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INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF GRADUATE
STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF PLAGIARISM BY THEIR PROFESSORS

by

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

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For the degree of

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This dissertation, submitted by Kimberly (Hanson) Becker in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.



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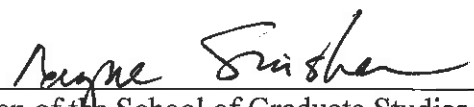


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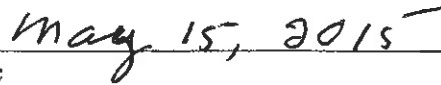


Dr. Barry I. Milavetz

This dissertation is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies at the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.



Dean of the School of Graduate Studies



Date

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Kimberly Becker
5/15/15

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thank you for your courage.

ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study expands the inquiry on perceived academic misconduct by investigating the experiences of graduate students who have reported a professor's misattribution of their work. The participants include five graduate students who formally reported a violation of academic integrity because they believed a faculty member had misattributed their work. During the incident, the faculty and students both participated in an academic setting in one or more of the following types of relationships: committee chair–advisee, committee member–student, classroom professor–graduate student, and research supervisor–graduate assistant. Two central research questions frame this study: How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics? How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor? Based on data collected primarily through interviews and documents, I employ an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) to examine the graduate students' experiences using the process developed by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). My research findings include (a) initial positive socialization experiences masked the reported dishonesty, which led to the graduate students' lack of trust in their professors; (b) self-identity of the graduate students shifted as the events unfolded regarding the professor's misattribution activity and the university's response to reports of ethical breaches; (c) individuals in positions of

authority to whom the graduate students formally reported the misattribution of their work failed to act in a manner that satisfactorily resolved the matter for the graduate student; and (d) advisement from trusted individuals can play a key role in assisting graduate students navigate power dynamics with professors and process the decision-making efforts of whether it is worth the risk to report the academic violation. These findings could have profound impacts on policies and practices within higher education. For instance, this study illustrates how important it is to have clear, readily available policies in place regarding research misconduct. In addition, this study calls for more education about authorship. Equally important, graduate socialization should involve stronger protective measures including having clear reporting procedures and protections in place for students when they report academic violations. Furthermore, this study highlights representational objectivity. In practice, it may be helpful in these cases of academic violations to have an unaffiliated (i.e., not associated with the student's or reported wrongdoer's academic unit) faculty member or administrator participating in reviewing cases of plagiarism.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study examines the phenomenon of perceived academic misconduct arising from conflicts of professional power by the very persons who are responsible for the academic socialization of graduate students. Specifically, I investigate the experiences of graduate students who reported that a professor misattributed their work. Although existing literature has examined many facets of misattribution, studies to date lack substantial inquiry into instances of faculty misattribution of students' work.

A key component of understanding the dynamics between graduate students and faculty is the analysis of the academic socialization of graduate students. Accordingly, this study considers the impact of these violations when they occur while the students undergo the process of graduate school socialization. Drawing on Weidman, Twale, and Stein (2001), socialization of graduate students is about the process of entering the academic profession or the "processes through which individuals gain the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for successful entry into a professional career requiring an advanced level of specialized knowledge and skills" (p. iii).

This study explores the experiences of graduate students who have gone through the process of reporting a violation of academic integrity. Central to the research, I

examine the conflicts between expected academic socialization processes and the actual experiences of graduate students who reported a violation of academic integrity arising from a professor misattributing their work. In this chapter, I present an explanation of the research problem, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, analytical lens, researcher's perspective, definition of terms, and a chapter summary and conclusion.

Research Problem

Academic integrity is defined as “a commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. From these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action” (The Center for Academic Integrity, 1999, p. 4). When standards of academic integrity are breached, academic misconduct results (Stone, Kisamore, Jawahar, & Bolin, 2014). Examples of academic misconduct include: “test-related cheating (e.g., ...using notes during a test without instructor permission, copying from another student...) and plagiarism-related behaviors (e.g., ...turning in work done by others, failing to cite sources, unapproved collaboration...)” (Stone et al., 2014, p. 255). Various studies and media coverage have highlighted the challenges associated with the academic integrity standard violations of students (e.g., Dee & Jacob, 2012; Nelson, Nelson, & Tichenor, 2013). In particular, studies reported plagiarism in the context of the following relationships: Students' experiences with fellow students' plagiarism (e.g., Nitsch, Baetz, & Hughes, 2005; Simon et al., 2004) and faculty's experiences with student plagiarism (e.g., Maramark & Maline, 1993; McCabe, 1993).

