White male and is in the third year of his doctoral program. John studied mental health counseling for his master’s degree. He had research experience, both as an undergraduate and as a master’s student. His research interests include counselor development and college students’ mental health.
John has four published manuscripts, three of which were developed during his doctoral program, and one developed during his master’s program (the latter of which was published during his doctoral program). Two of his publications are conceptual articles, for which he served as a solo author and as the first author, respectively. Another publication is a quantitative research article which was a result of a faculty member’s project in which he was engaged (as the third author). The other publication is a qualitative article he wrote with his master’s advisor as the second author. John also has one manuscript in revision and one in progress, both of which were quantitative manuscripts. He reports experiencing diverse types of research, including intervention studies, scale development, as well as action research using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The research climate of John’s program shifted after he came into the program. When he first began the program, research was not a priority among faculty members, and students had to do research on their own or actively seek out opportunities to do so. However, with the hiring of new faculty members, the program began to focus more heavily on research and publication. He said, “Now there is more of a research focus climate in my program and I think that it's going to continue to grow, because we brought new faculty members on who just did more of it.” The new faculty members began to invite students to join their research projects, and John perceived this shift in the research climate as one that was very helpful for students’ research development.

John conducted much of his research independently, but also had opportunities to work with faculty members. He mostly did research with one faculty member, whom he identified as his research mentor. John could always reach out to this faculty member when he had questions, or when he needed feedback on his writing. Also, as the mentor had abundant experience as a journal reviewer, John found it helpful to be able to consult with him. Although John who did
most of the legwork up front, faculty members were eager to serve as consultants when John
needed help. John also had a very positive experience collaborating with one of his colleagues, as
they were able to work off of each other’s strengths. John said, “That's somebody too, who I
think in the future, I'll probably continue working with him.”

Through the publication and editorial feedback experiences, John learned how to more
effectively prepare a manuscript, handle editorial feedback, and persist in the face of obstacles.
Moreover, he gained confidence in his ability to write and submit publishable manuscripts
independently. His research and publication experience also helped him become more confident
in his current role as a peer reviewer of a journal, where he regularly provided feedback for other
people. John said, “I feel a lot more comfortable and being able to offer feedback for other
people.” As a researcher, John focused on conducting research that is methodologically sound
and useful in the counseling practice. He believed that his experience will be beneficial when he
becomes a faculty member in the field of counselor education. John felt “more complete as a
counselor educator.”

Lila’s Story

Lila is a doctoral candidate in a counselor education program at a research institution
categorized as Research 1, which is located in the Southern region of the ACES. She is a 30-
year-old White female who is currently in the third year of her program and working on her
dissertation at the time of this study. Her master’s degree is in mental health counseling and she
has research experience both as an undergraduate and as a master’s student. She has a strong
researcher identity, which is why she decided to pursue her PhD degree. Her research interests
include addictions counseling and experiential interventions. Lila has one published quantitative
research article and one conceptual manuscript in revision, both as the first author. She also has
another quantitative manuscript under review, in which she served as the first author. The
aforementioned manuscripts, one in revision and one under review respectively, had been
rejected upon first submission, but both of them were subsequently resubmitted to other journals
after revision. Lila is currently developing a mixed-method research manuscript as the first
author.

In Lila’s program, research engagement was very strong among faculty members, but less
active among doctoral students. Also, Lila reported faculty members seldom involve their
students in their research. As research opportunities were not often available, Lila had to seek out
other opportunities to engage in research. Although she was able to join faculty members’
projects later in her doctoral studies, she found that in most cases, she had to do research on her
own. Lila also found it difficult to collaborate with her peers, as they were largely uninterested in
their development as future researchers. Given the fact that so few students were actively
pursuing research in her program, Lila was unsurprised to find that faculty members largely
underestimated her competence as a researcher. Indeed, Lila shared that her development as a
researcher was essentially stunted at the beginning of her doctoral program.

Lila’s experience as a master’s level student was rather more positive with regard to
research. She had more opportunities to collaborate with faculty members and peers. Lila was
mentored by her master’s advisor, an individual who actively involved his students in his
research, and regularly walked through the manuscript development and publication process with
his students. In contrast, she received very little advising and supervising from the faculty
members in her doctoral program, who largely seemed to only be available for basic questions.
Lila learned during her doctor program that the publication process would require a great deal of
self-agency and personal discipline. Lila wished she could have received a more structured
research mentorship from her doctoral faculty members, saying, “It often feels like we are thrown into the water with the hope that we can figure out how to swim with minimal help.” She had to be self-motivated and self-initiated.

Lila had a strong researcher identity, which she believed stems from her undergraduate research experiences. She shared, “It’s just become a part of my life and who I am. I consider myself a researcher as one of my primary identities.” She loved sharing knowledge and has a passion for writing manuscripts that will progress the profession. She believed that her publication experience will prepare her for future job as a counselor educator. Lila said, “I think my current work is going to help expedite what I do in the future.”

**Molly’s Story**

Molly is a second-year doctoral student in an institution classified as a Doctoral/Research university located in the Southern region of the ACES. She is a 26-year-old Black female who studied mental health counseling for her master’s degree. She reports not having any research experience as an undergraduate or as a master’s student. Molly’s research interests include supervision for school counselors, as well as group counseling for adolescents who have experienced trauma. She has one conceptual manuscript recently rejected from a journal, for which she served as a solo author. She is working on another conceptual manuscript with a faculty member in her program, which she will develop into a dissertation next year.

Recently, there has been a shift in Molly’s program; her institution was recently downsized and during this process, Molly’s program was consolidated into another program. She had to transfer over the summer to another campus and acclimate to a new learning environment, which she believed negatively influenced the research climate of her department. In her program, research was an expectation for doctoral students, but there was not much assistance regarding
how to conduct research. Submitting manuscripts for publication and conference proposals were program requirements, though faculty members rarely did more than answer students’ questions and provide feedback. Molly shared, “We have to ask, and they tell us if they have room or not.” She wanted “a little bit more help with writing and structural things from faculty.” Peers have been supportive in her research process; however, in most cases, Molly did research on her own, based on her class assignments. She believed that active collaboration is needed for both students and faculty to be productive in research.

Through the publication and editorial feedback process, Molly developed her writing skills and obtained a better understanding of her target audience. She believed that this experience will be helpful for her future research. She said, “It speaks to my ability to conduct and articulate it in a way that is meaningful to the profession and future literacy sources.” As Molly accrued more research experience, she became more confident in conducting research. She believed that the meaning of conducting research rests in the future of her professional identity, and recognized scholarly productivity was a necessity in becoming a good doctoral student and a future counselor educator. Molly thought research was what “needs to be done” for her future career path.

Rachel’s Story

Rachel is a second-year doctoral student in a research institution classified as Research 2. Her institution belongs to the North Central region of the ACES. She is a 25-year-old White female who studied mental health counseling during her master’s program. Rachel reports not having previous research experience before she began her doctoral studies. She has a qualitative research manuscript as the first author, which is now in revision for publication after being rejected from another journal. Also, she has five projects of diverse authorships in progress. She
is passionate about qualitative research methods and is working on multiple qualitative projects. Rachel conducts research on LGBTQ issues in counseling, remediation, as well as counseling students and mentorship.

Rachel described the research climate of her program as one that strongly values research. Faculty members were active in research, and students had several opportunities to join faculty members’ research projects or start their own. Faculty members have acted as co-researchers, engaging in the “nitty gritty” of research, and as consultants, when Rachel encountered problems during her research process. Rachel has consistently worked with a specific faculty member, whom she refers to as her research mentor. This research mentor advised Rachel throughout the research, publication, and editorial process, providing her with continued support. Rachel has also worked continuously with a peer collaborator, an experience that has positively facilitated her growth as a team researcher.

Since Rachel entered the doctoral program without any research experience, she experienced an elevated sense of imposter syndrome. Writing her first manuscript was truly a challenge for her, and she often asked herself, “You’ve never done this before, so how are you sure it’s going to be right?” Rachel’s research mentor helped her overcome her fears by encouraging and validating her work, and by helping to establish expectations of the publication process. With her mentor’s guidance, Rachel felt that she was mentally prepared for whatever may happen during the editorial process, including the inevitable rejections.

Rachel believed that, on the whole, her publication and editorial feedback experience was very positive, thanks to the strong research mentorship that was provided by the faculty members. She said, “One thing that helped me be successful, it would be having really effective and strong research mentorship.” In addition, the experience of receiving her first rejection so
early on in her career was beneficial to her growth as a researcher. Rachel’s experience as a
doctoral student researcher was sound preparation for the day she will become a counselor
educator in advising, as well as a teacher of individuals like herself.

Michelle’s Story

Michelle is a doctoral candidate in a Research 1 institution in the Southern region of the
ACES. She is a 28-year-old Black female and is in her third year of doctoral study. Her master’s
degree is in mental health counseling. Michelle reports having prior research experiences both
during her undergraduate and master’s studies. Her passion for research largely focuses on grief
and loss, and supervision of students with significant life stressors. Michelle has one accepted
manuscript as the second author, which was a conceptual article based her peer’s project.
Michelle reports that this manuscript was rejected from a journal after the revise and resubmit
process, but was finally accepted by another journal after two rounds of revision. She has another
conceptual manuscript currently in revision, in which she served as the first author. She states
she has had two manuscripts rejected from journals, including a qualitative manuscript and a
conceptual manuscript, both as the first author. Michelle currently has two other conceptual
manuscripts in preparation as the first author.

In Michelle’s program, research was a top priority among faculty members and students.
She shared, “I’m just surrounded by really hard workers and so that motivates me to be a hard
worker and to do research.” All members in her program were eager to be involved in research,
including writing, proposing, and presenting. In particular, the faculty members in her program
were competent researchers and have been actively supporting their students’ research. However,
since Michelle had a research assistantship outside her department, she did not have many
opportunities to engage in faculty members’ projects. Instead, she conducted most of her
research independently based on her own research agenda, receiving guidance and mentoring from her faculty members.

Michelle often began her research projects based off of her class assignments, as they were designed to facilitate students’ research and publication. Through her courses, she understood what was happening behind the editorial scenes, and also practiced the peer-review process of academic journals. Michelle’s cohort members have been helpful in her development as a researcher, providing both encouragement and constructive feedback. Moreover, her peers have been a strong support system, sharing each other’s experiences and commiserating when faced with challenges. Michelle also found the support from her faculty members very helpful in her growth, including the support from her dissertation chair. The chair provided clear feedback, presented examples, as well as helped her understand the publication and editorial process better.

For Michelle, being a doctoral student researcher has meant building the foundation to become a strong scholar. With her faculty members’ support and guidance, Michelle gradually developed her identity as a researcher. She found what she was passionate about, and what questions she wanted to dive into in her career as a researcher. Moreover, she became more comfortable as an independent researcher and future counselor educator. Michelle shared, “I can use what I’ve learned from that in how I teach and how I supervise and how I provide counseling services and how I lead.” Her goal as a researcher was to contribute to a larger body of knowledge through publication. Specifically, she wanted to make sure that her research is practical for the counselors and for her future students.
Cross-Case Analysis: Emergent Themes

Several themes and subthemes emerged from the individual participant stories and experiences. During the first phase of cross-case analysis, 73 categories were identified. Using further phenomenological reduction and reflection, the researcher constructed 7 overarching themes and 28 subthemes (see Table 3). In particular, the researcher used a metaphor of bike riding to represent doctoral students’ development in their research and publication process. Doctoral students’ experiences with the publication and editorial feedback process were similar to learning how to ride a bike and, over time, actively enjoying the act of bike riding. In this case, the bike represents the students’ potential publications; the act of learning how to bike ride is itself comparable to learning how to conduct research and publish articles to refereed journals. The concept of terrains (i.e. where the bike riding is taking place) refers to the environments in which doctoral students conduct research and publish articles. The skills that are needed to ride a bike, such as pedaling, coasting, and scooting, represent all the skills that are acquired during the research and publication process. Also, the editorial feedback provided by journals is illustrated by the rules of the road that the bike riders need to understand. Finally, training wheels represent the support and resources that are made available to students during this process, as they allow novice bike riders to remain secure and confident. The 7 themes included: a) bike riding terrains (climate/culture of doing research), b) learning to balance by learning to fall (learning from experience and mistakes), c) pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike (skills required/obtained during the process), d) learning the rules of the road (editorial feedback experience), e) learning with training wheels (mentoring, scaffolding, and resources), f) reasons to ride a bike (motivations for doing research), and g) runner’s high (achievement and researcher identity).


Table 4

List of Themes

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Subthemes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bike riding terrains</td>
<td>1.1. Research climate in the field of counselor education</td>
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<td>1.2. Research climate within the department</td>
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<td>1.3. Role of peers</td>
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<td>1.4. Research opportunities: <em>structured</em> versus <em>laissez-faire</em></td>
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<td>1.5. Safe environment and transparency of communication</td>
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<td>2. Learning to balance by learning to fall</td>
<td>2.1. Learning by doing</td>
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<td>2.2. Learning from mistakes and having resilience</td>
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<td>2.3. Perseverance</td>
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<td>3. Pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike</td>
<td>3.1. Seeking out opportunities</td>
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<td>3.2. Developing manuscript from class projects</td>
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<td>3.3. Openness to feedback</td>
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<td>3.4. Understanding issues related to collaboration</td>
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<td>3.5. Honing one’s writing skills</td>
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<td>4. Learning the rules of the road</td>
<td>4.1. Dynamics behind the scene</td>
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<td>4.2. Balance between conformity and autonomy</td>
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<td>4.3. Communication with editorial board</td>
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<td>4.4. Helpful and unhelpful editorial feedback</td>
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<td>5. Learning with training wheels</td>
<td>5.1. Mentorship</td>
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<td>5.2. Scaffolding and structured research opportunities</td>
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<td>5.3. Resources</td>
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<td>6. Reasons to ride a bike</td>
<td>6.1. Enjoying the process</td>
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<td>6.2. Contribution to the field</td>
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<td>6.3. Becoming competitive in job market</td>
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<td>7. Runner’s high</td>
<td>7.1. Feelings of achievement</td>
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<td>7.2. Feelings of self-efficacy</td>
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<td>7.3. Identity as a researcher</td>
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<td>7.4. Foundation for future research</td>
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**Theme 1: Bike Riding Terrains**

This section discusses the research climate/culture that the participating doctoral students experienced. The *bike riding terrains* will in this section metaphorically represent this research climate/culture. Some individuals might start bike riding in an optimized environment, which is a flat and paved path, away from traffic. Others might start bike riding on a gravel road. When
doctoral students come into their doctoral programs, they may find their learning environments
for research just as varied. For some students, their ‘terrain’ for learning how to ride their bike is
large, flat, smooth, or paved. However, for some, their learning environment is a park path, an
empty parking lot, or a driveway. Some students may have a supportive “parenting figure” that
can coach them while they are learning to do research, but others may not. Learning environment
is important for new researchers. Like people learning to ride a bike, the terrain makes the
difference in the process of learning how to do research --since it can make their learning
significantly difficult or smooth.

The research climate and culture that doctoral students experienced played a critical role
in their development as researchers. Therefore, understanding the detailed characteristics of
doctoral student researchers’ learning environments would be one of the essential keys to more
effectively understand the lived experiences of these students. The subthemes included: a)
research climate in the field of counselor education, b) research climate within the department, c)
role of peers, d) research opportunities: structured versus laissez-faire, as well as e) safe
environment and transparency of communication.

**Research climate in the field of counselor education.** The participants, especially those
with multiple publication and editorial feedback experiences (Lila, Blake, Jane, and John),
shared their overall thoughts about the research climate in the field of counselor education. These
doctoral student researchers mentioned that research is less seriously considered in the field of
counselor education, compared to other academic disciplines, such as psychology. In particular,
they perceived that researcher identity is relatively less emphasized in counselor education,
which focuses more on teaching. Lila said:
There's a reason that psychology, not just psychologists but even counseling psych, look at us and don't take our research as seriously. I think it's because we don't take our research as seriously. Again, it goes back to identity. I think there's just a lot that's missing here. I think counselor education wants to focus so much on the education piece, it forgets that scholarship is this major part of it.

Blake also said that publication is considered relatively less important for counselor educators, stating, “Generally from what I’ve seen, you know, you don’t necessarily have to publish as much as some other disciplines for your job.” In addition, Blake thought that the overall scholarly productivity of counselor education should be improved. He said:

I think, there definitely also needs to be just more research coming out of counseling, because I think, you know, a lot of research is from the psychology fields, and counseling... there’s probably not as much like really... I think there’s just less.

Jane shared similar perspectives on research in counselor education. She said, “I think that counselors and counselor educators tend to be regarded as not the greatest researchers, so how are we going to change that?” Jane argued that counselor educators should devote more time to helping their students learn and develop as researchers. In addition to other participants, John mentioned that counseling research largely lacks intervention studies, despite the fact that scholarly commitment should be considered as a big part of the missions of counselor education. He said, “There are often discussion about how the counseling field does not do enough intervention research.”

**Research climate within the department.** Within the departmental levels, the doctoral student researchers described how their programs, faculty members, and peers played a role in the research climate. Overall, many participants perceived that their programs are supportive of
research, and that research was expected for faculty members as well as students. Molly said, “The culture of my department, it’s expected of us as doctoral students.” Similarly, Rachel said, “My department really puts a high value on research as well.” Alex added:

I think our, my department, it’s a research heavy institution, meaning research is really important and so... research was talked about a lot... from the very beginning, it was talked about and it was made important, like you need to do it.

Jo also said that research was highly valued and discussed a great deal in her program; as such, she believed that she needed to do research. She shared, “The classes all built towards doing our own research throughout the program, and I think it’s highly valued.” Michelle said that the fact that her university is classified as Research 1 influenced the research climate, saying, “I think that’s the kind of set expectation, just by the nature of the university that we’re at. Research is like a top priority.”

Participants agreed that faculty members played a critical role in the research environment. Rachel and Blake said that having faculty members with research experience was beneficial for their growth. Lila said that faculty members with a heightened focus on research set clear expectations for their students. She stated, “I know among the faculty, research is very strong, lots of publications, lots of grants, lots of presentations. It’s basically an expectation where I go.” However, other participants reported that their faculty members were not very active in research. For instance, Jane mentioned that faculty members often showed a lack of productivity after they became tenured. Jane shared, “Professors are less motivated, especially because most of them specific to our department are tenured. The requirement is only one a year now, and I don’t even think the dean really can do anything when people are tenured.” Blake also added that his program previously had more late career-professors who were not interested
in publishing articles. Rebecca said that her institution was more teaching-based, which meant that there was not a lot of research being conducted. She shared, “We have a lot of faculty who have never published a research article or engaged in one, aside from their dissertation.”

In addition to tenure/promotion and institution classification, faculty members’ research engagement and scholarly productivity were influenced by a number of other factors, including the overall size of the staff. Jo said, “I think our professors have a heart for research and have a heart for helping students, but they are just stretched too thin.” Similarly, Alex said, “I think my timing was bad because I came in when there were only two faculty members and they didn’t have time to do extra papers and research projects.” The participants mentioned budget cuts as one of the reasons that the program was short-staffed. Jane said, “We’re very low-staffed and because of funding issues, they’re not really trying to hire anyone else.” Jo added, “Money and time is an issue, and I do understand that.” Once a program becomes short-staffed, it makes the faculty members extremely busy, which in turn makes it hard for them to advise and mentor their doctoral students’ research. Lila said:

I think it's more, one of my faculty members calls it ‘nuggets.’ Like they give nuggets, because there's just not enough time and resources for them to do heavy mentorship, so it's more of an advising. It's more, "Come see me if you have questions, I'll answer your questions." "Hey, here's a thing you might want to try to do. This could be good." But it's not really a hand-holding process.

John and Blake shared that new faculty members brought positive changes to the research climate of their programs. John said, “There is more of a research-focus climate in my program and I think that it's going to continue to grow, because we brought new faculty members on who just did more of it.” Similarly, Blake said, “Now we have these younger professors who are
collaborative with doctoral students.” Lila also said that her department’s research culture, which was previously not very active, has been changed in a positive way with the hiring of new faculty members. She stated:

The research culture was a little bit different when she entered the program. The staff didn’t have a lot of faculty members doing strong research. So, they brought in a couple of new faculty members who have really kind of changed that climate and culture.

Lila said that after her department hired the new faculty members, there was more time and resources available for doctoral students’ research.

On the other hand, Jane and Molly recently experienced shifts in their programs that negatively affected the research climate. Jane’s department had experienced financial difficulties and became less active in research, which led to her university, which previously was a Research 1 institution, end up being classified as Research 2. Jane said, “It’s interesting because we used to be a pretty high Research 1 and then our university had gone through some issues with funding and money, so we went down a rank, in terms of research.” Similarly, Molly herself transferred to another campus over the summer due to the downsizing of her institution, saying, “That also played a part in the climate of the department and the students’ morale and all those kinds of things.”

**Role of peers.** The doctoral student researchers also cited peers as one of the important factors that influenced their learning environment. Michelle said that her program’s heightened emphasis on research created a natural learning environment, which positively influenced how students felt about research. She said:

We are eager to get involved in research and writing and proposing, and presenting... I don’t think I feel jealous or that I need to be doing better than some other person. I’m just
surrounded by really hard workers, and so that motivates me to be a hard worker and to do research.

Learning with peers who were highly motivated encouraged Michelle to persist in her research and publication process. Indeed, peers can serve as strong collaborators, sharing the load when work becomes challenging. Andrea, Blake, Molly, and Rachel reported that they had very positive collaboration experiences with their peers. Specifically, Andrea mentioned that her peers were eager to do research, and often shared her own publication-oriented goals. She shares, “My experience doing research with peers has been a really positive one and I felt more like we were all contributing equally.” Rachel shared her experience of collaborating with one of her peers consistently, saying:

For me, it was really, really helpful not only to have a group of peers who I could do research with, but just specifically to have one peer that, you know, if I have an idea, that's the first person I'm going to go to. Like I know I really always have a team member with that person.

Andrea shared her own experiences with peer collaboration, saying that her peers were instrumental in providing genuine feedback during her manuscript-writing process. She stated:

We have each other's feedback and I think the peer teams I've been on, we're really honest with each other and can really feel like if we do need to get feedback saying like, “yeah, I do think we need to restructure this” or “we need to maybe rethink what the journal is looking for or what we're trying to say here.” We have each other, through the process.

Molly said that her peers were well aware of each other’s research interests, and they helped each other by sharing resources. She stated:
We all have a village, like a communal perspective on helping one another, and so if I had research to do or if they had research to do, we would all kind of, you know, "Oh, here's a random article I found, could be relevant for you.” We would just email those references and resources to each other.