Students were the violators in many studies, and thus the literature is less developed when examining faculty violations. The studies that explored faculty academic violations often highlighted instances where students felt uncomfortable reporting instances of faculty misconduct (e.g., Anderson, Louis, & Earle, 1994; Street, Roger, Israel, & Braunack-Mayer, 2010). These studies also included cases of plagiarism, a form of misattribution. Nonetheless, the responsibility for the research development of graduate programs rests largely with faculty, the very group that has (though in isolated cases) engaged in misconduct themselves. However, the literature, with some notable exceptions, has not addressed students' encounters with faculty who misattribute students' work. Given the role of faculty members in the academic socialization processes of graduate students—and the record indicating that some faculty members have engaged in academic misconduct—the intersection of these events raises a new inquiry about faculty misattribution of student work.

The extant literature on graduate student encounters of professors' academic violations is limited. For instance, Anderson et al. (1994) observed that graduate students were not inclined to challenge faculty members in areas of academic misconduct. Furthermore, as Oberlander and Spencer (2006) reported, graduate students do not challenge faculty members when questions of research contributions and author order do not commiserate with project conceptualization, work effort, and intellectual contributions.

In summary, there is limited research exploring students' encounters with faculty academic misconduct where students' work is directly misattributed. Of these studies,

the central findings contained information about the academic socialization of graduate students and their relationships with faculty. In other words, all of the studies suggested that students were reluctant to challenge their professors about authorship or proper attribution because of the inherent power differential in professor–student relationships. These findings referred to *what* the graduate students experienced or *how* they acted. Nevertheless, understanding *why* students exhibited such behavior or *how* they managed the challenging environment remains unclear. For instance, how did the students understand the academic rules and norms, what reasoning did they have for recognizing certain actions as violations, and what decision processes did they undertake in reporting the violation of academic integrity?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to expand the inquiry of perceived academic misconduct by investigating the experiences of graduate students who reported a professor’s misattribution of their work. In this study, I examine the conflict between the expected academic socialization process and graduate students’ actual experiences and employed a qualitative approach to explore how power was articulated and realized in graduate students when they decided to report misattribution of their work by the very individuals who had or were supposed to socialize them into the academic conventions of the proper attribution of scholarly work. In other words, I delve into the *why* and *how* concerning the reasoning and actions associated with a graduate students’ claims of their professors’ academic misconduct.

It may appear antithetical to graduate education that graduate students experience misconduct by faculty members. Academic socialization by faculty members is integral in the life of graduate students; it influences their research training and shapes them as researchers. According to Weidman et al. (2001), faculty establish the research norms in academic programs. In addition, faculty members believe their role is to assist students in developing as researchers (Barnes & Austin, 2009). Graduate students look to faculty to learn conventions concerning how to conduct research in their field, how to develop ethical research practices, and how to engage in the academic socialization process (Weidman et al., 2001). Students experience socialization from their faculty members. This study extends the discussion of academic socialization to illuminate what happens when students perceive that faculty behaviors have moved beyond the normative socialization process. Graduate students are least likely to have prior experience with academic socialization, particularly regarding academic conventions on scholarly attribution; this study uncovers an understanding of a new academic socialization—one that exposes graduate students to perceived violations of academic conventions.

As Reybold (2008) noted, the ethical practices of university professors are largely guided by institutional regulations, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) Statement of Professional Ethics, and professional codes of ethics within individual disciplines. For example, the field of social work is guided by the Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (2008), physicians by the American Medical Association's Principles of Medical Ethics (American Medical Association, 2015), and psychologists by the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct

(American Psychological Association, 2010). Furthermore, any recipients of grant dollars from the National Science Foundation (NSF) or the National Institutes of Health (NIH) are required to follow ethical standards (National Institutes of Health, 2009; National Science Foundation, n.d.). Specifically, recipients are required to complete training and abide by the ethical practices explained in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). Implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, the numerous standards address normative academic integrity expectations between faculty and students.

Kelley and Chang (2007) explored how power is articulated and realized among graduate students when they decided to report misattribution of their work. They found that a faculty member's power over a student was evidenced by a variety of unethical faculty behaviors: Grading unfairly and in a biased manner, creating an inhumane learning environment, expressing seductive behaviors, suggesting sexual bribery, pressuring activities through sexual coercion, and forcing unwanted physical acts in the form of sexual assault. Previous studies explored many of these various actions in terms of how faculty deprives students of their rights (see, e.g., Bruhn, Zajac, Al-Kazemi, & Prescott, 2002; Holmes, Rupert, Ross, & Shapera, 1999). Further, these studies examined settings primarily based on nonacademic works and behaviors (see, e.g., Biaggio, Paget, & Chenoweth, 1997; Gottlieb, 1993). Although some studies considered faculty power exercised during an academic socialization experience (see, e.g., Aguinis, Nesler, Quigley, Lee, & Tedeschi, 1996; Schrodtt, Witt, & Turman, 2007), my study focuses on another kind of student reported ethics failure. Specifically, it contributes to the literature in understanding graduate students' accounts of faculty power dynamics in

an academic socialization setting where the work is an academic product that the student claims as her or his own.