In addition to academic support, peers also became a strong source of social and emotional support for the doctoral student researchers. Rachel shared that peers have been sometimes more approachable than faculty members for sharing and discussing personal struggles. She said:

I think faculty members have like a higher level of knowledge, so you can have some conversations with them; there's some things you don't want to admit, like, I didn't want to admit I'd never written a literature review, but I could talk to my peers about that and kind of work on some of those things together.

Andrea also mentioned the encouragement that she received from her peers, saying, “I think a lot of it going forward is having support from peers and really encouraging each other to keep going and keep trying.” Furthermore, peer support was specifically helpful when they experienced rejections from journals. Commiserating with peers who share similar experiences helped relieve many of their fears and stresses. Lily said:

I think also just having peers who are going through it, having that, you know, community to kind of lean on and say, “Oh, I'm still waiting on [name of a journal]” or whatever the case might be... and having them be like, “Oh, I know it's so long,” you know, just having that ability to...kind of, you know, commiserate together.

For some participants, however, peers did not play such a positive role in their learning environment. Lila and Rebecca, for instance, shared that her peers were not very interested in research, which meant that had to work alone most of the time. Lila said that her collaboration
with her peers was minor; she could discuss conference presentations with her peers, for example, but not manuscripts or research studies. She shared, “People in my program that aren’t as interested in research don’t collaborate with me.” Since most doctoral students in her program were not active and competent in research, faculty members also held very low expectations for students’ research, which negatively affected Lila’s learning experience. She said:

I almost felt like being a doctoral student was holding me back from doing more research. I had thought that coming into a doctoral program would mean that I would be able to do more research, because it’s a doctoral program. I’ve had to kind of wait while everybody catches up... I felt like my development was getting a little bit stunted.

Similarly, Rebecca shared that she was the only student in her cohort who wanted to transform their class projects into publications. Her peers, conversely, did research only for class assignments and for the subsequent grades. She said, “It wasn’t as important to them, which is why they didn’t want to be the first author, or they weren’t as interested in submitting it. It was more for the grade.”

**Research opportunities: Structured versus laissez-faire.** The doctoral student researchers engaged in research projects through a variety of opportunities, including research assistantship, joining faculty members’ projects, or doing projects on their own. Some of the research opportunities were presented with some sort of structure, while others were provided accidentally.

Rachel had a very positive experience with finding research opportunities, as she joined a faculty member’s project during the first year of doctoral program. She said, “The faculty member I’ve been able to work with has been offering me opportunities, inviting me onto stuff, and has expressed a really strong interest in what I’m working on, and has wanted to join me in
that.” Blake also was given an opportunity to join a faculty member’s project. He said that his advisor, who was one of the newly hired faculty members, was always willing to work on projects with him. Lila and Jane were also invited to join faculty members’ projects; however, they were largely ambivalent about these opportunities, as they were not offered until Lila and Jane had proven themselves capable of doing research. Lila said:

Once their grant came along, and the content area is an area that I worked in clinically, and I think they saw that I could be strong in research. That's when that opportunity finally presented itself. I think there must have had, have been the shift from like students to future colleague maybe. That's when it started to get presented to me more often.

Similarly, Jane said, “I feel like it was only when I had published on my own and with other people that she realized that I could be an asset, and then asked me to join.”

Andrea was the only participant who had the opportunity to work as part of a research team during her program. She did her graduate assistantship in a faculty member’s research team, during which she worked on a few different research studies. By joining a research team, she could keep herself organized and structured; however, team research sometimes made the projects stagnant, as it largely depended on faculty members’ priorities and schedules. Andrea said that none of the work that was done by the team was ever actually submitted. In order to be published before she graduates, she had to do research on her own, beyond that required of the research team. Andrea said, “When I saw that that wasn’t happening really and wasn’t becoming publications, I decided to do some on my own.”

Andrea chose to do research on her own, which increased her productivity. However, for of other participants, research opportunities were not ‘given’; instead, such opportunities had to be actively pursued by the doctoral students themselves. The students were free to do their own
research if they wished, but the faculty members themselves did not necessarily provide such research opportunities. This ‘laissez-faire’ approach to research training did not always work for every student.

Rebecca, who described her institution as a teaching university, said, “Faculty members didn’t actively seek you out for publication or research opportunities. You had to seek it out yourself.” Lila also said that in most cases, she did research independently, stating, “I was doing research on my own, I do a lot of stuff on my own.” Lila, who identified herself as a self-starter, described her publication experience, “self-motivated, self-initiated, um, again, I've had to do, my experiences have been a lot of ‘me doing it’.” She said that her experience in publication has been a little bit of “you’re on your own.” Alex also had to do research on his own, clarifying that this laissez-faire approach was not the best for his learning. He said, “It was encouraged by faculty that we have to do our own project and they’ll kind of talk to us about it, but I just didn’t. That didn’t work for me.” Jo also had to figure out how to do research by herself, even though she needed help. She said, “I tried research on my own, because I thought I was supposed to, and I didn’t really have help... I would say that I took it upon myself to do it by myself, because I thought that was expected.”

**Safe environment and transparency of communication.** The participants mentioned that having access to a safe environment played a critical role in their experience; this safe environment welcomes open communication between faculty members and students on their progress, without fear of being judged. Jo said:

It’s embarrassing to me, to have to show what I’m lacking in. It feels like I have to perform all the time and I can’t be really vulnerable and honest, like just talking to them like other people.
Jo shared that her advisor seemed to over-estimate her abilities to work on her own. Jo said, “She (Jo’s advisor) has expected that I could do it on my own and I think maybe she over-estimated my abilities to work on my own on it.” She thought that part of this is contributable to the hierarchy that exists in her department. She stated, “If it was more collegial, where there was open, transparent discussion between students and professors, I think that would’ve helped me a lot.” Alex also shared that it is difficult for him to be transparent and open with those in his department, as he did not feel safe in doing so. He said:

I still don’t feel like I got enough of that and part of that I think could be, because I don’t know if this is of the department or if this is just the way I view it, but I don’t feel like it’s a safe environment to say, “I’m struggling here. I really feel kind of lost or I just got my ass kicked by this feedback. I just got beat up and that’s embarrassing.” When you have people that you’re close to and that you’re comfortable with, it’s okay to say, “I just got beat up and here are my bruises”, but when you’re in an environment that’s not quite that healthy, you try and conceal all of those visible wounds.

Unlike what Jo and Alex experienced, Rachel, Molly, Rebecca shared that their faculty members were very approachable, and that they were not afraid to ask questions and communicate openly about their progress. Rachel said, “I knew that I could ask faculty members any question I wanted, without feeling like I was being judged or seen as not a rigorous researcher.” Rebecca also said:

I would have no problem saying to him, “Hey, I’m really not familiar with this process,” or “I’ve never done a mixed-method research, would you mind taking the lead?” or “Can you refresh my memory on this methodology?”
Being able to be transparent, open, and vulnerable in their program was largely based on the relationships between participants and their faculty members, and as such was a very important component of their learning experience. As Molly shared, “I think the faculty should be my go-to resource.”

**Theme 2: Learning to Balance by Learning to Fall**

This section discusses the common patterns of learning that tend to emerge among doctoral students as they develop into independent researchers. *Learning to balance by learning to fall* will in this section metaphorically represent the process of learning research and writing for publication among numerous trials and failures. This learning process is similar to what novice bike riders often experience, in that they often fall from their bikes numerous times so that they might one day understand how to balance on their bikes successfully. Learning how to ride a bike is not an activity that can be achieved all at once. Indeed, riding a bike is very much a hands-on experience that requires time, trial and error. There is no one way to learn how to ride a bike, and all learners face particular difficulties in the process. Just as novice bike riders fall from their bikes, so also do student researchers face continued mistakes and failures that they have to overcome.

The process of trial and error, making mistakes and learning from them, is essential when learning how to ride a bike. Likewise, doctoral student researchers must learn how to develop a manuscript, how to organize it so that it is publishable, and, finally, how to successfully go through the editorial process, all by ‘doing.’ Indeed, participants shared that, in addition to their own perseverance and resilience, it was their mistakes that so heavily informed their journey to becoming independent researchers. The subthemes included: a) learning by doing, b) learning from mistakes and having resilience, and c) perseverance.
Learning by doing. Most participants highlighted the importance of experience throughout the publication and editorial process. They said that experiencing the process is different from reading about it in the textbook or talking about it with others. Rachel shared:

So, I can read the book and know all about it but when it actually comes to like doing it yourself, it feels very different. I often feel like publication/editorial feedback is one of those processes you just have to go through in order to better understand what it is like. Rebecca added, “It’s not like we were talking about it and not doing it. We were talking about it and doing it. So, the ‘doing’ for me really helped.” Andrea also shared that going through the entire research and publication process was the best way to learn it for herself. She said, “For me, it always helps to actually go through a process and I just learned much better that way.” Molly and Lily also said that going through the process itself has been beneficial; indeed, experiencing many different editorial processes at the same proved to be helpful, as Lila shares, “I think that I’ve learned since each editorial process has been different, that I’m growing and learning as I engage in it.”

The participants revealed that having prior experience ‘doing’ research contributed positively to their learning. Two thirds of the doctoral student researchers (Alex, Andrea, Jane, Lily, Blake, John, Lila, and Michelle) had previous research experience as undergraduate and/or master’s students, which helped them feel more confident about the prospect of conducting research and publishing articles during their doctoral studies. Jane shared her experience of doing research as an undergraduate student, saying, “I think foundationally doing research in my undergrad, which I think is, tends to be a unique opportunity.” Similarly, John shared his research experience during his master’s program. He said, “My mentor offered me an experience, offered me a position helping her do action research.” John perceived this experience
as one that was very helpful for his development as a doctoral-level researcher. He continued, saying, “Having had experience in my master's program and having had something published was encouraging. I didn't feel like I was just starting from scratch. It's just like I knew some of the ins and outs, so I think that experience helped me out as well.” Lila also mentioned that ‘experience’ was critical in her development as a researcher. She said, “I did research in undergrad as well to prepare me for master's, which prepared me for doctoral. I think that, that's 12 years of research experience.” Lila continued, “When I came out here (doctoral program), like I said, I came in with a strong researcher identity. I was already doing research, I already had projects that I had kind of started while I was still in practice.”

**Learning from mistakes and having resilience.** The doctoral student researchers also mentioned that the experience of making mistakes or having failures (e.g., being rejected from journals) contributed to their learning. Jo said, “Well, most of what I’ve learned as a researcher has been through my mistakes, and I’ve learned from my mistakes.” Indeed, Rebecca thought that doctoral student researchers should have more opportunities to make mistakes. She said:

I think it's important that we get our feet wet in and are making mistakes through the program, throughout the program, before we're actually in the field, and granted we're going to make mistakes in the field because we're human. But I think having more opportunities to make those mistakes, see those insights and learn and grow from them would have been a lot more helpful. I think that all doc students should be encouraged to do that.

Similarly, Jane also stated, “I’ve been grateful for my experiences and my ability to get published, and then also to have learned and developed from my challenges.” Feedback was greatly appreciated as it helped the participants recognize their mistakes and improve their
manuscripts. Lily voiced, “I really like having good feedback and I really like learning from mistakes that I’ve done, or mistakes that I made in the past.” Lila also shared her experience, saying, “I think that the experiences I just had with the major revision really facilitated my growth.”

Rachel and Blake believed that getting rejected from journals was beneficial to their growth, as Rachel says:

I think unfortunately the initial rejection was very helpful. I think my ego would have gotten a little bit too high if I never would have, if I wouldn't have just sailed right through. I didn't expect to get rejected, but a little part of you always hopes you're going to initially just your first submission is great and it's wonderful, but I think having that experience as we learn more from our failures than we do our successes. Having the experience of being rejected prepared Rachel for how to deal with it, and over time increased her resilience. The first sample of editorial feedback that she received was a rejection, and as such she was very disheartened and did not know how to respond to it. Nevertheless, once she was able to emotionally recover from the experience, Rachel worked on figuring out how she could make her manuscript better, which proved to be very instructive for her. She added, “While I wouldn’t call it a ‘wonderful’ experience, I am very thankful that I did get rejected the first time and did receive not-so-helpful feedback.” Blake also shared similar perspectives on the rejection experience. He stated, “In terms of being rejected, you know, just learning from the experience and trying to make my article better.” Showing such resilience helps doctoral student researchers quickly recover from personal failure, as Lily shares, “I think I'm very resilient. So, getting those rejections and stuff like that doesn't really phase me too much, and I think that that is a really big personal asset in this process.”
**Perseverance.** When individuals repeatedly experience failure, they inevitably feel exhausted, to the point that they wish to give up. The doctoral student researchers, however, were eager to overcome the challenges and failures that are inherent to the process of publication. Rachel said, “You will really never get accepted on your first try. Sometimes you go through journals and you have to submit four times before you get accepted.” Lila also stated, “I’ve never been accepted outright. I’ve always had major revisions.” Rebecca shared that she was prepared for harsh feedback, saying:

And then I learned that from the qualitative manuscript that it is a dog eat dog world out there and, like, not everyone gets accepted and the feedback you get is going to be harsh and you just have to develop that, you know, thick skin.

Michelle also shared her experience, stating, “Especially with the first article, we had a couple rounds of revisions and we thought that we addressed what they wanted, and it still got rejected.” The participants learned that the publication and editorial feedback process is full of uncertainties. Blake said, “It just was a slow process to be understanding and know that you’re not always the one in control and that things go wrong.” Jo added, “You just never know what’s going to come up and you have to be ready.”

Perseverance and resilience helped the participants continue in the publication and editorial process, despite the numerous challenges that they faced. John said, “I think that persistence and diligence helped.” Jo experienced difficulties specifically while she was developing manuscripts – a task for which she feels she did not receive enough support or guidance. Nevertheless, she said, “I don’t give up and I’m not giving up. I keep feeling like I’m going to get something out of that, and I’m very determined to figure this out and get my data into publication.” Blake also believed that his efforts will lead to a fruition, stating:
I see that research is a journey. Sometimes the process is slow, and you think that nothing will come of it, but you need to stick to it, and keep putting in the work and eventually you will see positive outcomes.

Jane shared that she was determined to make her needs met and figure out solutions, despite her unfavorable situation, saying:

I didn't just stop. I was like, "Okay, so what am I going to do?" Now I'm in this situation. I need to figure out what I'm going to do to make it work. My inner ability to figure that out I think has been helpful too, because I didn't give up. I just was like, "Alright, I'm going to move to figure out who is here that can help me."

Doctoral student researchers also discussed how difficult time management is when having to juggle multiple responsibilities. However, Lila and Andrea shared that their perseverance was key to persisting in their research endeavors, and to enduring the research and publication process. Specifically, Lila reminded herself of the passion that she had for her own unique research interests, stating:

I think that all goes back to the attention that I got, the effort I put into it, the mentorship, and also my initiative. I didn't make excuses for it. I was so interested in it, and I, in my own time ... I would practice during the day. I worked clinically, then at night I would go to a coffee shop for two hours and do data input.

Andrea said that her own perseverance allowed her to keep going. She expressed:

I think perseverance, is really, it would be the times when I was feeling not competent enough or feeling like, "Oh, this is just too much work to do." Just the idea that, "No, you have to keep at it, and you have to put the time in. And when you get, when you have challenges, you have to keep going and you have to try to overcome them."
Theme 3: Pedaling, Coasting, and Scooting the Bike

This section discusses the skills that the participating doctoral students acquired during the research and publication process. *Pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike* will in this section metaphorically represent the series of skills that are needed to effectively engage in research and develop publishable manuscripts. There are a variety of skills that are needed to master riding a bike. Once individuals learn how to balance and steer, they acquire skills such as pedaling, coasting, and scooting. Also, they may begin mastering skills that have never been formally taught to them. Moreover, they tend to seek out a smooth terrain (for instance, an empty basketball court) so that they might continue to enjoy their bike riding. Similarly, doctoral student researchers obtain skills through their experiences that accelerate their success during the publication and editorial feedback process. The subthemes included: a) seeking out opportunities, b) developing manuscripts from class projects, c) openness to feedback, d) understanding issues related to collaboration, and e) honing one’s writing skills.

**Seeking out opportunities.** Many participants had to actively seek out research opportunities in order to participate in research. Lila said, “I don’t think the opportunities were presented as much as I sought them out.” Indeed, Lila herself asked to do a research internship in her program, which was not a task that other people in her program typically pursued. She stated, “I requested to do a research internship, which most people in my program don’t even do. It’s not a requirement, which I think is to the detriment of the students.” Jane also said that she personally sought out her research opportunities, even though this was not what was expected in her doctoral program. She stated, “That’s because I sought it out. It wasn’t like the other way around, which I thought coming into the program, it would be.” Jane continued, “I had to figure out how to get my needs met (even though) I was disappointed in the support I got.”
Some doctoral students demonstrated personal initiative by collaborating among themselves or with faculty members. Andrea said, “A few of my colleagues, in terms of other graduate students, teamed up to do some research studies as well as on our own.” Rachel also shard:

I have one faculty member that's been consistent through pretty much all these projects.

And then one peer who's also been consistent through most of these projects as well. So, I kind of developed my own little research team that I work with mostly.

Other doctoral students sought out research opportunities beyond their programs. Alex, for instance, had the opportunity to write manuscripts by collaborating with practitioners, confessing that he had difficulty finding colleagues within his own department who were willing to do so. He stated, “I had to go outside of the department to find a community of people that do the same things that I do and then ultimately find research opportunities there.” Alex continued, “I had to look elsewhere to other professional groups, and I ended up finding mostly clinicians and other people who are in the field who were interested in seeing the value of research and that kind of thing.”

Similar to Alex, Rebecca also sought out a collaborator outside of her department, with whom she has been working on a research project. She had the fortune to meet the collaborator, who at the time was a faculty member at a different institution, while attending a conference. Rebecca stated:

My school is in [name of a state], but I live in [name of another state] and so I just…go to the conferences. I'm on the [name of an association] board and I just try to find other people…who are like, go getters and who want to do and who want to do stuff.
Collaborating beyond her department provided Rebecca the opportunity to pursue a mentorship. Rebecca, who felt that her research was not sufficiently supported by her program, knew that having a mentor outside of her program would only help her research process, stating:

> It was important to me, as still as a young student, to have a mentor because I really wanted to be mentored in that, in the research process, and so through him…I was able to get that.

Jane also sought out research opportunities outside of her department, as part of her graduate assistantship. She shared that this experience was positive, not only in terms of having the opportunity to engage in research, but also because it allowed her to experience interdisciplinary work, which Jane found beneficial. She said:

> It's been nice because I'm doing more interdisciplinary work and I feel like it's valuable and true to my approach to research and what I think our field needs to go, um, and could really expand upon a lot of our perspectives.

In addition to actively finding collaboration opportunities, doctoral student researchers were also proactive in initiating their own research projects. Blake shared, “I still feel like it's me usually like initiating it or asking to be on something, rather than having opportunities to be asked, to be included in something.” Initiating a project and inviting faculty members to advise and guide the project was not unusual among doctoral student researchers, as Michelle says, “A lot of my research projects, they've been on my own but have been supported by the faculty.” Molly also shared, “The other piece of research, I initiated but I'm now working with a faculty member on that. The manuscript is in progress.” Even when research itself is not necessarily required as a doctoral curriculum, the participants tended to initiate research on their own.
Rebecca said, “What I'm doing now... As a doc student, it's not part of, it's not part of my education. I think that's just something that we want to do on our own.”

Being proactive in securing research opportunities was critical for the research experiences of these doctoral student researchers. They used a variety of approaches to engage in research. Blake said, “Being a doctorate student researcher means that you emphasize being a researcher, you seek it out, take advantage of opportunities, and get started on the process.”

**Developing manuscripts from class projects.** One of the strategies that a lot of participants used to secure publications during their doctoral programs involved developing their previous class assignments into manuscripts. Rachel said, “The first one is actually my manuscript that's under review right now that I started with a peer, based on one of our research classes.” She continued:

Use your classes and your research classes specifically and turn those into… So, if you have to do a literature review for a class, see if you can turn it into a content analysis…

Trying to take these things we already have to do and make them into something that you can publish. Try to take as much of the work that you're already doing and maximize it.

Rachel’s strategy was one that was suggested by her research mentor. Rachel stated, “My research mentor advised us to work smarter, not harder...to try to get the skeleton of a project started.” The theme of ‘work smarter, not harder’ is evident in the experiences of several other participants. For instance, Jane discussed the efficiency of doing a little bit of extra work to turn what had already been done into a publication, saying:

As part of our class we have to do, we have to engage in a research project, and so, if I'm already putting in the time and writing all of this for a class, why wouldn’t I just make it a little better and then try to get it published? I think that helped a lot too. Just my ability to
use what I've done in the program and actually turn it into something rather than just have it sit there because it's, you know, I think it's good.

Molly also used her class assignments as a foundation for her publication. She shared, “Through just regular assignments, I was able to find a topic, start research on it, and conduct a few small studies just to get some baseline data.” Similarly, Rebecca submitted a manuscript that was developed from a group assignment. She said, “For our qualitative course, we started another research project and it ended up that there were four of us. I was the first author, and we ended up seeing all the way through to the end, like we submitted it for publication.”

**Openness to feedback.** Both editorial and non-editorial feedback (e.g., feedback received from faculty members or peers) was significant to the doctoral students’ learning experience. Specifically, they believed that remaining open to feedback, and improving their writing based on that feedback, was very important to their publication process. The participants valued such feedback and proactively sought out opportunities to receive feedback even before they submitted their manuscripts to journals. As such, constructive feedback from faculty members and peers was actively sought out. Rebecca said, “I think I would seek guidance and feedback, preliminary feedback from peers and colleagues first before submitting. I would try to, at least.” Lily also had other people review her manuscripts before submission. She stated, “I'll go through and edit it and I'll have my peers or my advisor edit it as well, and then from there, we'll submit it.” Jane added:

Making sure that you have other people look at it. I found, I think I've been fortunate in terms of reaching out to other people, who have been willing to look at my work and give me some feedback, which has been really helpful.
Lila and Molly put effort into securing feedback beyond their own departments. Andrea said, “We submitted that manuscript, and analyzed the data… We've also been presenting the data at some conferences to, to get some feedback and inform our manuscript.” Lila had her colleague outside of her department review her manuscripts to make sure that the writing was clear enough to be understood by those beyond her field. Lila shared, “I have a colleague who's in educational psychology. I send her my manuscripts and ask her to just briefly review them.” She was eager to find sources to receive feedback. She said:

I was just saying that, with this last manuscript, I also struggled to find people that would look at the manuscript. I mentioned before, I find that to be helpful. I wish that there was some type of like, program or some type of offering, maybe through ACA or something, where you could send a manuscript to get preliminary feedback.

In addition to being proactive in seeking out feedback, doctoral student researchers maintained positive attitudes toward feedback (both editorial and non-editorial) and were open to revising their manuscripts based on such feedback. Lily shared:

I think that it was really useful to be open to the feedback. I'm a very open person and I think that one big success that I have found from that is that my writing did improve when I listened to feedback. So, the more I can incorporate feedback, even though it's uncomfortable and it's not fun in that moment to apply the feedback and to redo what I've just spent so much time doing, um, using that feedback has been really beneficial to my own success, writing and stuff like that.

Similarly, Jane mentioned that “being open to revisions and to people’s suggestions and getting other people’s input on what you’re writing, what you're doing” is one of the important skills of doctoral student researchers.
Furthermore, doctoral student researchers said that they did not take feedback personally and understood that the experience of receiving feedback was a part of their learning. Blake stated, “Doctoral students are expected to handle criticism and rejection with grace.” He continued, “I think I'm always understanding why, and always like, ‘I've never felt anything was mean-spirited.’” Lily also mentioned that she has learned to be open to feedback, and to not take it personally. She shared:

I think the first time that it happened, the first time that I got a rejection, I was really, really like upset and very like, “Oh, this is horrible. I'm really bad at this. I'm never going to get anything published.”

When Lily first experienced rejection that was offered in the form of harsh comments, she viewed it as a personal attack. However, she has since learned how to remain objective. Now, Lily is more resilient to editorial feedback and, as such, she is able to view even negative feedback as a tool for improvement.

**Understanding issues related to collaboration.** Collaboration had significant benefits for doctoral student researchers, and as such opportunities to work with others were highly sought after. As Rachel shares, “Having someone else working with you instead of doing it all alone, having someone that can validate your work or help make it better” has been beneficial during her publication and editorial feedback experiences. Jane also shared her thoughts about research collaboration, stating, “I think that other people can contribute in really meaningful ways to your work. Having different voices and different perspectives are really cool.”

Collaborating with somebody who can complement one’s strengths and weaknesses was especially helpful, as John shared, “It's been good to just play off of each other's strengths and so that, I think that's been a really positive experience for me.”
However, collaboration in research was not always positive for the participants. They sometimes experienced challenges when working with others; these challenges were sometimes due to their relationships with other collaborators, while other times the challenges stemmed from the collaboration process itself. Authorship, for instance, was a prevalent issue that occurred when forming collaboration relationships, as Rachel shares:

Before we had started this project, we had never talked about authorship. And so we both kind of, were just, oddly hanging out really until we almost got down to the month of submission, where neither of us had brought it up, like "Who's going to be first?" And so that was kind of a lingering challenge, where I think we were both nervous to, to bring it up, to not hurt each other's feelings.

Rachel continued:

We managed, obviously to come to a very easy conclusion. We just split it up by who did the most work. I had transcribed all the interviews, which put me multiple hours over what he had done. So, we just kind of stuck at that way, but that was definitely a personal and a professional challenge and a learning experience because now I know that's something you need to talk about like right off the bat, as opposed to just waiting and hoping maybe they're going to say it's you or they're going to make a decision. It just, it felt weird. I definitely think in the future, I would make sure that that was discussed prior.

Since Rachel had begun the research and publication process without discussing the issue of authorship with her collaborator, it became even more difficult to bring up the issue until the end of the collaboration process. Indeed, this experience taught Rachel that the discussion of authorship should come earlier in the process.
Blake shared that his faculty members had informed him at the beginning of his research project that he needed to discuss authorship; he has not yet experienced any authorship issues, saying:

Making sure that you divide up the workload evenly or deciding before you do the research or writing, who's going to be, you know, what position in terms of authorship, negotiating authorship or you do the research this way, it doesn't become an issue later. However, the doctoral student researchers found no specific rules or guidelines for deciding authorship, as Michelle said:

I don't know if there's any, if... there's no book on what makes you a first author, makes you second author and so on... And so, trying to figure out what that looks like and how that's different, each person just sees it as a different thing.

Lila mentioned that authorship is determined by the degree of important work that each author contributed. She thought that first or lead author should write the literature review, which she believed to be the most essential. She shared:

The way my process works a lot is, whoever writes the literature review tends to be most intensive. In my eyes, the discussion is a little bit easier and depending on… the methodology can also be easier, but the literature review tends to be the most exhaustive process.

Blake believed that authorship should be determined by the amount of work that each author had done, saying:

If you do a lot of work, you should probably be one of the higher authors, first or second. And then if you're not doing as much, I think it should be, you be the later author. It's good to understand that when you're collaborating.
Although there were no specific guidelines with regard to authorship, Rachel, John, Lila, and Blake all learned that it should be discussed early in the process of research collaboration.

Collaboration also required accommodating different writing styles. Rachel described this process as ‘butting of heads’ and John described it as ‘too many cooks in the kitchen.’ Rebecca said, “It was difficult because we all had different writing styles…As a first author, I just kind of did what I needed to do to make things sound more coherent and flow better.” During the collaboration process, Rebecca was transparent about what challenges she was facing, and checked with her team members to ensure that they had every opportunity to convey their thoughts. She said, “I'm trying to merge our styles and it's a little challenging. This is a part that you wrote, I want to make sure that it sounds right.” She also utilized Google Docs to facilitate the collaborative writing process. Rebecca said, “People would save changes, we can see the changes that they're saving. They would write their ideas down or we would text.”

Another skill that is needed during the research collaboration process is being mindful its potential drawbacks, especially when working with people who have different priorities. Andrea said, “I think sometimes when people who are collaborating have different priorities in terms of the projects they're working on, I found that to be tough.” Specifically, she shared her experience of working with faculty members who already had multiple ongoing collaborative projects with other professionals. Since the faculty members never prioritized the projects they were working on with students, it was hard for Andrea to move forward because she was constantly waiting for faculty feedback. She said, “We would set a deadline for the students to get things done and then we would wait for the faculty to give us feedback before we kind of move on.”

Blake shared a piece of advice that he had received from his advisor with regard to collaboration, saying, “She told me in her experience, collaboration is great, but what happens is
when you're relying on other people, it may never happen.” Blake continued, “Through collaborating, you can't do so much, you can't force someone.” Also, Jane said, “I think I learned that sometimes people say they want to be involved, but then they really don't want to do the work when it comes down to it.” In other words, the participants learned that, while collaboration can be beneficial, it can also make the entire research and publication process slower. Blake said, “I can be self-reliant, I can try to think of things and carry it out myself, but also understanding the importance of collaboration as well, learning to balance self-reliance and collaboration…”

**Honing one’s writing skills.** The participants identified academic writing skills, or the skills that are needed to articulate thoughts clearly and concisely, as being critical to the article publication process. John, for instance, mentioned how important writing skills are in the publication and editorial process, saying:

> It’s just, I think writing skills are just as important as your research skills, because if you send it in and it's not well written or not well edited before you send it in, you're just going to get a reject and they may not even review what you've written down. And at that point, that just feels kind of like a waste. So, just the writing, like the preparation and the writing process are almost as important as actual, actually doing the research in a way that's methodologically sound and all that.

Some participants shared that they possessed natural writing skills, which helped them succeed during the publication and editorial feedback process. Lila described herself as a “technical writer,” noting that her writing has always been very concise. She said:

> I went to school for journalism before I went for psychology. I think that this is a good way for me to be able to kind of integrate those areas that I've always loved. Writing with counseling... And I think it's really, the skills have really helped me. It’s made me
stronger. The technical writing of journals has made me a stronger writer, especially for my dissertation. I think it's, just made me better in communication overall. That continues to kind of push me.

Jane also shared:

I believe I can articulate my thoughts and ideas better when I write. I mean, I don't think I'm a bad speaker, but I think I have an ability to articulate things and communicate in a better way when I write, so I appreciate that.

Michelle added, “The writing has been like a natural skill for me, instead of somebody just having to like practice harder at.” Nevertheless, writing clearly and concisely was not always easy, as Rebecca shared:

The difficult part was I think more just um, tightening up, you know, the writing, especially when you, when you're writing qualitatively, it's, it's not as clear and concise as maybe a quantitative, as you're trying to describe the themes and the narratives of your participants.

John said, “There's just a lot of things that we have to remember. Like if we're preparing something for publication it needs to be readable. People have to kind of be able to read it and has to be concise.” The doctoral student researchers mentioned that writing for publication should always consider the intended audience. Alex stated, “Producing publishable work is as much about writing in a way that matches the interests and styles of the audience, editors, and reviewers.” Molly described this process as ‘cultivating academic language,’ which she found challenging. She shared:

Other challenges will probably be just the time that it takes to really cultivate the academic language, in a way that readers will understand, but it's not too jargon heavy, to
where you sound like you're just using big words just because you know them. So, finding the way to captivate the audience, but explain it thoroughly so that you're explaining what you're actually talking about.

Similarly, Michelle added:

I think there's definitely an art to publishing. I'm like, you can be a great writer and still not publish as often as you would like because I think there's still like an art to it and knowing what the journal needs and how to write for that journal and for that audience.

The participants identified that tailoring their manuscripts to fit the intended journal was critical to the publication process. Indeed, Blake described the process of writing for publication as:

Making sure that my article was similar to like the way other articles are written, so like seeing that my format is similar to other formats that I've been accepted, trying to tailor it to specific journal to make sure that what I'm writing about is similar to what the journal usually publishes.

Jane also explained:

And if you find, and maybe if your piece doesn't fit in a place where you can find, then you got to adjust it. You got to figure out how to make it work and make sure you're following exactly what they want. I think people underestimate that too. I mean, they have all of that information online for a reason. You have to follow what they have, the format, what they're looking for, all that kind of stuff. I think that's really crucial.

In order to write well, reading ‘what is already out there’ was also critical. Jo said, “One thing I learned about the process of publication is you should read the articles, read articles that are in print in that journal before you submit and get a feel for what kinds of things they publish.

Despite the challenges of learning such academic language, the doctoral student researchers were
pleased to note how much they had developed as competent writers. Michelle said, “My writing skills have drastically grown over the past three years.”

**Theme 4: Learning the Rules of the Road**

This section discusses what the participating doctoral students learned about the peer review and editorial feedback process that they experienced while communicating with journals. *Learning the rules of the road* will in this section metaphorically represent the methods that doctor students use to learn the implicit and explicit rules of the editorial process while developing as researchers. All bike riders are expected to learn the rules of the road, which may include using hand signals, how to position a bike when turning right or left, obeying traffic lights and signs, dismounting when crossing crosswalks, letting pedestrians know when they are passing, and slowing down at intersections and railroad crossings to ensure it is safe to cross. Likewise, doctoral student researchers need to understand the rules of publications in order to succeed.

Writing to publish is different from writing for a class project; indeed, new authors in academia have to figure out the editorial feedback process and acquire strategies in response to the feedback. Sometimes, there may exist invisible dynamics regarding the editorial process, such as the values and writing styles of editors and reviewers. Also, politics and relationships may impact the process in unexpected ways. Doctoral student researchers must learn what is happening behind the scenes, and understand how to more effectively communicate and respond to editorial feedback. Another important lesson that doctoral students must learn is that some editorial feedback is going to prove helpful to their learning, while other feedback will not. The subthemes included: a) dynamics behind the scenes, b) balance between conformity and
autonomy, c) communication with the editorial board, and d) helpful and unhelpful editorial feedback.

**Dynamics behind the scenes.** Doctoral student researchers perceived that politics, power, and privilege are involved to some degree in the editorial process. Rebecca, Rachel, Jane, and Michelle mentioned that counseling journals are more favorable to quantitative research manuscripts when compared to qualitative ones. Rachel said:

My mentor, she spent some time kind of talking about the culture of qualitative research in our profession and how we're working on it. So, knowing that there are people who don't understand it and that doesn't mean that it's not good research.

Rachel added that, even within qualitative research, editorial board members may have their own personal preferences, stating of:

There are journal editors who don't know about qualitative research, who just maybe don't understand it, or don't like it or there are editorial review board members who maybe don't like certain topics or don't like certain methodologies.

Michelle also said, “I’ve noticed a lot of counseling journals, they tend to want more quantitative work.” Rebecca found it challenging to “submit qualitative research to largely quantitative journals.” She was not sure what editors of ‘largely quantitative’ journals would look for in a qualitative research study. Moreover, Jane reported that sometimes journal reviewers were not very familiar with relatively newer qualitative methodologies, meaning that they often did not understand what she was attempting to convey. Based on her experience, Jane believed that qualitative research was far behind in the counseling field when compared to other academic disciplines, sharing:
Sometimes people aren't ready or aren't as versed in things that are well-established in other fields, let's say sociology, anthropology, methodology, you know, they are the things that are out there, and I think counseling is far behind, especially in qualitative research. When I have submitted more creative things or tried to push the envelope a little bit, I've gotten feedback that was not really, they, you just could tell they didn't get what I was doing and maybe they didn't want something new out there, so they kind of pushed against it, which I think is part of the process.

Jane continued:

I did a narrative study, and someone asked me, "How did you reach saturation?", which in my mind has nothing to do with narrative inquiry, so they didn't have an understanding of the methodology and then their questions that they wanted me to respond to, didn't make sense.

Rachel was discouraged by the fact that the editorial board member’s perspectives and/or biases have such a significant impact on the editorial process. However, she did remind herself that, “They (editorial board members) are real people who have biases and they have these things, and that’s why there’s multiple editors or review… something to kind of check and balance those biases.” Michelle also mentioned, “It's a blind review process, but it's still two or three people with their own subjective views and biases and values and writing styles that are reviewing my paper.”

Beyond the preferences and biases of editorial boards, doctoral student researchers recognized that the blind review process may not itself be completely blind, or fair. Jane stated:

In some ways, privilege and power involved that I don't know if it is always talked about or identified because I know that reviews are supposed to be blind and X, Y, Z, but
they're really not. I feel like people know who you are, especially if you're established or if you're working with someone else. They know who you are, so I don't know if it's as blind. There's a lot of politics involved, which I have learned as well. I think too, that I've noticed that sometimes people who are reviewers and editors in journals tend to be get published in those journals, which I get. You're doing your time, but I don't know how fair that is.

Rebecca also shared her thoughts about the politics that tend to influence the editorial process, and what she viewed as happening behind the scenes. She said:

My professor was like friends or old colleagues with the editor, and there happened to a person who was supposed to write for that, for that particular volume I guess, for the Journal volume, I think. And so, he had asked like, "Hey, I know you had some manuscript ideas that you were interested in writing, do you think you're gonna write, write it?" So, we wrote, we wrote that manuscript in a month, and then submitted it. And so, he did, he did give us feedback, but it wasn't like, it wasn't a ton of feedback.

Rebecca continued, “From the conceptual manuscript I published, I learned that it's really good to have friends in high places. Have friends who are editors, then you can get your stuff published.”

Jane emphasized that, “there's some bias and privilege and power there, dynamics that are going on, that have always been going on.” As such, understanding the dynamics behind the editorial process was itself a challenging but necessary skill to learn. Rachel shared, “I think it was kind of learning about the politics, but also learning that like, learning to play the game essentially of, of knowing that there going to be maybe these processes that don't feel fair.”
Balance between conformity and autonomy. As doctoral student researchers gained more experience in the editorial feedback process, they began to learn how to respond to the provided feedback in a positive and effective way. Michelle, for instance, said that she had to decide how she wanted to interpret the editorial feedback process, and determine how the feedback aligned with the scope of her manuscript. She described the process of responding to the provided feedback as “a combination of respect and humility, but also discernment and autonomy.”

Six out of twelve participants dedicated their time and effort to addressing the editorial feedback that they received. Indeed, Blake always tried to “accommodate or try to make the changes they (the editorial board) wanted to see.” He said:

I had, in my letter, it had all their comments, and I had written response about how I responded, how I incorporated that feedback and made changes based on it. So, I literally responded to all their comments to show them how I had incorporated, how I had responded to it, in my revision.

Similarly, Rachel also did her best to accommodate the provided feedback, stating, “We tried to take whatever they asked for and addressed it as specifically as we could, without going outside of the scope of the information we had.”

In order to respond to the comments that they received from the editorial board, participants attempted to organize the feedback that was provided to them, often using a spreadsheet. John said, “I tried to show them that I paid attention to what they said, and I intentionally tried to change something and I kind of laid that all out in the document.” He added, “If you're not sending them decent edits, or if they perceive that you're not really responding to their feedback, then I don't think that they are going to be very receptive to taking
your manuscript.” Michelle also made a point to thoroughly address the feedback she received when undergoing revision and resubmission, saying:

If it is a revise and resubmit, I attempt to, and even if it's rejected, I tend to put all of their feedback and comments in Excel spreadsheet, just so like I can have it when I'm writing, revising it and things like that, and I can write. If it was a revise and resubmit, then I also jot down notes back to the reviewer like, “Hey, you said this, here's where ... “ If I made the correction, “Here's where I did it.” If I didn't make the correction, “Here's why I chose not to,” type of thing. And so, that way, it can make sure that I've addressed everything that they have said, because some reviewers are super thorough and they had like, “On page 67 or whatever you did this and said this, or this citation is incorrect or whatever.” So, I tried to make sure that I go and address everything that they said. And then still before I take it back or submit it back, if it's a revise and resubmit, I just look through things again, try and make sure that I cross all my t's and dotted all my i's and just, and submit it.

Doctoral student researchers often put a great deal of effort into accommodating the editorial feedback that was provided to them, though they also understood how important it was to find a balance between the feedback and what they believed to be important to their manuscript. Blake shared that finding the balance was the process of “making sure that I was really incorporating what they wanted to see changed, and then also making sure that the manuscript was still what I was trying to communicate to.”

The doctoral student researchers learned that, while they could not necessarily address all the editorial feedback, they could be selective in responding to it. Jane said, “What I learned
from the writing for publication class is that you don't have to change everything even if they
give you feedback.” Lila also stated:

When I first got feedback, I thought I had to incorporate every single solitary piece of
feedback. I think that the best advice that I got from my mentor was, “You don't have to
do everything that they say, you can take some of it, you can leave some of it.”

Rather than completely conforming to the comments provided by the editorial feedback, Lila
decided that, “This is what I have changed, but this is why I'm not changing what reviewer three
said, because it's out of the scope, so I've removed that question, and I've expanded on this.”

Alex also shared:

I was able to give an argument and provide some reason for why I left this the way it was
and as long as I can justify that, as long as I can say here are the reasons, then it's okay.

And I think that makes it even better because I'm not just sort of like catering to the needs
of this other person who's obviously doesn't give feedback in a very constructive way, but
I can say I see why that doesn't make sense to you, but here's why it does.

Michelle often asked herself, 'How do I make sure that my paper stays the way that I had
intended to?’” She added, “You work really hard on this paper, and you don't want to just take
away your heart of the paper.” Indeed, the doctoral student researchers learned how to advocate
for their research and verbalize their opinions during the editorial process, as Lila shared:

I felt stronger being able to explain but a couple of the things that they said like, “There's
too much of a political tone here,” and I said, “Well, it's social justice, it's political.” I'm
not, I'll negotiate some of the things that you want me to do, but ultimately this is going
to have a political tone because it's social justice, which is political in nature.

Lila continued:
I think that critical incident is being able to stand up for myself and being able to advocate for what I think is important in my manuscript. It goes back to, before, I wanted to do everything that they said to do, because I felt like I had to kind of subservient to them, if that's even a word. But now I feel stronger in who I am and what I'm writing, that I feel like I can, I have the room to say that I didn't have to do that.

**Communicating with the editorial board.** To the doctoral student researchers, communicating with the editorial board often appeared to be one-sided. Blake shared his experience while he was navigating and responding to editorial feedback, saying, “I think, really trying to understand what was, what they were trying to communicate, really trying to understand what they saw as the weaknesses of my article.” Since there was no active communication between the authors and the members of the editorial board, understanding the board’s intentions was often very challenging for the doctoral student researchers, as Michelle shared:

I don't know who they are, I can't go back and forth and say like, “What do you mean by this?” And sometimes it's just liked a guessing game, “I think you mean this, and so I'm going to try to address this, and then write back to you saying that”, “This is how I took your comment, and this is what I did with it.”

Lily herself added that having to continually wait for a response from the editorial board often caused unnecessary anxiety and self-doubt. She shared:

I think the hardest part about that, the biggest challenge would be just waiting for a response, because you wonder, you start to wonder, “Are they looking at it?”, “Are they not looking at it?”, “Should I maybe take this somewhere else?”, or “Should I wait it out, am I going to get a publication here?” or “Is this just sitting in a queue?”
Rebecca described the journal editors as being “untouchable.” She wishes that the editors were more accessible, instead of being placed on a “pedestal.” Rebecca acknowledged that, “most of them are counselor educators and so their students are privy to their knowledge and expertise in that field.”

Some participants, however, said that they were more proactive in communicating with editorial board members, even seeking out one-on-one relationships at conferences. Rachel asked direct questions to one of the journal editors that she encountered in order to clarify any confusing or unclear aspects of her feedback. She shared:

I think the only challenge we ran into with resubmitting or revising with this next one was we ended up going over the page limit. So, the page limit was 25, with the additions they had asked us to do, we ended up into like 26, so not too much. So, how we responded or navigated that was, just emailing the editor asked him if it was okay if we went over, which it was.

Jane also communicated with journal editorial boards, sharing:

Because once it's been three, four months, I think it's appropriate to just send them an email and say, “I haven't heard anything. What's the status?” and so they will respond and say, “Oh, you know, your review went through. We just didn't get it to you yet.”

Jane’s communication with the editorial boards was overall very positive. Indeed, she said that the editors she communicated with had been “responsive, helpful, and encouraging.” She added:

If you have questions, ask. I'm not scared to send more emails or ask more questions. I think the more you ask, the better it is, because when you know what they want and what to expect… You can't read people's minds and sometimes things are very broad and vague, and if I don't understand something, then I go back to them and say, “Can you
help me understand this?” or “What pieces can you, are most important for me to attend to and what aren't? So that I have an idea of what they're willing to have me do and not have me do, so then also I can make a decision like, “Is this worth revising or not?”

Asking questions and being able to communicate back and forth with the members of the editorial boards has been helpful in Jane’s experience. Alex also shared his personal experience with meeting an editor in person during conferences and building a connection based on those encounters. He said:

I linked up with the editor of that journal and she gave me a lot of support along the way. Not so much in practically how do you do this, but in “How's the project coming? I'd love to publish this in our journal. If you're done, you know when you finish it, when do you think you'll be done?” Just sort of asking questions about how it's going, and that to me, it was like somebody seems to care about this and thinks it's valuable and so that interest in seeing value in it helped motivate me to continue going.

Alex added that this journal editor was the most helpful resource of his entire publication and editorial feedback experience. He stated:

I kind of said that my editor, [name of a person], she's probably the most helpful. I'm trying to think of anybody else who's been really that helpful or helpful at all really. Uh, I think that's pretty much it as far as, as far as publications go.

**Helpful and unhelpful editorial feedback.** The editorial feedback that the participating doctoral student researchers received varied both in terms of quantity and quality. Blake said, “Sometimes the changes were really small and easy to make. Other times they really required a lot of work, a lot of revising.” Lily added, “It’s been either very brief or not existent, flat-out reject or it’s been very thorough, very conducive, very constructive.” John also described his
editorial feedback experience, stating, “There are two kinds of general types of feedback that you can get: one being just very generalized feedback and then the more specific feedback.”

Overarchingly, the doctoral student researchers found specific feedback to be more helpful than generalized feedback. Michelle shared that overly general feedback did not succinctly identify what needed to be addressed. She said, “Some kind of more general feedback... I don't know where they read, what they read, to make them want to give that feedback.” Similarly, Blake shared:

With the broad feedback, it can be harder to understand what they want to see, and you know, usually that requires changes throughout your article, not just in one place, sometimes rewriting the whole introduction or changing sections around, like changing my discussion section, so that it can be really be a lot more work.

Not having access to specific feedback or suggestions often made Blake feel overwhelmed. Generalized feedback was also frustrating for John, as he was left not knowing how to improve his manuscript. John expressed:

Reviewer 1 and reviewer 2 gave me three sentences, three or four sentences, uh, feedback, that was a very broad... “Please add more to the discussion section.” And I think that's frustrating to get, as a writer, because you really want to know how to improve your manuscript, and when it's that broad, you're not really sure what the reader wants, so that can be frustrating.

Doctoral student researchers appreciated editorial feedback that identified how the manuscripts could be improved. Rachel said, “I am more than okay with someone criticizing the work I've done, but tell me how to make it better.” Blake also shared the specific editorial feedback that he
received. Even though his manuscript was rejected, he said that the feedback that he received from the journal was nonetheless encouraging. He shared:

It was just more feedback about what they would like to see me include in the article, what kind of arguments they want me to make or how they will, maybe they wanted me to make it more concise, take out... One time I had, included a case scenario, which I thought was a good idea, but they said, since it wasn't a real, it didn't really happen, they thought it was better to take it out. I took that out. Then they also give a lot of feedback on grammar, and just grammatical errors, or stylistic errors.

Jo also described a sample of the editorial feedback that she had received, which included specific suggestions for improvement. She said:

He (the editor) gave me some very specific feedback that if I wrote about a case conceptualization or something like that, to give the readers a better understanding of what that might play out, like since I wasn't collecting data, he thought that it would be really good then, so that was nice.

John added that the editorial feedback that he had received provided “line by line edits,” which he found to be very helpful. The feedback specifically identified the parts that needed further improvement, including, “Please use different language here,” “Please add more about this specific topic you may wish to include.” Michelle also shared the clear and concrete feedback that she had received; such feedback included, “This is where, on this page, this is your sentence.”

Molly mentioned that receiving feedback at both the micro- and structural levels was conducive to her learning. She said:
They were really specific and really detailed to the point, where it tells you what line they're talking about, and how it can be changed, and they gave me some suggested articles that I could use to reference, moving forward. They also gave me some structural changes about how it could flow better and how it would read better to the audience that I was speaking to.

John shared that his experience with receiving editorial feedback has influenced how he intends to provide feedback in his current role as a peer reviewer of a journal. He said, “A lot of that translates to how I give feedback as a reviewer. I typically try to give a lot of specific feedback because that's what I think is helpful.”

In addition, feedback that focused on attainable changes, rather than those that were impossible to achieve, was considered essential for doctoral student researchers. Rachel said, “Tell me something I have control over.” When the feedback focused on changes that she could actually achieve, it validated her belief that her team “had done a good project but maybe just needed a little tweaking here and there.” However, when the feedback was about things that could not be changed, it was no longer considered helpful, as when Rachel had the following exchange with an editorial board:

They had basically... Some sections of it told us we needed to completely redo our study. So, we were both just kind of upset about it, sad, like I think questioning our whole process, “Where did we mess up?”, “Did we do something wrong?”, “Should we have done these things they suggested?”

She continued:

They were telling us we needed to redo our study that we shouldn't have used CESNET for sampling, that we should have had this researcher, so it was a lot of things we should
have done, but it was nothing about, how can we take, how can you advise us to take what we have, and make it better.

The editorial feedback that Rachel received could not realistically be implemented, and as such the entire experience was very frustrating. When the editorial feedback was thorough and constructive, however, as well as achievable, it facilitated the student researchers’ growth, as Lily shared:

They helped give me the depth and the concrete research base for my ideas, which really helped me to grow as a writer to see where I need to expand on ideas, where I need to provide more primary research, where I need to give more background on attachment theory in general, or on the autonomic nervous system or whatever part of the manuscript we were looking at.

Positive and encouraging feedback also contributed to student researchers’ learning, as it kept them motivated and impassioned while doing research. Rachel said:

We were motivated because we had a, a journal who was just as passionate about what we had done and understood the value in what we had done because we were really feeling like we had missed the ball on a lot of things. I think it was a success for us to, to have such a positive second experience, I think really helped both of our self-confidence.

However, harsh editorial feedback that did not include any actual guidance for improving their manuscripts was not considered helpful, as Rebecca shared:

It was very disheartening to read the feedback because some of it was blatantly, “this isn't true” or “this is the wrong methodology” or “this is inconsistent with the methodology that you're, that you're, um, that you used.”

Rebecca continued:
The way that it was written, the way that the editors wrote their feedback was really rude, honestly. It was pretty much, the tone of it was like, “You don't know what you're doing and why did you even submit this garbage for me to read?” That's like the tone of it.

The editors, it seems, tend to forget that the authors are doctoral students who are still in the process of learning how to write and publish their articles. Rebecca said, “I didn't feel like their feedback was collegial or collaborative, or mentoring.” She added:

I thought it would have been an awesome opportunity for the editorial team to be like, “Hey, great, great concept, great idea. Here's, where you could go back and learn some more about this methodology or do this differently, keep working, keep.” There was no like words of encouragement. It was pretty much like, “Don't submit this again, we don't want to see it”, kind of thing.

Contradicting feedback between reviewers was also a challenging aspect of the editorial feedback process. Jane said, “It's been hard to navigate when you have two different very opposite reviewers giving you questions and editorial feedback and then balancing that.” She described some of the editorial feedback that she had received from a journal as such:

I had somebody, one of the reviewers say, “Oh, this is great, I think this is well-written, easy to understand, unique, fits with our journal, just needs some grammar editing, tweak it up and it'll be good,” and then someone else wrote two pages of feedback, it's like one person will be really on board and really say, “This is foundationally good to go.” Then other people will say, “You need to do X, Y, Z,” and so it's hard when you have such different feedback and sometimes contradictory feedback.

Andrea also shared a similar experience with editorial feedback, stating:
With my first manuscript feedback, some of it was conflicting between reviewers. So, I had a difficult time with that of, “How can I meet both of these reviewers?”, “What they're asking for, when they're asking for two conflicting things?” That was definitely tough for me to figure out how to actually respond to all three reviewers when they all seem to be focusing on different things.

John said, “I think it's tough when you get feedback that's completely on different sides from two different reviewers.” He added:

Someone's saying like, “Hi, you should, take this out because it doesn't make as much sense in the context of the manuscript”, and then another reviewer saying, “Hey, this part, I thought this part was really strong, you know, you should keep this in.”

When reviewers were not contradicting with their fellow reviewers, they did contradict themselves on occasion; this occurred when the reviewer provided feedback later in the manuscript that diverted from previous recommendations. John stated:

I think something that, something that can be challenging and frustrating as well is, sometimes it seems like you'll change something, you'll address feedback and change something, and then they'll have like a reviewer will ask you later to change it back or make like a different change to it. I think part of you as an author wants to say, “Well, what do you want? Do you want this or that?” You can't have both. I think it can get frustrating, but it's just the things that are, that kind of confusing as a writer.

Theme 5: Learning with Training Wheels

This section discusses all the support and resources that helped (or will help) doctoral students’ learning. Learning with training wheels will in this section metaphorically represent the doctoral student experience as it is facilitated by mentoring, scaffolding, and other resources.
Training wheels are additional wheels mounted to the rear wheel of a bike in order to assist learners until they develop a sense of balance on the bike. These wheels are typically used when teaching young learners to ride a bike, helping to lessen the frustrations of the learning experience. In the context of metaphor, training wheels are all the support and resources that facilitate doctoral students’ development as competent researchers.

Bikes with training wheels can give new learners the confidence they need, to one start riding on their own. Once the confidence is in place, the training wheels can be removed. Doctoral student researchers also need support and resources before they become independent researchers. Some of these students are given sufficient research mentorship and scaffolding, while others were forced to figure out how to learn without such support and resources. Learning without support and resources could still work, though only if the learners had already been exposed to them in the past, or if they had a natural proclivity for learning. However, most new learners needed guidance to some degree. The subthemes included: a) mentorship, b) scaffolding and structured research opportunities, and c) resources.

**Mentorship.** During their doctoral programs, the participants received varying degrees of guidance and support from their faculty members. Lily said:

I reached out to faculty members and I think that's really helpful both in terms of the timeline and the methodology because they can offer their insight and they can offer their previous experience um, or their opinion on what I'm doing.

In Lily’s experience, faculty members tended to share insight based on their own research experiences. In this way, the faculty members served as consultants. Andrea said, “They were kind of a consultant, like an expert consultant to us, when we ran into problems or when we had questions and they were really helpful from that perspective.” John added, “They (the faculty
members) are reviewers for big journals as well. They just have a lot of experience that I don’t have, so, just being able to consult with them is really helpful.” Jane also found it helpful when receiving advice from her faculty member. She stated, “Getting advice from my professor in that class about that (editorial) process because he was an editor, so he had some good insights about that.” Rachel added:

I've used faculty members as a consultant, so say something comes up in one of my research projects, something with ethics or we kind of run into a bump in the road or something like that. I've used faculty members as kind of like a consultant in that way.

However, some students regretted that their faculty members did not engage in the detailed aspects of the research and publication process. Molly said, “A lot of times the faculty would literally just read them, give you just check for APA, but they won't really add to the content or build off of it and enhance what you already have.” Michelle describes the experience of working with two faculty members, each of whom served as second authors for her different projects. She stated:

One faculty member really kind of contributed to things, took out things, still made sure that I was okay with everything, she didn't take over the paper, but she was more of my idea of a second author than this other faculty member who kind of just purely took on the editorial role, which is still needed, but I think I wish I would have ... he would have talked more, wrote more, contributed more or really kind of went into the nitty gritty of things.

Michelle also added, however, that her faculty members have been overall very helpful, and have contributed to their students’ research. She explained:
They also contributed, and educated me on the whole process overall, and so it's kind of a different feel than when they're like my teacher and then grading my work because they're not like, "It's my work." But when I'm collaborating with them, it really becomes like, "Our work," and I can see that they have, like, much as investment in it as I do.

Rachel and Andrea also reported that they had faculty members who were serving as co-researchers and, as such, are more actively engaged in the research and publication process. Rachel said, “They’ve acted as co-researchers for me, so actually kind of getting down into the nitty gritty, doing the interviews with me, the coding with me, the writing with me.” Andrea shared, “She (her faculty member) was the one doing the data analysis, too.”

Doctoral student researchers used the term ‘mentorship’ when describing the relationship that they shared with faculty members whose support extended beyond simply advising, consulting, or guidance. Alex described mentorship by using the metaphor of a ‘walkthrough’, saying, “I don't need to say much more about that except for walkthrough, yeah, I would say, give a really practical walkthrough experience of how the process works, not just talk about it, but go through it together.” Alex believed that a true research mentorship goes beyond providing information that is found in a textbook. He said:

It's just like teaching a kid to ride a bike. You don't just say, “Well, you got these wheels and these pedals and then you have to put your foot on this one, and then, okay, now go to the garage, fit your bike and start doing it.” You know just explain it and send them off and say, “Go figure it out.” You say, “Let's do it together. Let me show you first, and then let you try some different things, and then, and then now just practice this for a while.”
Rachel expressed that the research mentorship that she experienced during her doctoral program was critical to her succeeding in the publication process. She stated:

I think the research mentorship I was able to get, hands down, that was probably, if I look back on it and I narrowed it down to one thing that helped me be successful, it would be having really effective and strong research mentorship, someone to guide me throughout the way, someone to educate me about the process of it, the actual process of publication and the process of actually writing a manuscript. Having a research mentor who's been through it multiple times, and has been willing to share their experiences I would say was definitely the most vital asset I had, when trying to develop my identity as a researcher.

Mentorship was particularly helpful during the editorial feedback process, as most participants were largely unfamiliar with it. Andrea described the essential support that she received from her advisor, stating:

My advisor being willing to read it, and to give me feedback and guidance in terms of what are journals looking for, and even how to respond to the reviewers’ feedback, too. We walked through that together, which was really helpful. So that support has definitely been a huge part of what I received I've been thinking about.

Andrea also explained how her advisor supported her during the editorial feedback process, saying:

I took it to my advisor and walked through it with him, he said right away, “Oh, this is good. They could have rejected this outright. But the fact that they're giving you this amount of feedback means that they think there's potential for it to be published. So, we have to just, you have to go through and respond to these comments and make changes,
or if you feel strongly like that you don't want to change something that they're recommending, you have to give a rationale as to why.”

She continued:

That first process (first round revision) for me was really helpful to walk through with him, because I feel like if I hadn't gone through it with him, I just would have given up and said, “Okay, this is not okay, ever going to be published,” move on to something else. Then the second revise and resubmit, if I hadn't walked through it with my advisor and have him saying, "Well, if they didn't think it was publishable, they wouldn't have given you another revise and resubmit." So, that was positive.

Andrea’s advisor supported her throughout the publication and editorial process, providing her with feedback, guidance, and encouragement. Lily also described the mentorship that she received from her advisor while she was navigating and responding to editorial feedback, saying:

I think having my advisor, to kind of walk me through that and to remind me, “Okay, don't take this personally, remain objective, and here's what we can learn from this, maybe we don't go back to that journal. Maybe we tailor this in a different light, and we can put, put a different spin on it.” That's been really helpful.

Jane herself urged counselor educators to dedicate themselves to mentoring their students, stating:

If you think students have an ability to write and to do things well, mentor them, ask them to be a part of your projects. They have something to say. They can contribute. If students ask you to be involved, I think part of your role as an educator is to help them. How do you expect us to be the next generation if you can't devote the time to developing your students? And you have the power. You have a lot of power and privilege to try to
use that in a way to move the field forward and give opportunities to people who are going to be the next researchers or individuals of the field.

**Scaffolding and structured research opportunities.** Theme 1 described the research opportunities that were provided to the participating doctoral students, as well as those that the students had to seek out. Some students benefited from the structured research opportunities that were provided by their faculty members or departments/programs, while other students primarily conducted research on their own. Theme 3 discussed the strategies that doctoral student researchers utilized to more effectively develop manuscripts for publication, such as using class projects as foundations for future publications. Although these experiences varied across participants, most doctoral student researchers mentioned that they required some scaffolding experience before they felt comfortable conducting research independently. When he first entered the doctoral program, Alex assumed that he would be able to learn through scaffolding. He said, “This is great! I’ll have to learn and work under somebody who knows how to do research and I’ll kind of pick up things.” He expected his faculty members to say something to the effect of, “Jump on this project with me and then you can do whatever you want, I’ll support you on that.” In other words, Alex expected to encounter “the combined effort of doing research together at first and then sending the youngster out to go do their own.” Overt time, however, Alex found that this degree of supportive scaffolding was not inherent to his particular program.

All participating doctoral student researchers agreed that they needed more support and scaffolding. Jo said, “Doctoral students need to be taken under someone's wing, or connected to other peers. Something needs to be in place to make sure that everyone is getting sufficient exposure and experience with research.” Blake mentioned that students need more opportunities to learn by collaborating with faculty members and receiving their guidance. He thought he
could have more research opportunities if the faculty members had ongoing research and they wanted him to play a role in it. Michelle added that writing for publication requires more substantial faculty support. She said:

   Especially when you're just learning how to do it, and learning how to write well and write for like peer reviewed journals, I think it just takes a lot of like support and time and like guidance from folks who have done it before and kind of know some tips and some strategies to, to what they like to, how to do it.

   Alex said that his experience as a doctoral student researcher was not necessarily one that was overly supportive or facilitative. He said, “Nobody’s going to do this for you. No one’s going to teach you. No one’s going to support you in that.” Lila added:

   It often feels like we are thrown into the water with the hope that we can figure out how to swim with minimal help. I feel like we are expected to be able to do these things without a standardization of education and mentoring.

Jane also said, “The individuals in my department that I thought would be mentoring me, that I thought would be reaching out to me, and having me join their projects, rather than the other way around.” She continued:

   I wonder if I wasn't self-motivated, if I didn't come in with a background of research, if I didn't have the people in other departments help me, if I would have been able to really develop that at all because of that fact, I would say, it was way different from my expectations. In my mind, you go to a doctoral program to develop that, and I didn't get the support that I was hoping for in those respects. Even though I think when I interviewed for the program, they kind of made it seem like I would, but then they didn't do it.
Some doctoral student researchers were very satisfied with the support that they received from their programs, saying something to the effect of, “I think I received all the support I could have ever wanted.” However, other doctoral student researchers mentioned that they needed more support. Molly said, “There is not much assistance with uncovering data, methods to find data, how to analyze and synthesize the data.” Instead, she was just told, “We need to research this topic, here’s some tools, go for it.”

Lila shared, “there needs to be a more formalized research process for students” and that “what’s most important is providing research opportunities.” She continued:

“Because I think as a student it's really hard to just develop a research study on your own without any support, without any encouragement, and without those pre-established opportunities, just because it's so overwhelming and we don't have a ton of experience in that. So I think having faculty members who do have that experience and who can provide those opportunities, um, to kind of guide and encourage students to help is really important.”

Research team approaches were frequently mentioned across the participants, as Lila stated:

We need, like, research teams, research labs. Psychology does it completely different and I love how psychology programs do it. They have research teams and labs and like people are working collaboratively. They’re also working on their own projects, but they might mirror around the same vein. I do think that programs need to really pay attention to the models of how psychology does it.

Blake also shared:

I think some universities, they have like a lab kind of thing, this is the lab on, acculturation and adaptation or this is the lab on meditation and mindfulness or the lab on
suicide prevention. I think having that can help facilitate doctoral students to come in and try to apply to a school, because they know they're going to be a part of that lab and then have opportunities through the lab to do their own research.

Molly added similar thoughts, stating:

I think, having the mandate to do some type of research can benefit all doctoral students in any program. And by not making it mandatory, we're putting doctoral students at disadvantage compared to students who are actively engaging in research just because they like it.

Andrea, as the only participant who had worked as a member of her faculty member’s research team, also shared her experience. She said, “I think when they (faculty members) have teams, I think it was easier for people to get students to get involved because there were clear roles that needed to be filled.” Andrea continued, “People can join the team, being new to our program and know what's expected of them and what the team is looking for.” She found the research team approach to be helpful for both faculty members and students, as it both establishes expectations and ensures that the individuals involved remain organized. Andrea also shared, however, that the research team can be ‘a double-edged sword,’ as described in Theme 1, She shared, “She (her faculty member) was really the leader and we would rely on her to wait for her to set the meetings and to set the tone and the pace of things.” Andrea explained that peer collaboration can offer students more autonomy, saying:

That's been a really good, positive experience in terms of working with peers. I think there's a little more freedom too, and when one of us has an idea, we feel like we'll listen to each other. Whereas, I think when we were on a faculty's team, I think sometimes, when we would contribute ideas, we felt like they might not have been as valued or, that
the faculty had a vision that they wanted to follow and didn't really need new ideas. So, my experience doing research with peers has been a really positive one and felt more like we were all contributing equally.

Andrea added, “The ones who don’t have teams, it can be good and that they can be more creative in terms of starting new studies or collaborating with graduate students.” However, she was also aware of the repercussions of initiating research in a less-structured manner, stating, “It was often pushed off or not a priority because there wasn’t any structure in place.”

**Resources.** The participants cited several resources as their metaphorical training wheels according to how they facilitated or will facilitate their growth as researchers, noting that doctoral students like themselves had limited resources to conduct research due to their student status. John said, “I believe that we only have a limited amount of resources (i.e., time, money, support) as doctoral students to do research that we might otherwise do.” He continued:

For example, there is often discussion about how the counseling field does not do enough intervention research. As students, it is difficult for us to do this kind of research, as it often requires organizational entities (e.g., community clinics, research labs) as well as a significant amount of time and money. This phenomenon may also apply to doing community-based action research, which often requires a significant amount of time and other resources from the researcher.

Alex experienced difficulties when attempting to obtain access to a sample of participants that he needed for his study, and thereafter had to figure out what type of research would be attainable in his situation. Alex said, “What I decided to do was to do a content analysis because I didn't have to worry about access.” Blake shared that he has since written more conceptual articles than empirical ones, saying, “There’s been a couple of opportunities but that’s why I
think I gravitated more to just writing these conceptual articles because you don’t really need to
be doing any ongoing research. You can kind of just do a literature review, make an article based
on it.” Blake himself did not receive any financial support to do research from his department; he
responded by saying, “You don’t need a lot of support, you don’t need financial support, you can
kind of just do it on your own.” He explained that writing conceptual manuscripts was “one way
to overcome this challenge,” as he believed that writing conceptual articles had more merit and
was far more feasible. He said, “If you have an idea and there is evidence to support it, you can
just write it yourself and submit it.” Molly and Rebecca also reported that they wrote conceptual
articles because the articles themselves did not require data collection, which could be
overwhelming for doctoral students with limited resources.

Some doctoral students took advantage of internal or external grants in order to conduct
empirical research. Jo said, “I actually got a student grant to buy a measure that already has been
validated for [topic; concealed upon Jo’s request] and so I use that and then I added my own
questions to it.” Lila also shared, “I received a very small grant to research a topic that I’d
suggested and was approved.” However, these funding opportunities were not available to
everyone, as Blake himself expressed, “It'd be cool if we had like a stipend of money that was
dedicated just to helping us do research.”

In addition to financial support, the participating doctoral student researchers required
courses or workshops that were specific to the publication and editorial process, so that they
might enrich their limited knowledge of conducting research. John thought that, “having a class
that's about how to publish or how to get published, and how to write appropriately” would be
helpful. Similarly, Andrea said, “I would have loved to have this be part of a class, or to have
just more like workshops within my program of the actual research process, including how to
turn your data into a publication.” Jane shared her positive experience with a class she had attended that was specific to publication. She said:

I took a *Writing for Publication* class at our university, which was taught by somebody in another department, and he had been an editor for a journal for about ten years, so just his sheer feedback and editing abilities were really helpful. He really taught us about the process of publishing and that was super helpful.

Rebecca also talked about a similar workshop she attended:

There were two editors from CES and maybe I can't remember the other journal, but they came, and they answered questions from people and talked about the process for submitting and then editing and stuff, so that was really helpful. I attended that, that was helpful to see like what they were looking for as editors and I wrote down notes to see if we were to revisit our manuscript and address the feedback and then submit, resubmit, that would've been helpful information.

Participants added that these opportunities should be provided early in their doctoral studies. Lila shared, “Our program had a researcher identity development course last year, that was the first year that we had that.” Despite this opportunity, however, Lila mentioned that the course itself was given too late in the program for some students, saying:

We had third years in there, who were learning things that they had never heard about before as far as the publication process, the peer review process, and the job search. It’s your third year. Why are you just now learning this?

Blake also expressed:

I wish I had more research classes early on that really talked about how to design and develop a study. I feel like my program is really designed to prepare you with everything
you need to know before you do your dissertation, but then to do research earlier on in
your program, you have to really figure it out yourself or figure it out by speaking to a
faculty. It's talked about and some of our classes, but it's not, not talked about. We don't
have like a specific class on writing for publication.

Doctoral student researchers also wanted “hands-on experience in terms of the publication
process,” as Blake shares:

We had an intro to research class our first semester, but it wasn't new information, like it
was really basic research, statistics, research methods. It didn't really prepare me to do
my own research projects, yeah.

Alex believed that these hands-on opportunities should extend beyond “just some fake 10
participant dataset that comes from a textbook.” He said:

Doing is the important part for me because I need to be hands-on, I need to practice it like
sit at a computer with SPSS and throw in the numbers and see what happens, screwed up
a few times and then get it back and learn from that. But when it’s all this just conceptual
understanding of how it’s supposed to happen, I don’t get it. It takes me a while.

Jo and Rebecca also reported that there was a significant disconnect between “what they are
learning about the research process” and “what it actually looks like in the real world.” Blake
also wished to see the publication and editorial feedback process more heavily integrated into the
curriculum, saying, “Yeah, in the curriculum, even having that as part of a class assignment
where you're doing a project as part of a class assignment, I think would be great.” John added,
“I do wish that my program was a little bit better about infusing the curriculum with research
opportunities.”
Theme 6: Reasons to Ride a Bike

This section discusses the motivations that doctoral student researchers often have when conducting research. *Reasons to ride a bike* will in this section metaphorically represent these motivations. Individuals commit to riding a bike for a variety of reasons, including increasing one’s health, relieving personal stress, doing something that brings pleasure, benefiting the environment, or saving money by not driving a car. Similarly, the twelve participants of this study cited a number of motivations for committing themselves to the research and publication process; the most prevalent of these motivators were: a) enjoying the process, b) contributing to the field, and c) becoming competitive in the job market.

**Enjoying the process.** Several participants shared that they enjoyed the research and publication process. Most of these participants were internally motivated, and often chose to engage in research activities regardless of their program requirements. Several of them mentioned that they naturally enjoyed writing. Blake said, “I like writing, so I actually enjoy the process of trying to develop an idea and see it come to fruition.” Jo added, “I really enjoy doing literature reviews. I love seeing what's out there and reading and trying to piece together ideas from the body of knowledge that's already there.” Rachel also said, “the process of going through this research, identifying a problem, finding the right methodology, writing, has given me a lot of joy, as dorky as that sounds.” According to Andrea, “Going through the process and doing the research and the writing process and even the process of submitting it and hearing back from journals has been really enlightening.”

The doctoral student researchers enjoyed sharing knowledge of topics that they were passionate about, as Jane shared:
It's nice to be able to be passionate about something and then have other people read and appreciate what you do and get that perspective out there. I'm all about kind of pushing the envelope and getting new perspectives out, so that's nice that there's opportunities when you publish to do that.

Lila added, “I really love sharing knowledge. One of my faculty members always says the coolest thing about being an academic is you basically get paid to think.” She added that her passion for research is a motivator that helps her persist during the research and publication process, stating:

There was also a lot of internal motivation for me because I really want it. If people don't want it and they're not interested, they're not going to be able to withstand the arduous publication process. Why else would you do it if you don't really want it? Because it's very annoying.

Alex also shared, “My motivation is that the project looks fun, and I want to learn how to do that and if I don’t do it, I won’t learn. It’s for my own knowledge, my own benefit, my own interests.” He did not agree with the premise of doing research in order to obtain external rewards, saying:

People can be impressed by your work and you can be proud of yourself and you get recognition, you get all this stuff, but it's not... If you, if you go strive for that, it doesn't, it's the wrong way to go about it.

He continued:

You do these projects and you get published because if you get your name on something, you put it on your CV and then you used that to show people that you're a real researcher so you can get a job, but that to me is not worth my time.
Alex added that he wants to do research “that has value,” not simply so that it can “fill a space on the CV.”

**Contributing to the field.** Regardless of one’s personal motivations, one of the primary reasons for persisting in the research and publication process is to contribute to the current body of literature. John himself believed that one of the purposes of doing research is “to increase our (the profession’s) knowledge base.” Jane also shared that her motivation was to “help move the field forward in terms of research.” Similarly, Jo said, “We need to contribute to the body of knowledge that’s there and keep us moving forward.” Molly herself attempted to make meaning of being a doctoral student researcher by adding, “It speaks to my ability to conduct research and articulate it in a way that is meaningful for the profession and future literary sources.” Rachel believed that “contributing to the literature and contributing to profession” was one of the most valuable aspects of getting one’s article published.

Doctoral student researchers wished to inform the counseling practice through their own scholarly commitment. Michelle shared, “I definitely have a research interest in grief and loss, and that motivates me to try to get more information out to folks.” Andrea also expressed her hope to inform school counseling practices, saying:

I'm interested in school counseling, and so when I think about how publications can hopefully inform practicing school counselors and school counseling, school counselors-in-training, being able to inform my research and then use my research to help practitioners and counselors-in-training, is also motivating me now, too.

Jo was hopeful that her work would benefit future school counselors, saying, “I believe that it’s something that can be very helpful to school counselors and to schools.” Blake also emphasized the importance of “making a difference in the field.” He thought that more research should be
conducted regarding “new styles of intervening, new interventions, or new teaching strategies” for “specific clients or populations,” as well as “issues that might be affecting different populations.”

Alex strongly believed that research should benefit others and “give back to the community.” He himself was committed to doing research because his field needed access to research that was of better quality than what was currently available. He added that conducting research simply to ‘fill the gaps’ in the literature was not meaningful, saying:

I see what research can do for other fields and other areas of study, like medicine and psychology, but I didn't see the questions (in our field) and how they were really driving and need in the field. Really good scholarship asks a question that really has an impact on the way people behave and what they do. But since I didn't see that happening (in our field), they were questions of like, just “fill the need in the literature” or “fill a gap in the literature.” That's just sort of... sometimes you fill a hole that doesn't need to be filled.

Rebecca and Jane highlighted advocacy when they made meaning of doing research. Rebecca said, “I think that research is a part of advocating for marginalized populations and different things, so I really believe strongly in that and so that's what motivates me.” Jane also added, “I also think it's nice to be able to hear what people have to say when you interview individuals and get their voice out there and have their perspective heard, so that's cool for me as well.”

**Becoming competitive in the job market.** Most of the participants mentioned building their CV and becoming competitive in the job market as important reasons for dedicating themselves to the research and publication process. Alex was the only participant who did not agree with the premise of doing research and publishing articles for job search. Although she
naturally enjoyed the research and publication process, Rachel admitted that her initial motivation for doing research was to secure a job, sharing, “In all honesty, at first it was just (about) wanting to secure a good position.” Rachel wanted to have as many publications as possible before she began her job search, saying, “I'm putting some of my focus more on those projects that I know that I can get done, by the time my CV will go out.” Lila believed that having scholarly records makes a candidate more competitive, saying, “As a doctoral student, it's also being competitive for positions.” Blake added, “I think it's also just part of building my CV and increasing my job prospects by having evidence or showing my scholarly work.”

Molly mentioned that research and publication are “a necessity when applying for professor jobs,” saying:

It's like an unspoken rule almost, you can almost never become a professor unless you've already published. Even if it's a newsletter article, there has to be some record of scholarly research or scholarly writing which is done through publications. So, it's just as important as finishing the dissertation.

The doctoral students viewed their publications as proof to their potential employers that they could effectively conduct research. John said, “It’s kind of showing that you can go above and beyond and do independent work or collaborate with others. I think that shows to programs that you can be a valuable faculty member.” Andrea also said, “It shows the potential programs that you know how to publish, and you know how to go through the process of research and publications.” Jane also shared her recent experience in the job market, saying, “I really do think my publications helped me a lot in jobs, looking for jobs and getting interviews, because they know or they've seen that I have the potential to do that kind of work, especially at research universities.”
Alex himself did not agree with the premise of doing research and publishing articles for the sake of the job market, sharing, “It was kind of bitter, so, I think people are just doing this to get tenure to get something to put on their CV.” Nevertheless, Lily claims that these publications are “crucial to getting on the job market.” Rebecca added, “I wanted to have some research publications on my CV.” The doctoral student researchers tended to place a great deal of pressure on themselves to achieve publication, as many believed that doing so was an essential step toward securing a faculty position. John adds:

I think right now, part of it or a big piece of it is having the publications on my Vita. We are in such a competitive field of counselor education... I think there's always a pressure to have as many things on your Vita, before you graduate as possible. So, I think right now, unfortunately that's sort of the motivating factor.

**Theme 7: Runner’s High**

This section discusses what the participating doctoral student researchers achieved through the publication and editorial feedback process, as well as their meaning-making of those experiences. Runner’s high will in this section metaphorically represent how the doctoral students felt when they crossed the finish line, such as publishing articles or submitting manuscripts. In terms of bike riding, a runner’s high refers to the feeling of euphoria that an individual experiences after a prolonged and difficult exercise. All individuals, including bike riders who train for a competition or race, feel a profound sense of joy when they reach the finish line. Similarly, doctoral student researchers experience a feeling of achievement once the entire process of research and publication – from the ideation of the research question to the editorial feedback process – has been completed. During this process, they often built a stronger researcher identity and increased their own self-efficacy, helping them overcome the imposter
syndrome that they may have experienced at the beginning of their doctoral programs. They also believed that their experience would serve as the foundation for future research, as well as their careers as counselor educators. The subthemes included: a) feelings of achievement, b) feelings of self-efficacy, c) identity as a researcher, d) foundation for future research, and e) foundation for future career.

**Feelings of achievement.** All participants experienced great joy when their works were published. Blake said, “My work was deemed valid and significant enough for publication in a scholarly journal in our field. That feels like an accomplishment to me, which I’m happy for.” Jane also expressed, “I think just the fact that I got published is really successful, and I have been super happy about that, and it's been exciting that I've been able to do that as a doc student.” Andrea added, “I felt a sense of success after that manuscript was published because it made me feel like I had adequately responded and incorporated their feedback. So, I definitely felt that that was a success.” John also stated:

> I felt really proud of that one too, because I was the first author on it. Those were my ideas. So, to get that accepted and also to kind of persist through all of the edits was just, it just felt good.

Participants also experienced a sense of achievement upon completing their manuscripts and submitting them to journals. Molly said, “The obvious success would be that, it's completed, I was able to complete something, submitting someone else to read.” Andrea stated:

> I mean, so far there's only been one published, hopefully more, so that that feels like the success. But I think it's exciting to actually put something together and feel like you've really done something positive and you've seen this project through and actually come up with results that hopefully are going to make a difference even in a very small way.
Michelle also shared:

I think all of it is, even the ones that have been rejected, is still a success, still have something done and submitted out there, because I can be the one that ... I can have many manuscripts in the pipeline or working on many things at one time, so it's nice to just finish something, even if it means that months down the road might have to look at it again, but it's just nice to know I accomplished something, at least to submit something. So that has been fun.

Rachel made a point of saying that she valued the time and effort that she personally put into her projects, saying:

It's something that we had created from scratch. And so, knowing that the idea was ours, the interview questions were ours, the writing was ours. It was something that we had put a lot of blood, sweat, and tears into and kind of seeing it develop over time.

Feelings of Self-efficacy. Several participants shared that they experienced some degree of imposter syndrome when beginning their doctoral studies. Rachel said, “I came into my doctorate program having absolutely no research experience whatsoever. I had never written a literature review. I started bottom of the barrel.” Rachel continued:

Kind of running into those personal walls that I have set up of, "You've never done this before, so how are you sure it's going to be right?", or “How are you sure it's good enough?” I think was an initial challenge. So, to summarize that, I think me wasn't, it was a challenge myself and my own kind of mental barriers I had put up the voice in my head that is saying, “You have no experience with this, it means you're probably not doing right.”
Alex mentioned that she had some “imposter syndrome coming through” in the beginning. “I didn't have successful experiences, so I didn't know if I was even going in the right direction. I had no idea what I was doing. I just felt kind of lost.” She added, “I’ve never done it before, so I’m probably not qualified.”

The participants recognized that the research and publication process was less scary once they began to overcome their initial imposter syndrome. Rachel said, “I’ve learned what the process is, which makes me feel less scared.” She added, “Learning how the process works is very helpful when you enter it. So, it’s less scary, demystified. You know exactly what to expect.” Molly said, “I learned that it’s really not as difficult to actually submit.” She continued, “Learning that it wasn’t as difficult as I thought was the biggest takeaway because I thought that publishing something was this big, daunting task and it would take forever, and it wasn’t that at all.” Andrea added:

I think I've gained just overall confidence in that, this idea of publications that was so scary. It's still scary, but not as scary as when I first started my program and had this big publish or perish idea in my head, and how serious it is, to worry about having enough publications and going through the process. It is definitely still scary, but I feel like I have a better understanding of the process and know how to get it done.

Over time, the participants gained more confidence in their ability to conduct themselves as independent researchers. Andrea shared, “I definitely still have some doubts about myself and some imposter syndrome still coming through, but I do know that I'm capable of going in and getting publications and doing my own research as an assistant professor, too.” John said, “I feel like I have the skills to be able to answer my research questions better, like I feel like I'm starting.
to feel like I can do this independently.” He added, “Now at the end, I feel a lot more comfortable and being able to offer feedback for other people but also to critique my own work.”

**Identity as a researcher.** Participants reported that they had a strong identity as a researcher after completing the research and publication process. Molly described her own experience as a doctoral student researcher, saying, “Mostly all of it is pretty exciting and just knowing that I’m a scholar, I’m writing, and I’m doing research...” Rachel also shared, “The process helped me better understand who I am as a writer, who I am as a researcher, who I am as a person.” Although she had not personally experienced research before beginning her doctoral program, Rachel now proudly identifies her as a researcher, saying, “It has become one of the largest parts of my identity, more-so than teaching, supervision, or clinical practice.” Andrea stated, “I think that the research and publication experience helped me as I think about my future career and as I think about what kind of research I want to be doing.”

Lila entered her doctoral program with an impressive portfolio of personal research experience, saying, “I came in with a strong researcher identity, and it’s the whole reason I wanted to pursue a PhD.” She continued:

I think being a researcher is so deeply ingrained in who I am thanks to all, I mean I did research in undergrad as well to prepare me for master's, which prepared me for doctoral. I think that, that's 12 years of research experience. It's just become a part of my life and who I am. I consider myself a researcher as one of my primary identities. I think that, that is how I see, that's the lens through which I see a lot of the work that I do. It always has been, it's all rooted in research.

Conversely, Alex shared how his own research and publication experience influenced his identity as a researcher, saying:
I said, if I'm going to do this, I have to do it on my own. I have to find out all this information on my own and I'm actually going to get it. I got kind of bitter, because I was, I don't know how to do this (research). This is dumb. I'm not going to do this stuff. I said for a long time, “I'm not a researcher.” Even when I'd go through stats classes and qualitative classes, I said, “I don't know, this is just not for me.”

Alex’s initial experience as a researcher was not a pleasant one, as it was rife with uncertainties. He entered his doctoral program with the assumption that he would receive guidance and mentorship for his research, only to discover that this was not the case. As such, he had to do much of his own research without guidance, which negatively impacted his relationship with research. However, once he began to engage himself in the process, Alex found that he actually enjoyed it. He stated:

I don't see myself as a researcher, but I started doing it anyway and it became a lot of fun. It became some fun. There are some parts that I like, other parts I don't, but it became kind of interesting, exciting. And for the first time, this is three years past the beginning of my doctoral studies.

Alex continued:

One of them is that now that I've found sort of a research identity of “here's what I think I can do”, I want to... and I see kind of a path to getting there. Like here's how I could do that, and the benefits of the field I think...

Participants also shared how they continue to make meaning out of being a doctoral student researcher. Blake shared, “Being a doctoral student researcher means to me, that you are interested in gaining skills as a researcher and producing results.” Molly added, “A doctoral student researcher is a doctoral student who makes their journey largely focused on the
research.” Jane, however, did not see herself as a doctoral student researcher; instead, she viewed herself simply as a researcher, stating:

I don't really see myself as a doctoral student. I don't identify as that. I just identify as a researcher. I don't really identify as a doctoral student researcher. I know I'm a doctoral student, but I think people also, they try to mystify it, and make it seem like it's a boys’ club, like you can't get in until you are a full professor or whatever, but I don't think like that. I just see myself as a researcher because, obviously I'm growing and I need to develop my skills, but because I had that foundation early on and I did research early on, I saw myself as a researcher. I didn't identify first as a doc student, because I do feel like I can contribute something, and I do feel like I have things to say.

Although Jane acknowledged that she was in the midst of the learning process, she was confident about her ability to conduct research, and was prepared to one day fulfill the duties of a counselor educator.

Blake and Lila cited the possibility of becoming full-fledged members of the larger academic community as being intrinsic to their identity as doctoral student researchers. Blake said, “As a beginning doctorate student, it feels like becoming an accepted member of the academic community.” Lila added, “I make meaning by reminding myself that it is part my responsibility as a member of academia. It’s another aspect of the scholarly wheel of which I am expected to participate.”

**Foundation for future research.** Participants mentioned that their current scholarly work will serve as the foundation for their future research. Indeed, Molly and Lily explained that their current research will establish the course of their dissertations, with Molly sharing:
Both of the articles that I'm working on could both be dissertation topics. So, both of them will be end up be enhanced by (empirical) research. I just wanted to present a conceptual piece, get that out there and then build on it with my own research.

Doctoral student researchers recognized that their current research projects were just the first step on their career paths as researchers. Jo shared, “I believe that I will continue to build on what I’m writing.” Jane added, “You have to understand where you want to focus and how you want to do it, and it builds a foundation for your work for the future.” Lily said, “I think that, in developing a research agenda and a line of research, what I’m doing now is laying the groundwork for that, trying to establish who I am as a researcher.” Blake also added:

I think the projects that I've worked on, are all pretty well aligned with my broader interests. So, those are the topics that I'm going to continue to write about, and hopefully to research on. Um, so I think those are all areas that I'm going to continue to be interested in.

Andrea and John more specifically addressed how their past and current research informs their future research, with Andrea mentioning that she personally had a “focused line of research.” She explained:

For example, my conceptual article really sets up what kind of research I want to do and outlines the study that I wanted to do first. My next research study to do is the one that I really outlined in that article and then some of the other, one of the other articles that are under review, we're already on the next phase of that research study. So, I think the next manuscript there would be kind of the second step of what we already learned from our manuscript, and the research taking it a step further. So, I think they really inform the future research and publication that I want to do.
John added:

Some of the publications that I've done that have fallen in line with my research interests, they really are answering questions, they're answering questions that I'm asking, but they're also providing me with more questions. I felt like the things that I've worked on have really fell into place in terms of giving me a research line, and first of all, helping me explore the literature, but also kind of directing me to new questions that I want to answer that I haven't answered yet. The stuff that I've worked on is going to lead into new questions and new research projects.

**Foundation for future career.** Doctoral student researchers also believed that their experience with the research and publication process will help prepare them for their future careers, as Molly shares, “I intend to carry this experience with me moving forward as I work on future manuscripts and complete future research.” Rachel mentioned that experiencing the process herself will prove helpful when she becomes a counselor educator, stating:

I think it's also kind of a learning experience for me. So, if I were to ever get into a counselor education faculty position, but I've never published anything, I would feel very uncomfortable trying to help my student through that process. By going through it myself, especially at a similar time when maybe a lot of my students will go through that process, I'm able to better relate with them and better prepare them and educate them on what this process might look like.

Rachel added, “If I'm ever going to be a mentor, a research mentor, I have to have done some of it, I think.” Lila also shared that, because of her experience with research and publication, she feels more prepared to one day take on the duties of a counselor educator, adding:
I think that I am more prepared to push out publications faster. I imagine, there has been a learning curve for junior faculty, like there's always going to be the struggle to learn and figure out the whole process, but I think that for people who have, maybe their publication, a newsletter article or something in a state journal, they're not going to, I'm not going to have the struggle of figuring out how to navigate ACA journals or APA journals or something, because I've already done those.

Similarly, Blake said, “I think the end goal is to have the skills necessary so that when you are in a faculty position, you will be able to do solid scholarly work.” Molly added, “You can't really be an effective counselor educator, if you've never published anything.” Rebecca believed that experiencing the research and publication process will no doubt lead to “more well-rounded counselor educators.” John added:

I think that all comes together and me feeling like more complete as a counselor educator. Because, like supervision-wise, I think I'm pretty strong and then clinically I've done a lot of clinical work and I think I'm pretty strong there, too. And the research piece is kind of the last piece where I was worried about and I wasn't as developed, and now I'm sort of, sort of starting to feel like, “Okay, I'm getting the hang of that too.” So now I'm really feeling like I am, I can be a counselor educator.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings of this study. The first part of this chapter presented the within-case analysis, which outlines each individual participant’s story as doctoral student researchers. The second part of this chapter presented the cross-case analysis according to the seven themes that emerged from the data. The metaphor of bike riding was adopted in order to describe the participants’ experiences with the research and publication process, which includes
responding to editorial feedback. The themes reflected the climate/culture of the programs with regard to research (bike riding terrains), the inherent challenges and successes (learning to balance by learning to fall / pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike / learning the rules of the road), as well as the supports and resources (learning with training wheels) that the doctoral students sought out during the publication editorial feedback process. The themes also included the doctoral students’ meaning-making of their experiences (reasons to ride a bike / runner’s high). These seven themes provided insight as to how doctoral students develop as independent researchers and, by extension, become members of the larger academic community. The next chapter will provide a discussion of the results, as well as implications for counselor educators, doctoral students, training programs, and future research.
CHAPTER V.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore doctoral students’ publication and editorial feedback experiences, as well as their meaning-making of those experiences. The participants of this study included twelve doctoral students who were enrolled in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs. All participants had submitted one or more manuscripts to peer reviewed journal(s), and had received editorial feedback as first or solo authors. This study explored these doctoral student researchers’ lived experiences, specifically focusing on their challenges, successes, received support, resources, and training needs. This chapter will discuss the significance of their experiences to this study, specifically the seven themes that emerged from these experiences. Implications for doctoral students, counselor educators, counselor education programs, journal editorial boards, and future research will be provided. In addition, the limitations of this study will be discussed.

Discussion of Themes

The seven themes that emerged from this study provide insight into how the twelve doctoral students in counselor education programs make meaning of their publication and editorial feedback experiences. As previously mentioned, the doctoral students who participated in this study were all enrolled in CACREP-accredited programs. They were at different stages in their programs, ranging from second to fourth year. Their programs were located across the country, and included the North Atlantic, North Central, Southern, and Rocky Mountain regional divisions of the ACES. The participant institutions were classified as Research 1, Research 2, and Doctoral/Research universities. Though individual experiences varied, there were seven themes that consistently appeared over the course of their recollections. For the purposes of this

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research study, these themes were discussed through the lens of an extended metaphor – namely, the act of learning how to ride a bike. These themes included: a) bike riding terrains, b) learning to balance by learning to fall, c) pedaling, coasting, and scooting the bike, d) learning the rules of the road, e) learning with training wheels, f) reasons to ride a bike, and g) runner’s high. The next sections will discuss the themes in light of the current literature.

Theme 1: Bike Riding Terrains

One of the most influential sources of meaning making for doctoral student researchers was their learning environment. This theme aligned with Jorgensen and Duncan’s (2015a) study, which also cited external facilitators (e.g., program expectations and elements, messages from others) and faculty as critical components of counselor trainees’ researcher identity development. Similarly, Flynn et al. (2012) mentioned environment influence as one of the six domains pertaining to doctoral students’ dissertation processes. In the current study, doctoral students described extensively the climate/culture of their own particular department, as well as that of the larger field of counselor education, and how these climates/cultures impacted their relationship with the publication and editorial feedback process. These students shared their thoughts on how the research and publication process was considered and conducted by those within counselor education. Moreover, they discussed the immediate research climate of their department, including how their department viewed research, the role of their peers, and the degree of transparency that exists within faculty-student relationships and communications.

While the current literature has continuously emphasized the value of research and publication in counselor education (Barrio Minton et al., 2008; Lambie et al., 2008; Ramsey et al., 2002), doctoral students who participated in this study nonetheless perceived that, when compared to other academic disciplines (for instance, psychology), the field of counselor
education seems to value research significantly less. The doctoral students specifically pointed to the lack of scholarly productivity among counselor educators, and believed that this negatively impacted their learning environment. Limited scholarly productivity in counselor education has already been cited as a growing problem in the existing literature (Barrio Minton et al., 2008; Lambie et al., 2014; Stewart et al., 2007). The findings of this study, in addition to the previous literature, indicate that there is a discrepancy between the high emphasis that is placed on publication, and the actual scholarly productivity among scholars in counselor education. Furthermore, doctoral student researchers in this study mentioned that counseling research largely lacks intervention studies – a concern that is also discussed at length in the existing literature (e.g., Crockett et al., 2010; Ray et al., 2011; Wester et al., 2013).

Despite the lack of overall scholarly productivity and intervention studies in the field of counselor education, however, most participants reported that research and publication were highly valued and expected in their department. Indeed, faculty members’ active engagement in research was greatly beneficial to the doctoral students’ growth as researchers, whereas faculty members who were not actively publishing articles were perceived as negatively influencing the research climate of the department.

Several doctoral students in the current study pointed out that later career faculty members did not engage in scholarly activities, a phenomenon that was consistent with existing literature (Barrio Minton et al., 2008; Lambie et al., 2014). Lambie et al. (2014) also reported that half of the counselor educators published less than two articles during a 6-year period. Moreover, Barrio Minton et al. (2008) found that 20% of counselor educators did not publish at all during a 10-year period. Doctoral students shared that this environment was not very conducive to their own research and publication process. Research suggested that faculty
members’ time allocation, including how much time they had to dedicate to research, was associated with where they ranked among their faculty peers (Link, Swann, & Bozeman, 2008). The amount of time that faculty members have to dedicate to service increases throughout their careers; indeed, full professors spend increasing amounts of time to service, which leaves less time to research and teaching (Link et al., 2008). Link et al. (2008) also found that long-term associate professors dedicated more time to teaching.

Peers were another critical component that contributed to doctoral students’ research environment. Doctoral students found it helpful to be surrounded by highly motivated peers, and to collaborate with those peers on shared goals for publication. Such peer collaboration, however, was not always very conducive to learning, especially when those peers were not very actively seeking out research opportunities. These findings are supported by Jorgensen and Duncan (2015), who identified peers as one of the many external facilitators affecting students’ researcher identity. In his qualitative study, Jazvac-Martek (2009) described how collaborative peer learning can be beneficial for doctoral students’ development. In his study, participants worked collaboratively with peers, often sharing work and ideas. In addition to academic support, doctoral students also received social and emotional support from their peers. They encouraged each other to persist in their academic journey, and helped normalize discouraging experiences. Castro et al. (2011) mentioned that positive relationships with peers were critical to doctoral students’ success and resiliency during their studies. The importance of peer support was consistent with Protivnak and Foss’s (2009) study, which recognized the support that doctoral students receive from their peers in the form of conversations and peer-mentoring.

Finally, participants mentioned that having access to a safe environment that welcomes open communication between faculty members and students played a critical role in their
learning experience. Some of them shared that it was difficult to be completely transparent about their progress because of the hierarchy that exists in academia; this hierarchy can create distance between faculty members and students, adversely influencing the students’ development. Similar findings were reported in Gelso et al. (2013), which discussed the fact the power differential that is inherent to the advisory relationship can make some students uncomfortable communicating their needs. In the current study, doctoral students who viewed their faculty members as approachable asked more questions and communicated their progress without hesitating. In other words, transparency in student-faculty relationships facilitates doctoral students’ growth as researchers.

**Theme 2: Learning to Balance by Learning to Fall**

Doctoral student researchers learned how to develop a manuscript, how to organize it so that it is publishable, and how to successfully go through the editorial process by *doing*. Jalongo et al. (2014) explained that scholarly writing requires “a constellation of skills, understandings, and dispositions” (p. 242). The “doing” of scholarly writing for the purpose of publishing articles requires a tacit way of thinking that cannot be acquired through direct instruction (Jalongo et al., 2014; Sternberg, 2004). In the current study, doctoral students obtained this tacit knowledge of conducting research and publishing articles through ‘experience.’ This finding is consistent with Sternberg (2004), which described that tacit knowledge was “typically acquired through experience or mentoring rather than through direct classroom or textbook instruction” (p. 167). In the present study, doctoral students who already had published/accepted articles during their doctoral programs all had previous research experiences as undergraduate and/or master’s students. Conversely, students without prior research experiences struggled more during the
publication and editorial feedback process. This finding reinforces the importance of ‘doing’ within the doctoral students’ development as researchers.

Moreover, doctoral students reported that they learned from mistakes and failures, including being rejected from journals. The experience of failure motivated these students to figure out how they could improve their manuscripts. Participants reported that they could anticipate potential failure and prepare their manuscripts more thoroughly by reflecting upon the mistakes that they had made. They also became emotionally more resilient, learning how to recover from discouraging experiences and viewing these experiences as foundations for future success. This finding is consistent with Mercer (2013), which described a particular participant who was more mentally prepared for further rejection and more resilient because of the rejections s/he had received from journals. This theme (i.e. learning from mistakes) can also be found in Kim (2015); in her phenomenological study, participants attributed their development as writers to the fact that they had learned from their mistakes as well as the feedback they had received.

Similar to the findings from Dickens et al. (2016), the doctoral students who participated in the current study struggled with demanding responsibilities and time management. Nevertheless, perseverance and resilience helped these students persist in their research and publication endeavors, regardless of the numerous challenges that they faced. Academic resilience refers to “the ability to cope with adversity and overcome the most challenging circumstances” (Hassinger & Plourde, 2005, p. 319). Doctoral student researchers did not give up, rigorously persisting in the publication and editorial feedback process. The findings of the current study were consistent with Jalongo and colleagues’ (2014) study, which noted that individuals’ “initiative, diligence, and persistence at publication” (p. 242) were critical for
doctoral students’ development in the research and publication process. They acknowledged that even when doctoral students struggled to publish their work after several rounds of revision, they nonetheless continued to endure in the process. Indeed, having a “can-do” (Castro et al., 2011, p. 56) attitude and accepting that challenges are a source of knowledge are important constructs of resilience.

**Theme 3: Pedaling, Coasting, and Scooting the Bike**

As the continued in their programs, doctoral student researchers acquired skills that facilitated their development as researchers. To do this, doctoral student researchers were proactive in securing opportunities to engage in research, particularly when those research opportunities were not being presented to them by faculty members. Participants sought out research opportunities both within and beyond their programs, demonstrating personal initiative and collaborating with their peers or with faculty members. Through this process, doctoral students learned how to build their own support system that facilitated their growth as researchers, even when opportunities and support were not offered to them. Some participants reported collaborating with people whom they had met at conferences, and seeking out research mentors beyond their programs. In addition to finding collaborators, doctoral students were also proactive in initiating their own research projects, and invited faculty members to advise and guide their projects. Indeed, they often developed their previous class assignments into manuscripts for publication.

The doctoral students reported that both editorial and programmatic feedback helped them recognize their mistakes and improve their manuscripts. Previous research studies also highlighted the critical role of written feedback on academic writing in higher education (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000; Can & Walker, 2011; Kumar & Stracke, 2007). Kumar and Stracke
(2007) reported that feedback facilitates students’ critical thinking and writing skills. Can and Walker (2011) also suggested that feedback enables instructional communication between doctoral students and other members of the larger academic community. In the current study, doctoral students maintained positive attitudes toward feedback, proactively seeking out opportunities to receive feedback from faculty members, peers, and individuals unaffiliated with their programs. The findings were consistent with Borders et al. (2012), which urged students to actively seek out, accept, and reflect upon feedback so that they might develop as researchers. The participants in the current study were willing to accommodate the opinions of others in their revisions, and understood that receiving feedback was a part of their learning experience, provided they were able to remain emotionally unaffected by such feedback. This theme supports findings by Kumar and Stracke (2007), who suggested that doctoral students who had positive attitudes toward negative feedback engaged in substantial revisions, allowing them to examine their work from a fresh perspective and ultimately improve their writings.

Moreover, the students obtained skills needed for effective research collaboration. While collaboration in research was largely beneficial, working with other people also created unexpected challenges, including determining authorship, integrating different writing styles as lead authors, as well as accommodating different priorities and goals among collaborators. Doctoral students understood potential drawbacks of research collaboration, and learned how to maintain balance between independent and collaborative projects.

Writing skills were considered essential tools for achieving success during the doctoral students’ publication process. The findings were consistent with Lambie and colleagues’ (2008) study, in which writing skills were identified as one of the most important components in the publication process. Eyres et al. (2011) also mentioned that one of the primary goals of doctoral
education was to develop students’ academic writing skills. In the current study, some doctoral students reported that they naturally possessed good writing skills; however, other students perceived that writing a manuscript that is concise and clear was not easy. Through the research and publication process, doctoral students learned that they should consider their potential audience and tailor their manuscripts to fit their targeted journals. In order to achieve this, they read articles that had already been published in these journals and familiarized themselves with the academic language therein.

**Theme 4: Learning the Rules of the Road**

Doctoral student researchers had to understand the editorial feedback process and acquire strategies about how to more effectively navigate and respond to editorial feedback. Just as Glatthorn and Joyner (2005) identified scholarly writing a “unique genre” (p. 142), participants in the current study reported that writing to publish was very different from writing for a class project. Moreover, doctoral students who participated in the current study recognized that journal editors and reviewers brought their own values and writing styles to the editorial feedback process. Heppner, Kivlighan, and Wampold (2008) mentioned that the judgments of authors, reviewers, and educators are often different, since writing is a personal process. Kim (2015) also explained that feedback is very contextualized and represented the voices of an academic community, as well as the unique opinions of the reviewers themselves.

Doctoral students perceived that politics, power, and privilege could impact the editorial process. For example, they thought that counseling journals were less favorable to qualitative research when compared to quantitative research. Also, they believed that editors’ personal preferences with regard to specific methodologies might influence the review process. One participant mentioned that some journal reviewers may not be familiar with relatively newer
qualitative methodologies (e.g., narrative study). Okech et al. (2006) found that counselor educators who were trained in the 1970s and 1980s were rarely trained with qualitative methods. Barrio Minton et al. (2008) reported that approximately 10% of the articles published to ACA division journals during a 10-year period were qualitative articles, whereas almost 44% were quantitative or mixed-method articles. Although qualitative articles continuously increase in the field of counselor education (Erford et al., 2011; Hays et al., 2015), ‘quantitative privilege’ can still exist behind the scenes. Moreover, Borders et al. (2014) pointed out that traditional approaches (e.g., grounded-theory, phenomenology) in qualitative methodologies were taught more frequently when compared to newer approaches (e.g., consensual qualitative research [CQR]). Both the reviewers’ subjective views and values, as well as their research training, might affect the review process and further editorial decisions.

Doctoral students also believed that the blind review process may not, in fact, be completely blind. They believed that reputations or personal relationships with those involved in the editorial process can impact how readily a manuscript is accepted. They mentioned that sometimes authors were encouraged by editors to submit manuscripts, and then these manuscripts were more eventually accepted by journals. A peer-review system of journals is meant to be double-blinded, which means that the authors and editors/reviewers involved are unable to identify each other (Milsom, 2009). Nevertheless, the participants in the current study believed that building personal relationships with editors or editorial board members can somewhat facilitate their publication process. Another reason that the doctoral students question the blind review process is that some journal editors and/or reviewers are able to publish their work in journals for which they are serving. This issue leads doctoral students to question the fairness of the publication process.
The participants in the current study made meaning of the process of navigating and responding to editorial feedback as ‘keeping balance’ between conformity and autonomy. While dedicating their time and efforts to addressing the editorial feedback that they received, doctoral student researchers learned that they could be selective and advocate for what they thought was important. They considered how the editorial feedback aligned with the scope of their manuscripts and learned that they needed to provide a rationale for their decision-making in a respectful way.

Communication with editorial board members also emerged as an important subtheme in the current study. Many participants perceived that the communication that occurred between themselves and the editors/reviewers to be one-sided, as the authors typically did not hear back from the board. Therefore, the doctoral students experienced challenges in understanding the intentions of the editorial feedback. The lack of communication, in addition to the slow editorial process, created anxiety and doubt in the doctoral students. The editors seemed untouchable and unaccessible. Nevertheless, some participants proactively communicated with editors and reviewers, asking questions to clarify the meaning of editorial feedback that they had received. They also reached out to communicate with the editorial board members and built relationships with them at conferences. For doctoral student researchers, being able to communicate with editorial board members was perceived as very helpful for the process.

Editorial feedback that the participants received varied from person to person. Doctoral students found specific feedback to be more helpful, when compared to generalized feedback. Students perceived that thorough and constructive feedback positively facilitated their growth. Singh (2016) similarly reported that students appreciated straightforward and specific feedback that provided clear instructions. When the participants received generalized feedback, they did
not know exactly what to address, which made them feel frustrated. Indeed, doctoral students appreciated feedback when it informed them how to improve their manuscripts, using specific suggestions. They also valued balanced feedback, which included both macroscopic and microscopic comments. Moreover, doctoral students valued feedback that suggested.

Positive and encouraging feedback was also perceived to be more helpful than harsh feedback. This finding closely aligned with Kumar and Stracke (2007), which noted that students found expressive feedback (including praise, criticism, and the supervisor’s opinions) was helpful for students. Similarly, Can and Walker (2011) examined the effects of feedback on the students’ emotions, self-confidence, motivations, and their willingness to continue revising their work. Doctoral students in their study who lost confidence and motivation after receiving critical feedback were likely to refrain from asking for further feedback or engaging in revision (Can & Walker, 2011).

The participants in the present study also reported that conflicting feedback between reviewers was difficult to address. The inconsistency of editorial feedback can also be found in Mercer (2013). In this study, the new assistant faculty members complained about the inconsistent editorial feedback from reviewers. These findings are consistent with Caffarella and Barnett’s (2000) study, which noted that low quality or contradictory feedback made the students highly emotional and frustrated.

**Theme 5: Learning with Training Wheels**

Mentorship, mostly received from faculty members, was identified as the most critical resource for those participants experiencing the publication and editorial feedback process. This finding is consistent with Kamler’s (2008) article, which discussed how mentorship facilitates doctoral students’ publication and helps them establish their professional identity as researchers.
Through the mentoring process, doctoral students obtained “practical and political know-how about journal submission” (Kamler, 2008, p. 293). In the current study, the participants believed that a true mentorship was distinguished from one that merely provided information; they perceived mentorship as one that invited both the mentor and the student to ‘walk through’ the entire research and publication process together. Mentorship was particularly helpful during the editorial process, with which most participants were not very familiar. During this process, faculty mentors provided guidance and helped their students understand and appropriately respond to the editorial feedback. Also, they encouraged the students to persist in their scholarly endeavors, providing positive feedback when necessary. Studies reported that research mentorship increased the scholarly productivity of graduate students as well as new counselor educators (e.g., Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Magnuson et al., 2003; Okech et al., 2006).

Doctoral students shared some of the research opportunities that were available to them. A few participants engaged in research by joining their faculty members’ projects. However, in most cases, they had to actively seek out opportunities, which were otherwise not provided to them. More than half of the doctoral students in the present study conducted research on their own. This ‘laissez-faire’ approach to doctoral research training has been discussed in the study conducted by Borders and colleagues (2014). They pointed out that a significant proportion of counselor education programs did not secure research opportunities for doctoral students, saying that, “In about one third of the counselor education programs, students’ opportunities for research involvement were serendipitous, depending on students’ initiative or whether their faculty advisor was involved in research” (Borders et al., 2014, p. 157).

Paradise and Dufrene (2010) mentioned that counseling doctoral students in general have neither sufficient research training nor the opportunity to conduct research. Similarly, in the
present study, doctoral students reported that they needed more hands-on opportunities to ‘get their feet wet.’ More specifically, they wanted to have more research opportunities infused within the curriculum. Flynn and Korcuska (2018) also emphasized the importance of applied experiences in doctoral research training.

Doctoral student researchers in this study reported needing scaffolding experience to develop into independent researchers, preferably by collaborating with faculty members and by receiving sufficient guidance from them. The finding was consistent with Lambie and colleagues’ (2008) study, which contended that doctoral students could develop their academic writing skills by working collaboratively with authors, such as their mentors, who were more experienced in publication. In addition, apprenticeship allows students’ transition from “an advisor’s direction to collaboration, from dependence to independence” (Lovitts, 2005, p. 18).

Some participants in the current study reported that they were well supported by their faculty members, but others perceived that they received no support from their doctoral programs. Doctoral students suggested that a more formalized research process, such as research team approaches, be available for students. Research lab model in psychology has been the most frequently mentioned among the participants in this study. According to Goodrich et al. (2011), 37.5% of CACREP-accredited doctoral programs established research teams for their students’ research training, while the remaining 62.5% did not have formalized teams in their department. In the present study, only one out of twelve participants reported having research experience within a structured research team, which was led by a faculty member. However, one participant shared that the research team model had both pros and cons, as the research team is typically driven by the faculty members’ personal research interests and timeline, both of which restrict opportunities for the students to engage in the process.
Doctoral students had limited resources to conduct research due to their status as students. These resources included time, money, support, or access to a sample of participants needed for research. This lack of resources often led to participants writing conceptual manuscripts, which were realistically more feasible, instead of conducting empirical studies. Also, some students could benefit from a research grant, but financial support was not always available for every participant. In addition to financial aid, doctoral students needed courses or workshops specifically designed to help them with the publication and editorial feedback process, which were available for only a few students who participated in the current study.

Borders et al. (2014) had reported that counselor education programs have often covered topics related to the research process (e.g., literature review, construction of research questions, and writing for publication). Nevertheless, the participants in the current study needed more research support in terms of the curricula. Jalongo et al. (2014) also suggested that providing classes and continued instruction on scholarly writing for publication would facilitate students’ scholarly publications. Adkison-Bradley (2013) noted that counselor educators and training programs should require curricula that focuses primarily on academic writing for publication, which is distinguished from dissertation writing. This suggestion also aligned with Kline and Farrell (2005), who argued that counselor education programs need to use course requirements that more systematically prepare prospective counselor educators for publication.

Borders et al. (2014) pointed out that counselor education research methods courses were mostly taught outside the counseling departments, meaning that they largely lacked relevance for counseling doctoral students’ interests. However, one participant in the present study reported that taking a research course specific to the publication and editorial process, which was taught by a faculty member outside her program, was helpful for her growth as a researcher. Although
the faculty member did not know much about the field of counseling, he was knowledgeable about the research (particularly methodologies), publication, as well as the editorial feedback process, which the participant found most helpful. This finding is different from what is suggested by Borders and her colleagues, indicating that there can be pros and cons of both approaches: research courses taught by counseling faculty members and research courses taught by methodologists.

Gelso (2006) suggested that hands-on and low-challenge research experiences early in one’s doctoral program is critical for a constructive research training environment. Doctoral students in the current study also mentioned that research opportunities as well as research courses should be provided early in their doctoral studies. These findings are consistent with Mowbray and Halse (2010), whose study also emphasized how important it is for doctoral students to engage in the research and publication process early in their program, so that they might develop their autonomy as researchers.

Theme 6: Reasons to Ride a Bike

Morrison and Lent (2014) suggested that intrinsic motivation is associated with higher levels of scholarly activity. The participants in the present study were internally motivated and enjoyed the process of research and publication. In addition to the writing process, doctoral students found the process of developing ideas and seeing them come to fruition enjoyable and appreciated the opportunity to share their knowledge with others. This passion for research helped doctoral students persist in the ‘arduous’ research and publication process.

These doctoral students also conducted research to increase the knowledge base of the counseling profession. They wanted to move the field forward through their scholarly commitment. Beyond filling gaps in the literature, doctoral student researchers wanted to inform
the counseling practice and make positive change in the field, just as Lambie et al (2008) notes that “scholarly writing is not only an academic exercise but also an ethical and professional responsibility for all counseling professionals” (p. 18). They hoped to benefit people by ‘giving back’ to the community. Furthermore, the participants conducted research to advocate for marginalized populations and ensure that these individuals’ voices are heard.

Nevertheless, building their curriculum vitae and becoming more competitive in the job market was a critical motivating factor for most participants. Indeed, they continued their research endeavor primarily to secure a good faculty position. Therefore, these students put their efforts into publishing as many articles as possible before they graduated. They believed that having published articles in their curriculum vitae would demonstrate their capability to do research, ultimately increasing their job prospects. This finding is consistent with Hoskins and Goldberg’s (2005) study, which also reported that job marketability and opportunities were important reasons for students to conduct research.

**Theme 7: Runner’s High**

Doctoral students experienced feelings of achievement after they went through the research and publication process. Regardless of the editorial decisions or feedback they received, doctoral students perceived their experiences as rewarding. They felt successful because they had completed their manuscripts and submitted them to journals. They also experienced increased feelings of self-efficacy, which helped them overcome their initial imposter syndrome that they had experienced at the beginning of their doctoral program. Bandura (1977) reported that self-efficacy encourages individuals to persist at certain tasks when they believe that they can succeed. In the current study, many of the doctoral students who had submitted their manuscripts and corresponded with editorial boards perceived the publication and editorial feedback process
as one that was less intimidating and more achievable. By demystifying the ‘daunting’ process, they realized that it was not as difficult as they had anticipated. Doctoral students became more confident in their abilities to answer their own research questions and felt more prepared as independent researchers. Previous studies also noted that higher levels of research self-efficacy were closely associated with greater scholarly productivity (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011; Morrison & Lent, 2014).

Reisetter and authors (2004) reported that students who were more confident in research were more likely to perceive themselves as researchers. Likewise, doctoral students who participated in the current study developed a stronger researcher identity as they engaged in the publication and editorial feedback process. Lamar and Helm’s (2017) study noted that research experiences contributed to the doctoral students’ researcher identity development. According to Lamar and Helm, researcher identity included the process of “understanding experiences, increasing awareness, and incorporating both into the sense of self” (p. 4). In the current study, research became an important part of the participants’ identity as they became aware of themselves as researchers. Specifically, doctoral students obtained a better understanding of their own research interests, their motivations to engage in research, as well as the meaning of their own research within the field of counselor education.

Finally, the participants believed that their research and publication experiences would be a foundation for their future research agenda, as well as their future careers as counselor educators. Indeed, they believed that their past and current research would inform their future research. Moreover, they viewed their experiences with the publication and editorial feedback process as preparation for their future jobs as counselor educators. Previous literature also noted
that doctoral students’ scholarly commitment became a foundation for their future research productivity as counselor educators (Barnard-Brak et al., 2011; Horta & Santos, 2016).

**Implications**

The themes and subthemes that emerged from this study provide several implications for doctoral students, counselor educators and counselor education programs, journal editorial boards, as well as for future research.

**Doctoral Students**

Numerous doctoral students will begin their journey as professional writers, in the hopes of receiving sufficient support on their research development through a series of scaffolding experiences. They might also expect that research opportunities will be presented in a manner that is both structured and organized. This experience may or may not be true for every student, depending on the research climate of the department, the degree of research engagement among faculty members and peers, and the course structure/curriculum. Therefore, doctoral students should be proactive in seeking out research opportunities, both within and outside of their programs. Also, they should consider how they will build their own support system in a way that can facilitate their growth as researchers, such as finding collaborators or developing personal relationships with professionals beyond their immediate department. Additionally, doctoral students should be encouraged to ask for help and voice their needs. In other words, they need to take initiative in their learning experiences in order to ensure that their needs are met. One strategy might include looking for different types of faculty mentors for their research. For example, the students could look for faculty editors, consultants, or faculty members who will guide and supervise the entire process of projects, depending on the type of project.
During the editorial feedback process, doctoral student researchers are also encouraged to actively communicate with journal editors. Although the communication with editorial boards may seem one-sided, doctoral student researchers need to understand that the editors and the board members are also human. Instead of simply assuming what the editorial feedback is suggesting, students should reach out to the editors and ask questions for clarification on any unclear feedback. Also, students need to understand that they have the right to advocate for what they think is important in their studies as long as they provide a rationale for those decisions.

Moreover, doctoral student researchers need to understand that writing with the intention of getting published means learning the language of the academic community. They should be proactive in exploring what has already been published on their topic, and in the journals in which they want to see their articles written. Analyzing past articles for writing style, content and analysis could help student researchers tailor their manuscripts to fit the scope of the targeted journal. At the same time, doctoral students need to manage expectations, recognizing the fact that journals rarely agree to publish an initial submission of a manuscript without further revisions (McGowan & Scholl, 2004). Doctoral students also need to understand the editorial feedback is not personal. By understanding that the publication and editorial feedback process can be arduous, and being prepared for rejection, students will be more inclined to continue the long and difficult process of getting their manuscripts accepted.

Counselor Educators

The ACES Strategic Planning Committee (2007) suggested that counselor education faculty members should provide their students with guidance, instruction, and support throughout the research process. Counselor educators are encouraged to provide research mentoring for their students, thus helping these students address their research needs and
expectations. Even from the beginning of the doctoral program, counselor educators can help their students establish their individualized research goals and expectations. Moreover, they can be proactive in involving their students in their research projects in order to provide their students with meaningful scaffolding experiences. Faculty members can even involve those master’s level students who are interested in research and/or PhD programs to engage in their personal research, as these students’ early engagement in scholarly activities can positively influence their future research competencies, as well as their productivity levels. By joining faculty members’ projects, students will be more prepared to one day conduct their own research. If students already have sufficient experiences and the ability to conduct research independently, counselor educators can help these students take more initiative in their own projects. Depending on the students’ readiness levels, counselor educators can either provide support or more opportunities for autonomous work.

Moreover, counselor educators are encouraged to provide their students with more critical and constructive feedback on their writing, beyond the superficial level, so that their students can improve their manuscripts for publication. In the current study, doctoral students emphasized the role of feedback that they had received (or not received) from their faculty members during their program. Indeed, the more specific and thorough the feedback, the higher the confidence levels of doctoral students (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000). In addition to providing feedback, counselor educators can also encourage their students to provide feedback to their peers, which will help them gain a better understanding of the peer review process before they submit their manuscripts to journals.

Furthermore, counselor educators need to have open discussions with their students. In other words, counselor educators should create a safe environment that facilitates transparent and
open communication. Hierarchy sometimes makes it difficult for students to be vulnerable; indeed, if students are afraid of being evaluated or judged by faculty members, they will not openly discuss what experience they are lacking, or even what they need further assistance on. Thus, counselor educators should be aware of the power differentials that exist in their relationships with students, and recognize how this hierarchy may affect communications.

Finally, counselor educators can help their students remain optimistic and hopeful about their experience with the publication and editorial feedback process. Although the findings of this study indicated that mistakes and failures do indeed contribute to student researchers’ learning, continuously being exposed to failure can nevertheless be detrimental to the students’ growth. Lee et al. (2018) reported that the more counseling graduate students continued to be exposed to negative events, the more likely they were to experience emotional exhaustion and decreased professional self-efficacy. If students’ projects become stagnant over time, or if the students themselves continue to experience failure (e.g., rejection from journals), counselor educators can help by suggesting that the students make positive changes in their learning environment, thereby ensuring that the students do not lose hope in their research.

Counselor Education Programs

Doctoral students have limited resources with which to conduct research; these resources include, among others, time, money, and personal resources. Thus, it is essential that counselor education programs can support their doctoral students’ research by providing financial aid, as well as by offering workshops or courses that specifically address the publication and editorial feedback process. Lambie et al. (2008) also suggested that counseling professionals need preparation in scholarly writing, given the importance of writing skills in the publication process. Moreover, doctoral students require more structure in their learning, so that they may develop as
independent researchers. By providing fundamental structure of learning, counselor education programs can encourage doctoral students to collaborate amongst each other, initiate their own research projects, and/or to join other people’s research. Indeed, the programs can be much more instrumental in their students’ learning experience by connecting their students with other individuals who share similar research interests and introducing resources as they become available. In particular, counselor education programs can promote research collaboration among students at different developmental levels, which will provide scaffolding experiences for junior doctoral students to observe and learn from senior students (Peterson, Hall, & Buser, 2016). Through a variety of research collaboration experiences, doctoral student researchers will be able to accommodate diverse roles in research projects, such as organizing research teams, leading the projects, and helping as co-authors.

Furthermore, counselor education programs are encouraged to support faculty members who actively engage doctoral students in their own projects. Doctoral students who participated in the current study required more structured research opportunities, typically through collaboration with their faculty members. Student-faculty research collaboration can benefit the students; however, it can make faculty members’ research projects emerge much more slowly than if they did it themselves. If faculty members are burdened by promotion and tenure requirements, research collaboration with students might create more anxiety and stress for them. According to Paul, Stein, Ottenbacher, and Liu (2002), 40.7% of mentors (senior faculty members) perceived that research collaboration with junior faculty members did not enhance their research productivity, because collaboration required more time commitment from senior faculty members than working alone or with their colleagues. Faculty members in counselor education program are confronted with multiple role expectations, which often leads to
significant personal stress (Niles, Akos, & Cutler, 2001). Such faculty members struggle with role overload (e.g., writing for publications, teaching, participating in service activities), a general lack of support and resources, insufficient rewards and recognition, as well as conflicting life role demands (Sorcinelli, 1994). Moreover, faculty members’ out-of-class contact with students (e.g., mentoring, advising) was not appropriately rewarded or recognized in universities (Milem, Berger, & Dey, 2000). Milem et al. (2000) pointed out that higher education institutions “do not reward faculty” in ways that contribute to students’ better outcomes (p. 473). Counselor education programs should encourage faculty members to provide their students with research opportunities by adjusting faculty workload or allocating more budget to faculty-student collaborative projects or counting research teams as part of agreed upon service obligations.

Journal Editorial Boards

This study also provided several implications for journal editors and reviewers, as well as the counselor education profession at large. First, American Counseling Association (ACA) division journals should put more effort into diversifying their editorial boards so that they can accommodate professionals with diverse experiences and expertise, especially with regard to methodologies and topics. The editors of ACA journals have shown effort for a diversification of their board members, calling in *ad hoc* reviewers when they have topics or methods that may not fit the editorial boards’ expertise. This effort should be continued to provide authors with unbiased editorial feedback and decisions, minimizing potential biases that can impact the review process. In this way, journal editors might contribute to expanding the scope of counseling research, allowing room for diverse research to thrive, but at the same time, still considering their membership and potential audience.
Professional organizations, such as ACA or ACES, should continue to provide more training opportunities for reviewers, informing what the reviewers should focus on as they read manuscripts that contain specific research methodologies. Journal editorial board members are encouraged to attend to training sessions provided by professional organizations, such as ACES Insight Research Preconference, in order to develop their competence as professional reviewers. By doing this, journal reviewers will become more knowledgeable of diverse research methodologies.

In addition, ACA journal editors can provide more workshops for doctoral students and young professionals (e.g., panel discussion sessions at ACA and ACES conferences), specifically about the editorial feedback process. In addition to explaining how to publish in their journals, editors need to demystify the blind review process (e.g., Reviews are blind, and no one knows if the authors are doctoral students.), as well as share strategies that effectively respond to editorial feedback. Indeed, open communication between the editorial boards and researchers will encourage those researchers to continue their scholarly endeavors.

Moreover, editors and reviewers of ACA division journals can be more helpful to doctoral students’ learning experience by providing quality editorial feedback. Feedback that is encouraging, clear, specific, and not contradicting, will contribute to the growth of any developing authors, including doctoral students. Journal editors could create a list of specifics that reviewers should address for each manuscript they review. Although some journals’ online review interfaces are more structured, with rubrics that weight each component of a manuscript, the editorial feedback that authors received was inconsistent with regard to its amount and depth. Journal editors and editorial board members are encouraged to continue professional effort to
ultimately standardize the format of their feedback (e.g., specifying essential components of written feedback in details, for each section of manuscript) at least within the same journal.

Participants in the present study also shared several ideas for scaffolding opportunities within their programs. They mentioned that providing a journal exclusively for doctoral student authors would be beneficial to their learning experience. As publishing in peer-reviewed journals, particularly ACA division journals, is very competitive, most doctoral students are unable to experience publication during their doctoral programs. However, if there was a journal that doctoral students could submit to and receive feedback from, these students would be provided with the opportunity to experience the entire publication and editorial process without the fear of receiving a flat-out rejection from competitive journals. The participants also believed that such a doctoral student journal could provide learning examples for students’ research training.

**Future Research**

This study explored the lived experiences of doctoral students in counselor education with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process. Seven themes and subthemes emerged from this qualitative inquiry. These themes identified the numerous elements of research training that can positively or negatively impact doctoral students’ experiences. Based on these themes, future studies can quantitatively examine the contribution of environmental, personal, and demographic variables to doctoral students’ research productivity, research competence, and overall satisfaction with their research training. Through large scale quantitative studies, future research can also identify group disparities in doctoral students’ research experiences.
In addition, this study aimed to amplify the voices of doctoral students, so that they may positively contribute to the overall research training environment. In addition to these students, other important stakeholders in doctoral research training, such as faculty members and journal, editors/reviewers, were assessed. Further research on the experiences of faculty members who advise students’ research invites an exploration of the challenges that these faculty members experience and what strategies they perceived as effective during the process. Case studies on satisfactory research mentorship can also provide practical implications for counselor educators and counselor education programs. Moreover, research on the experiences of journal editors and reviewers will provide new perspectives on how the overall publication and editorial feedback process can be improved.

Furthermore, the present study provided information on the overall editorial feedback that the participants experienced. The participants pointed out the inconsistent feedback across reviewers. Future studies can examine more fully the content and format of editorial feedback that is provided by ACA division journals. The findings of these future studies would positively influence the quality of feedback in the field of counselor education, which would ultimately contribute to a standardization of editorial feedback, at least within the same journal.

Research studies on ethical practice in authorship decisions are also needed to inform the future research training in counselor education. Although the American Psychological Association (APA) and articles (e.g., Winston, 1985) suggested guidelines for determining authorship orders, the literature on authorship remains insufficient. Future research can investigate how counselor educators and professionals, as well as counseling doctoral students, perceive authorship in academia. More specifically, future research can provide more details on how counseling researchers decide authorship orders, who contributes to the decision-making
process and to what degree, what conflicts or problems are experienced by individuals, as well as how power differentials/politics influence authorship. Further research should investigate the ethical practices of the authorship decision-making process, inviting an atmosphere in which students and faculty members can actively discuss authorship expectations.

Future studies can also examine international doctoral students’ publication experiences. Considering the fact that doctoral student researchers face a constellation of challenges during the research and publication process, it is important to note that international doctoral students often experience those challenges more intensively and extensively due to language barriers. Depending on the cultural backgrounds that the international students bring to their doctoral programs, the students’ cultural identities might intensify or reduce the challenges they face in their training environment. Song (2014) did examine the publication experiences of non-native English-speaking doctoral students in the United States, and identified difficulties that these students encountered and linguistic and textural strategies that they adopted to overcome their difficulties. However, further studies should examine international doctoral students’ publication experiences specifically in counselor education, given the fact that the profession itself relies heavily on English. These studies will provide implications for international doctoral students, as well as faculty members working with these students, to create a more facilitative learning environment.

Lastly, the current study focused on the publication and editorial feedback process experienced by doctoral students who have been somewhat successful. They had either already published articles in peer-reviewed journals or had experienced submitting articles as lead authors. In addition, most of the doctoral students in this study had multiple research projects in progress. Future studies should thus highlight the experiences of doctoral students who struggle
with research. Not all doctoral students possess the resilience to withstand the arduous publication process, as many lacks the capacity to identify solutions under unfavorable situations. According to Flynn et al. (2012), many doctoral students remain as ABD status without completing their dissertations. Given that a significant number of students graduate without any publications (Lambie & Vaccaro, 2011), future studies need to provide suggestions for effectively helping these students succeed in their academic journey post-graduation.

**Limitations**

This study had several limitations. First, the term *research* was perceived and interpreted differently across the participants. Whereas the researcher of this study did not explicitly denote the term *research* (as she assumed that this term included all processes related to developing manuscripts and publishing findings) some participants chose to interpret ‘research’ as ‘empirical’ studies. They did not therefore use the term *research* when indicating conceptual manuscripts. Other participants assumed that writing newsletters and presenting at conferences were aspects of research and publication. Since the notion of research and publication was different across participants, as well as between the researcher and the participants, the researcher had to continuously determine how the term *research* was being used according to context and member-checking.

Second, this study focused on the experiences of doctoral students who had submitted one or more manuscripts as solo or first authors. The purpose of this inclusion criterion was to ensure that every participant had experience navigating and responding to editorial feedback as a corresponding author. Nevertheless, solo or first authors do not fully represent the population ‘doctoral student researchers.’ Indeed, those students who have other authorships can also share a range of experiences that will contribute to the future of doctoral research training. Therefore,
it is hard to say that the inclusion criteria used in this study was optimal, as it excludes certain doctoral student researchers’ experiences.

Finally, most participants in this study identified as White females. Ten out of the twelve participants were White, and nine out of twelve were female. Moreover, all of them were U.S. citizens. Considering the overwhelming nature of the publication and editorial feedback process, the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals can deviate from the experiences that are explored in this study. Also, individuals who identify themselves as minorities might have unique training needs pertaining to their identity. Future studies should therefore explore these individuals’ experiences in order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of doctoral students’ research and publication process.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided a discussion of the seven themes that emerged from the lived experiences of twelve doctoral student researchers in CACREP-accredited counselor education programs. The purpose of this study was to contribute to the current literature on doctoral students’ research and publication specifically in the field of counselor education, and ultimately improve the research training of these students. Through individual case summaries as well as the seven themes found across twelve participants, this study illustrated how doctoral students made meaning of their experience with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process. The findings included the followings: a) how doctoral students perceived the research climate/culture of both the counselor education profession, as well as within their programs, b) the skills and assets that facilitated their growth as independent researchers, c) what these students learned from the editorial feedback experience, d) the support and resources that they felt were needed, e) their own personal motivations to conduct research, and f) their meaning
making of being a doctoral student researcher. Based upon these research findings, implications were provided for doctoral students, counselor educators, counselor education programs, journal editorial boards, and future research.

Research that addresses the experiences of doctoral students is limited in counselor education, despite the importance of these experiences to the profession at large (Goodrich et al., 2011). Thus, the research findings will encourage scholars to continue this line of inquiry, and provide counselor educators and other professionals with insight as to the doctoral students’ publication and editorial feedback process. In summary, doctoral students’ publication and editorial feedback experiences can be described as becoming well-rounded members of the larger academic community, learning the culture and language of the publication and editorial process, as well as being proactive in building their own learning, ultimately becoming more prepared as future researchers and counselor educators.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

RESEARCHER AS AN INSTRUMENT

This statement is to illustrate my values, philosophies, personal characteristics, and all related experiences that can influence my research. Through this statement, I will reflect my basic assumptions and perspectives through which I interpret the world. More specifically, I will discuss how all of my experiences and beliefs relate to the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers.

My own experiences as a doctoral student for the last three years piqued my interest in counselor trainees’ experiences. I particularly paid attention to professional development of these students and how professionals could better aid them. Moreover, the unique challenges that counseling doctoral students face led me to delve into this topic for my dissertation. Reflecting upon my own experiences, being a doctoral student in counselor education required me to reconcile myself to a host of uncertainties. I had to continuously struggle to keep up with the class, conduct and publish research, develop my professional identity, juggle different roles (i.e. student, teacher, counselor), look for outside opportunities for my own growth, as well as connect with peers and colleagues. Although there was both official and unofficial support from faculty and department, in most cases, I had to be the principal agent to develop myself as a professional, to be ready for the future professoriate.

Conducting research was a particularly challenging experience for me as a doctoral student. Although I took research courses and there were faculty members whom I could reach out to when I had questions, actually conducting research required another layer of competency: constructing research questions, developing ideas, looking for funding opportunities, obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), collecting and analyzing data, as well as
writing up manuscripts. I had to navigate every detail of the whole process through trial-and-error. I continuously asked myself, “Am I doing it right?” Finding colleagues to write with was another challenge as a doctoral student with insufficient knowledge and skills. I wish I could have had a ‘scaffolding’ opportunity to learn research and manuscript writing by joining a research project led by a more experienced researcher. Opportunities were not naturally given to me, rather, I had to struggle to make my own opportunities. Because of this, I often had to resort to initiating research projects by myself, which ultimately made me feel overwhelmed. Moreover, my status as an international student often made me feel vulnerable in the power differentials of higher academia. Also, my Asian heritage made it difficult for me to say ‘no’ even when I felt I was being treated unfairly.

Submitting articles to a journal and responding to editorial feedback for publication were even more challenging for a novice researcher who was taking the corresponding role for the first time. Finding an appropriate outlet for my manuscript and matching the writing style and formatting were not easy. After several months of waiting, the decisions were not always positive. One of my manuscripts was even not sent for the review process because the editor thought that it was “unlikely to surpass the threshold required for publication prioritization” in the journal. Another manuscript was asked for revision and resubmission, but finally was rejected after a tedious, major revision process. Dealing with unfavorable and discouraging feedback was not pleasant, but I had to work on my manuscript in order to find the best outlet for it.

Research and publication processes, indeed, required a lot of support from other people. I realized that I could not complete these processes without help from a variety of sources. I had to continuously ask for help from colleagues, faculty, department/college, and potential research
participants. My efforts sometimes turned out to be successful, but other times did not. I learned how to ask for help and handle unexpected failures through trial-and-error.

Dealing with all these challenges, I have matured as a researcher over the last three years of my doctoral studies. I have a stronger identity as a researcher and have more research self-efficacy compared to when I first began my doctoral program. I located my own research interest, developed my own research agenda, and wrote and published several articles. I learned how to initiate projects, develop ideas, ask for help, find resources, and collaborate with other people. Moreover, the manuscript submission and revision process allowed me to experience the entire journey toward publication.

Conducting research and publishing articles, which challenged me and matured my identity as a researcher and student, also made me aware of my own assumptions with regard to the commonalities that exist among doctoral student researchers in counselor education. First, my overarching assumption regarding this topic was that doctoral students should all be expected to publish articles in refereed journals, and that all counselor education programs should prepare their students for publication. I understood that not all counselor preparation programs have a culture that lends itself to research, which may explain why the current literature argues that a significant number of researchers in counselor education do not publish enough. This assumption led to self-selecting participants who themselves belonged to programs that are geared more heavily toward research.

Also, I believed that doctoral students would have more difficulty while conducting research and publishing articles when compared to faculty members. They might have limited resources, limited knowledge, as well as limited networks. I also thought that the environment provided by faculty and department members – supportive or otherwise – would have a
significant impact on the students’ research and publication experiences. Moreover, their status as students might influence their research and publication processes, often negatively. I believed that doctoral student researchers might feel frustrated and embarrassed while handling unfavorable editorial feedback. My assumptions and underlying beliefs led me to investigate how the lived experiences of doctoral student researchers strengthen their voices in counselor education. I am eager to advocate for the advanced training experiences of counselor education doctoral students, which I believe will have a profound effect on the advancement of the counseling profession overall. Through this research, I expect I will find doctoral student researchers’ unique challenges regarding research and publication processes, support received, critical incidents that led them to a learning curve, and what resources are further needed.

So far, doctoral student researchers have not received enough attention in counselor education literature. Their research productivity has been low, and, in most cases, the dissertation often has been their first empirical research experience. Moreover, there is no research on doctoral students’ publication experiences. A thorough investigation of their lived experiences as novice researchers and writers will give practical implications for counselor educators and training programs so that they can provide more systematic support for their students. Furthermore, this phenomenological inquiry will serve as a starting point for future research on counselor education doctoral students’ development as researchers and writers. Based on the findings of this study, researchers will be able to suggest a model of counseling researchers’ development. Future studies can also examine the contributing factors (i.e. resilience) that lead to successful publication of articles in refereed journals.

Throughout the research process, I will continue to be mindful of any assumptions, beliefs, and attitudes that might affect the data collection and analyses, and will thus employ
multiple strategies to illuminate my own perspectives and experiences as a doctoral student researcher. In addition to bracketing my assumptions before I access the participants’ experiences, several trustworthiness strategies will help address the issue of researcher biases.

The data will be collected from various sources, including semi-structured interviews, an online focus group, writing prompts, and cultural artifacts. Continued reflexive journaling of the researcher will also help ensure the trustworthiness of this study.
Dear doctoral students in CACREP-accredited programs,

My name is Injung Lee, a doctoral candidate in the Counselor Education and Supervision program at the University of Iowa. I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study that I am doing to fulfill my dissertation requirement. This study will examine the lived experiences of doctoral students in CACREP-accredited programs with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process.

Your participation in this research will involve taking part in **1) two semi-structured interviews** (an initial and a follow-up) and **2) writing a response** to two open-ended questions. Also, I will invite you to join a one-time **3) online focus group**, which is optional.

To be eligible for the study:

- You must be a current doctoral student in a CACREP-accredited program;
- You must have submitted one or more manuscript(s) to refereed journals during your doctoral program and received editorial feedback;
- You must be the first or solo author of the manuscript(s).

You will receive a **$50 Amazon gift card** as a compensation. The compensation will be given after you complete two interviews and a written response. However, compensation will be given on a reasonable prorated basis even though you withdraw from the study before completing all the required data collection process. (e.g., If you withdraw from the study after completing the first interview, you will receive $20 gift card, and if you withdraw after completing the follow-up interview, you will receive $30 gift card.) If you participate in the online focus group, you will receive an additional **$20 Amazon gift card** as a compensation. **Total $70 Amazon gift card** will be given, if you complete all the procedures.

This research study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Iowa (IRB# 201810782). To protect your confidentiality, I will use pseudonym and collect personal information only directly needed to conduct the study. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won’t be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

If you are willing to participate in the study, please click on the link below to review the consent document and complete a demographic questionnaire:
(It will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.)

https://uiowa.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cRQUcoMmV8yqdsF
If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me directly (injung-lee@uiowa.edu), or my dissertation co-chairs, Dr. David Duys (david-duys@uiowa.edu) and Dr. Susannah Wood (susannah-wood@uiowa.edu).

Thank you very much for your consideration of this research study.

Sincerely,

Injung Lee, M.A.
Doctoral Candidate
Department of Rehabilitation and Counselor Education
The University of Iowa
Phone: (319) 383-6722
E-mail: injung-lee@uiowa.edu
APPENDIX C

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

[Inclusion questions]

Thank you for your interest in participating in the following study, titled, “Publication and feedback experiences of doctoral students in counselor education: A phenomenological inquiry”. Before you begin, please answer the following questions:

Q1 I am a current doctoral student enrolled in a CACREP-Accredited program.
 o Yes.
 o No.

Q2 I submitted one or more manuscript(s) to refereed journal(s) during my doctoral study, and have received editorial feedback from the journal(s).
 o Yes.
 o No.

Q3 I am the first or solo author of the manuscript(s).
 o Yes.
 o No.

[Demographics]

Q1 What is your age? ________________

Q2 What is your gender?
 o Male
 o Female
 o Not listed ________________________________
 o Prefer not to answer

Q3 Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be.
 o White
 o Black or African American
 o Hispanic
 o Asian
 o Native American
 o Pacific Islanders
Q4 Are you an international student?
  o Yes.
  o No.

Q5 What year are you in your graduate study?
  o 1st year
  o 2nd year
  o 3rd year
  o 4th year
  o 5th year or more

Q6 Are you a full-time student (9 credit hours or more) or a part-time student (less than 9 credit hours)?
  o A full-time student
  o A part-time student

Q7 Is your current program primarily an on-campus program or an online program?
  o An on-campus program
  o An online program

Q8 By the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, what is the type of your current institution?
  o Research University, Very High Research Activity
  o Research University, High Research Activity
  o Doctoral/Research University
  o Not listed. / I don't know. ________________________________________________

Q9 What was your master's degree specialty area?
  o School Counseling
  o Clinical Mental Health Counseling
  o Rehabilitation Counseling
  o Other ________________________________________________

Q10 What was your bachelor's degree?

__________________________________________________________
Q11 Did you have any research experiences during your master's or bachelor's program?
- During master's program
- During bachelor's program
- During both master's and bachelor's programs
- None.
- Other ________________________________________________

Q12 Tell me about your manuscripts that you wrote during your doctoral program.

(1) What is the number of manuscripts at each stage of publishing process?
(2) What is your authorship order? (e.g., first, second, third, solo)
(3) What is the type of the manuscript? (e.g., conceptual/quantitative/qualitative/mixed)

If you answered more than one manuscript in the question (1) (e.g., 2 manuscripts in revision), please use '/' to distinguish them answering the questions (2) and (3).
(e.g., solo/3rd; quantitative/qualitative)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>(1) What is the number of manuscripts at this stage?</th>
<th>(2) What is your authorship order?</th>
<th>(3) What is the type of the manuscript? (conceptual/quantitative/qualitative/mixed)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Published/in press/accepted</td>
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<tr>
<td>In revision</td>
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<tr>
<td>In review</td>
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<td>Rejected</td>
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<td>In preparation</td>
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</table>

Q13 Please provide your e-mail address to schedule the interviews.

________________________________________________________________
Dear Participant,

My name is Injung Lee, a doctoral candidate in Counselor Education and Supervision program at the University of Iowa. I would like to invite you to participate in a research study for my dissertation. The purpose of the study is to examine the lived experiences of doctoral students in CACREP-accredited programs with regard to the publication and editorial feedback process. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a current doctoral student in a CACREP-accredited program, and have publication and feedback experiences. Approximately 15 people will take part in this study nationwide.

If you agree to participate, you will first be asked to complete a short questionnaire that will ask for some demographic information including your age, gender, race/ethnicity, nationality, year in the program, the type of institution you attend, previous degrees, and publication experience. At the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide your contact information. It will take approximately 5 minutes to complete the questionnaire. You are free to skip any questions that you would prefer not to answer. Your participation in this research will involve taking part in two individual interviews (an initial and a follow-up) and writing a response to two open-ended questions. Also, I will invite you to join a one-time online focus group, which is optional.

Once you complete the demographic questionnaire and provide your contact information, I will send you an email to schedule an initial individual interview. It will take approximately one and a half hours or less. During the initial interview, I will ask you questions about your research climate, research projects, the process of developing manuscripts and responding to editorial feedback, as well as your meaning making on those experiences. The second interview will take place within a month after the initial interview is completed and I will ask follow-up questions based on the first interview. It will take less than 30 minutes. The interviews will be conducted via phone or via Zoom meeting. After the second interview, you will be invited to join a one-time online focus group via Zoom meeting. It will take approximately one hour. You will be asked to discuss your own experiences with other participants in the group. The online focus group is optional. Finally, I will send you a Qualtrics link including two open-ended questions and ask for your written responses to these questions.

I would like to audio record the interviews for transcription purposes. Also, I will also contact you through email with a copy of the transcript to ask you to verify that I have accurately captured your words and experiences. I may use direct quotes that you provide within the paper. If at any point during the interview or the project, you feel you do not want to continue, you can withdraw from the project. I will keep the information you provide confidential, however federal regulatory agencies and the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. I will use a pseudonym instead of your name to identify the data and this pseudonym will be linked to your identifying information. I will destroy the link between the pseudonym and your
name upon completion of the study. If I write a report about this study, I will do so in such a way that you cannot be identified.

You may feel uncomfortable revealing your experiences, thoughts and feelings during the interviews and focus group (if you choose to participate). You can stop participating whenever you want. Also, you may decide not to participate in the focus group if you feel uncomfortable meeting other participants even online. You will be asked to provide information over the Internet. It is possible that your responses could be viewed by persons who have access to the computers hosting the web site or by unauthorized persons who gain access to the web site computers. We will use a secure web site and computers to collect the study information and we will not collect any information in the on-line questions or through the web site that would identify you. You will not benefit personally from being in this study. However, I hope that others may benefit in the future from what I learn as a result of this study. You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

You will receive up to a total of $70 in Amazon gift cards as a compensation for being in this study. You will receive $20 for completing the first interview and $30 for completing the second interview. If you participate in the online focus group, which is optional, you will receive an additional $20 Amazon gift card. Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won’t be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact Injung Lee (319-383-6722). If you experience a research-related injury, please contact: Injung Lee (319-383-6722) or Dr. David Duys (319-335-5281). If you have questions about the rights of research subjects, please contact the Human Subjects Office, 105 Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, 600 Newton Rd, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1098, (319) 335-6564, or e-mail irb@uiowa.edu. To offer input about your experiences as a research subject or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Subjects Office at the number above.

Selecting the ‘I AGREE to participate in this study’ option below and completing the demographic questionnaire on the next page will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you wish to keep a copy of this information page, please save or print the page before going on to the survey. If you do not wish to participate in this study, please close your web browser window now or at any time before submitting the survey.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Injung Lee, MA
Doctoral Candidate
Graduate Research Assistant
Department of Rehabilitation and Counselor Education
University of Iowa
Phone: 319-383-6722
Email: Injung-lee@uiowa.edu
APPENDIX E

IRB APPROVAL

IRB ID #: 201810782

To: Injung Lee

From: IRB-02 DHHS Registration # IRB00000100, Univ of Iowa, DHHS Federalwide Assurance # FWA00003007

Re: Publication and feedback experiences of doctoral students in counselor education: A phenomenological inquiry.

Approval Date: 12/12/18

Next IRB Approval Due Before: N/A

Type of Application: New Project

Type of Application Review: Full Board:

Meeting Date: Expedited

Approved for Populations: Children

Prisoners

Pregnant Women, Fetuses,

Exempt

Source of Support: College of Education Research Fund

The following documents have been submitted for the above review and approval:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consent Letter</th>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>Focus group questions.rtf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>Interview questions.rtf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Handling Approval</td>
<td>Cash Handling Approval_Injung Lee.pdf</td>
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<td>Recruitment Script: Email</td>
<td>Email correspondence_Revised.rtf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Data Collection Instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Open-ended question email.rtf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>Scheduling Interview Email.rtf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Data Collection Instruments</td>
<td>Demographic questionnaire.rtf</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As Principal Investigator, you are responsible for ensuring this project is conducted in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, institutional policies, and requirements of the IRB, which include, but are not limited to, the following:

**IRB Approval:** IRB approval indicates that this project meets the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects. The research is approved to be conducted as described in the Hawk IRB application. The addition or omission of study activities is not permitted without prior IRB review and approval. IRB approval does not absolve the principal investigator from complying with other institutional, collegiate, or departmental policies or procedures.

**Agency Notification:** If this is a New Project or Continuing Review application and the project is funded by an external government or non-profit agency, the original HHS 310 form, “Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption,” has been forwarded to the UI Division of Sponsored Programs, 100 Gilmore Hall, for appropriate action. You will receive a signed copy from Sponsored Programs.

**Recruitment:** Your IRB application has been approved for recruitment of subjects not to exceed the number indicated on your application form. The IRB has approved all recruitment strategies described in the application. It is not necessary to use all of these strategies, but no additional recruitment strategies may be used without IRB approval.

**Continuing Review:** Federal regulations require that the IRB re-approve research projects at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk, but no less than once per year. This process is called “continuing review.” Continuing review for non-exempt research is required to occur as long as the research remains active for long-term follow-up of research subjects, even when the research is permanently closed to enrollment of new subjects and all subjects have completed all research-related interventions and to occur when the remaining research activities are limited to collection of private identifiable information. This includes data identified with a study ID# for which a link exists between the ID# and subject identifying information. Your project “expires” at 12:01 AM on the date indicated on the preceding page (“Next IRB Approval Due on or Before”). You must obtain your next IRB approval of this project on or before that expiration date. You are responsible for submitting a Continuing Review application in sufficient time for approval before the expiration date, however the HSO will send a reminder notice approximately 60 and 30 days prior to the expiration date.

**Modifications:** Any change in this research project or materials must be submitted on a Modification application to the IRB for prior review and approval, except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects. The investigator is required to promptly notify the IRB of any changes made without IRB approval to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects using the Modification/Update Form. Modifications requiring the prior review and approval of the IRB include but are not limited to: changing the protocol or study procedures, changing investigators or funding sources, changing the Informed Consent Document, increasing the anticipated total number of subjects from what was originally approved, or adding any new materials (e.g., letters to subjects, ads, questionnaires).

**Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks:** You must promptly report to the IRB any serious and/or unexpected adverse experience, as defined in the UI Investigator’s Guide, and any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others. The Reportable Events Form (REF) should be used for
reporting to the IRB. Reports from the investigator to the IRB must be submitted via Hawk IRB within ten working days of the event or within 10 working days of the PI becoming aware of the event.

Audits/Record-Keeping: Your research records may be audited at any time during or after the implementation of your project. Federal and University policies require that all research records be maintained for a period of three (3) years following the close of the research project. For research that involves drugs or devices seeking FDA approval, the research records must be kept for a period of three years after the FDA has taken final action on the marketing application. For research that involves Protected Health Information (PHI) under HIPAA, the research records must be kept for a period of six (6) years following the close of the research project.

Additional Information: Complete information regarding research involving human subjects at The University of Iowa is available in the “Investigator’s Guide to Human Subjects Research.” Research investigators are expected to comply with these policies and procedures, and to be familiar with the University’s Federalwide Assurance, the Belmont Report, 45CFR46, and other applicable regulations prior to conducting the research. These documents and IRB application and related forms are available on the Human Subjects Office website or are available by calling 335-6564.
APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Initial Interview:

1. Please tell me about your projects and manuscripts prepared for publication.
   a. PROBE: Tell me about your projects and manuscripts, if any, published, accepted/rejected, in revision, under review, or in preparation.
   b. PROBE: What did you work on, and who did you work with?
   c. PROBE: Tell me about the timeline of the publication process that you experienced.
   d. PROBE: What motivated you to publish your work?

2. Please describe your process of developing manuscripts.
   a. PROBE: What was the overall manuscript writing process like for you?
   b. PROBE: What, if any, were the challenges you have faced with developing your manuscripts? How did you cope with those challenges?
   c. PROBE: What worked well in your manuscript writing process?
   d. PROBE: What has been the most helpful when developing manuscripts?
   e. PROBE: What support could you have received during this process?

3. Please describe how you navigated and responded to the editorial feedback from journals.
   a. PROBE: Please describe your interactions with editorial feedback. How did you address the feedback?
   b. PROBE: What, if any, were the challenges you have encountered navigating and responding to editorial feedback? How did you cope with those challenges?
   c. PROBE: What worked well in corresponding with editorial feedback?
   d. PROBE: What has been the most helpful when navigating and responding to editorial feedback?
   e. PROBE: What support could you have received during this process?

4. What did you learn about the process for publication and/or yourself as a researcher?
   a. PROBE: Please describe any critical incidents that facilitated your growth, if any.
   b. PROBE: What was the most critical asset that helped you succeed in this process for publication?

5. What would you suggest for counselor educators and counselor education programs to facilitate research and publication of doctoral students?

6. Is there anything else that I did not ask that you feel you would like to share in regard to your experiences?
Follow-up Interview:

1. Does the transcript of the previous interview accurately represent your experience? Is there any point over- or under-stated?
   a. PROBE: What, if any, would you like to add to better describe your experience?

2. In the previous interview, you mentioned that ________. Could you tell me more about that?
   a. PROBE: Given what you have said about your experience as a doctoral student researcher in counselor education, I recognized that ______at the time of the interview. I am wondering how you make meaning of this?

3. How do you make meaning of your experience as a doctoral student researcher in counselor education?
   a. Probe: What does being a doctoral student researcher mean to you?
   b. Probe: What are your perspectives regarding your publication experience that you have had as a doctoral student researcher?
   c. What is the value of publishing articles for you, as a doctoral student?
   d. How do you expect your current scholarly publication will influence your future research and publication?

4. Is there any other information you would like to share regarding your publication experiences to improve the research training for doctoral student researchers?
APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What, if any, were the challenges you faced during the publication and editorial feedback process?

2. What, if any, were your coping strategies with regard to those challenges?

3. What, if any, do you think contributed to your growth as a doctoral student researcher? (e.g., received support, personal strengths, critical incidents, etc.)

4. What, if any, would you suggest for counselor educators and counselor education programs to facilitate research and publication of doctoral students?
APPENDIX H

QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN RESPONSES

1. How do you make meaning of your experience with the publication and editorial feedback process?

2. What does being a doctoral student researcher mean to you?
APPENDIX I

SAMPLE FROM REFLEXIVE JOURNAL

Jan 27th, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Taken:</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
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| Data collection; Written responses | • As the last stage of my data collection, I sent participants e-mails requesting written responses to two open-ended questions.  
• Again, I realized that this qualitative study involved a lot of e-mail communications and I needed to be mindful so as not to confuse the participants or make mistakes during the e-mail correspondence.  
• I also realized that every step took more time than I anticipated, specifically organizing data, because even though this process required a lot of time, the product was not immediately visible.  
• I feel like I’m overwhelmed by a tremendous amount of data. |
| Transcribing Andrea 1 | • I personally envied Andrea since she had access to a research team, although she couldn’t sufficiently benefit from it. At the same time, I thought that there were pros and cons to the research team approach. In most cases, I initiated my own projects to engage in research. But, after hearing Andrea’s story, I felt that my approach to research was actually good, because I could control my own timeline. So, she provided me new perspectives to view my own experience.  
• I feel a little bit exhausted with the ‘tedious’ qualitative research process, and understand that I will need more patience to continue. I am sick of texts, but I am trying my best to stay focused.  
• I came up with several questions while reading through the transcript, including: “Should I code every single sentence, although it does not sound significant?” “How can I code the timeline to develop a manuscript?” I will ask these questions during my meeting with Dr. Wood.  
• While I was transcribing interviews and reading the transcripts, I came up with new research ideas, such as a quantitative study on master’s and doctoral students’ research engagement and productivity in counselor education, through a survey design. This survey would ask: Where do they publish? How many? What types of articles are involved? Who do they work with? I thought that this would be another interesting study that stemmed from my dissertation.  
• This was my final transcript, and I feel like I have identified commonalities among the participants, but the matter of how to organize them thoroughly remains a challenge. |
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<th>Action Taken:</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
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| **Focus group 2** | • Running a focus group is always nerve-wracking for me. I don’t know when to summarize, when to paraphrase, when to move on to the next question. I do recognize, however, that the participants are unaware of my embarrassment.  
• I began this group session differently than I began the first focus group session, without the members introducing themselves, and with an explanation of the purpose of the focus group. I realized that I forgot to mention this explanation in the first focus group.  
• I regret deciding to split the group in two, since there were some people who, without notice, decided not to join either group, resulting in two groups of only three participants.  
• Again, a lot of e-mail communications and organization of data today.  
• I am learning how to be a professional qualitative researcher, and how to be more efficiently organized. |
| **Coding Molly 1** | • I visited the old ICON site today, for the qualitative research methods course that I took a year ago, in order to refresh my memory on how to code my interview data.  
• A lot of questions arise, including: Can I be selective in terms of what to use and not to use? What information should be disclosed (e.g., the topic of their research and the journals they published)? Would I present them collectively or separately?  
• After coding Molly 1, I found out more about her experience, beyond what I had obtained while transcribing. When I first completed this interview with her, I was a little embarrassed because the interview was shorter than usual. I was afraid of making mistakes. Molly said that she did not experience either revision or resubmission, but she had experienced rejection; so, I was unable to ask several questions related to the editorial feedback experience. However, after coding her data, I realized that she shared her thoughts in depth, and I could learn information that was unavailable at the time of interview and during transcription. I feel like I found another layer of her experience. I hope to find more hidden meanings as I code Molly 2. |
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<th>Action Taken: Coding Blake 1</th>
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<td>• I found some similarities between Blake’s experience and my own. Blake figured out what would be feasible as a doctoral student who did not have enough funding opportunities and needed publications for his eventual job search. He mentioned doing a research study among doc students, saying that data collection was always challenging as a doc student researcher and finding a feasible research topic was a difficult task.</td>
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<td>• It was difficult for me to ‘open’ code, as I always thought too much about the potential categories that each statement would belong to. I found myself automatically categorizing even during the coding process. The categories that appeared in my mind aligned with the interview questions, and as such, I found that it was really hard to be completely ‘open’ during this process.</td>
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<td>• Blake shared very thoughtful suggestions for counselor education, which I think were very helpful.</td>
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<td>• After coding Blake 1, I could see a saturation in terms of participant experience. Also, I have a better sense of understanding my data. I feel like my coding is more organized and makes more sense to me.</td>
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<th>Action Taken: Coding Michelle 1</th>
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<td>• Michelle’s editorial feedback experience caused me to reflect upon my own editorial feedback experience. I remembered that I had struggled to find relevant literature for information, and watched Youtube videos to understand the data analysis procedure, what types of tables I needed to provide, etc.</td>
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<td>• Michelle provided her meaning-making of the literature review process, and I really liked it.</td>
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<td>• What stood out the most to me was the feedback that Michelle received from her peers, even though they were not engaged in the same project. My peers and I were not very active in giving feedback on each other’s writing, unless we were collaborating on the same project. I envied the collegial research environment that Michelle experienced as a doctoral student.</td>
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<td>• <em>Ideas for Chapter 5:</em> Guideline for authorship is needed, and students and faculty actively discuss authorship and share expectations on the authorship. (Find some literature on authorship) Counselor educators and faculty advisors should be aware of the power differentials that exist in the relationships between students and faculty members, and put effort into implementing ethical authorship decision-making practices.</td>
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<td>• Michelle is a participant who perceived more support compared to other doctoral student researchers. She had a good support system, coping strategies, and collaborators. Faculty mentoring was especially significant for her process.</td>
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