This study is unique in that various studies, as previously mentioned, have pointed to the power dynamics inherent in the faculty–student relationship but did not significantly consider the power dynamics involving students who report the misattribution or theft of their own work. Studies have alluded to the power dynamics present in those situations, but little research has examined what it means to students in terms of how they processed such incidents of power conflict. Understanding this unique phenomenon of academic misconduct from the students’ perspective, as the individuals with unequal power leverage, is a significant contribution to the literature. Exploring this important ethical discussion sheds light on a disturbing phenomenon that threatens the integrity of academic institutions. This study delves further into the discussion regarding power dynamics between college faculty and students, focusing on graduate students.

Further defined, my study’s purpose is to understand the phenomenon of reported faculty misattribution of the works of graduate students who claim to be both the primary author of the works at issue and the party harmed by the faculty’s exercise of power. Although graduate students are key players in the phenomenon of academic misconduct, their voices remain largely underrepresented in the literature. Understanding their perspectives is critical to proper consideration of this subject. In addition, my study investigates this phenomenon from the eyes of students who have reported such issues; this distinction is important to note because those who did not report may have had different experiences. Their experiences are not captured because the purpose of this

study examines the decision-making process of those students who did report. Furthermore, because this study focuses on understanding the experience of the graduate student, it does not explore administration or faculty experiences. In other words, I have made no attempt to cover both sides or to determine the truth of the students' claims. Additionally, as discussed earlier, some literature has addressed graduate students' experiences of misattribution by their professors, but, prior to this study, little was understood about the reasoning behind their purposes in reporting these accusations of academic misconduct and how students managed their environment after they reported the incident. The perspectives of the graduate students who directly experienced this phenomenon provide the best insight for this study. In summary, the literature has noted students having experienced misattribution of their work, but the literature has been less clear about the reasoning behind students' responses and how they managed that environment.

Conceptual Framework

To better understand how graduate students experience the academic socialization process and power dynamics when their professors commit a violation of academic integrity, I have sought to learn how students learn research expectations, how faculty and students engaged in relationship building with one another, and how students formed their new role in their profession. To frame the socialization process of the participants, I have drawn on the work of Ongiti (2012), Austin (2002) and Weidman et al. (2001).

Ongiti (2012) and Austin (2002) explained "process" is an integral part in socialization. Austin's (2002) study "was guided by the view that socialization is a

dialectical process through which newcomers construct their particular roles as they interact and engage with others (Staton & Darling, 1989; Staton-Spicer & Darling, 1986, 1987; Zeichner, 1980)” (p. 97). My study’s conceptual framework revolves around a process approach that captures the interactions among individuals involved in a socialization experience and challenges that appear to involve power dynamics.

Although many socialization models exist, Weidman et al.’s (2001) model is particularly relevant to the present study. First, Weidman et al.’s model focused on graduate and professional students—who comprise the sample of this study. Second, although other models of socialization focused on graduate students, Weidman et al.’s model, “recognize[d] explicitly the developmental nature of the socialization process” (2001, p. 11). Weidman et al.’s model provides understanding for the socialization process of the participants of this study.

Weidman et al. (2001) applied Thornton and Nardi’s (1975) framework to the socialization of graduate and professional students. There are four stages of socialization: Anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. In the anticipatory stage, novices enter a training program with preconceived ideas that they modify over time. Novices learn new roles, procedures, and agendas. Communication between students and professors tends to be one-way, downward from the professors. During the formal stage of role acquisition, students determine their fit in a program and take on greater responsibilities and privileges that are commensurate with past performance and increased maturity: “Communication becomes informative through learning course material, regulative through embracing normative expectations, and integrative through

faculty and student interaction” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 13). In this stage, Weidman et al. noted that the student is an “apprentice” (p. 13). To be successful, students must move into the informal stage. Here, novices learn the expectations of their informal roles and absorb the new culture primarily through their own peer culture, with some of the information coming from the faculty.

Lastly, in Weidman et al.’s personal stage of socialization, students form their own professional identities. Students realize that their program is only preparation for their professional goals. They become deeply immersed in the program and have higher expectations of the faculty and of themselves. Students look to their personal and professional development beyond graduation.

Furthermore, I apply Weidman et al.’s (2001) model with a critical lens on power analysis to illuminate how a student experiences academic socialization during a time when an act of academic misconduct occurred. Power is an integral component in this study because of its impact on students’ socialization experiences. Power can be defined as “any advantage one person has over another” (Rocco & West, 1998, p. 173).

Therefore, a professor is in a position of power over a student. For example, Slaughter (2010) explained that professors grade students, evaluate dissertations, shape lives, develop norms, etc. To further explain, Slaughter (1997) referenced Foucault’s (1978) research that stated professors are the primary norming agents and thus have power in their position. Slaughter (1997) noted that within power dynamics is a “side of academic practice that labels, fails and rejects” (p. 19). This study will look at these power

dynamics among individuals through the socialization process. Please see Figure 1 for a schema of Weidman et al.'s model (2001) with power analysis.

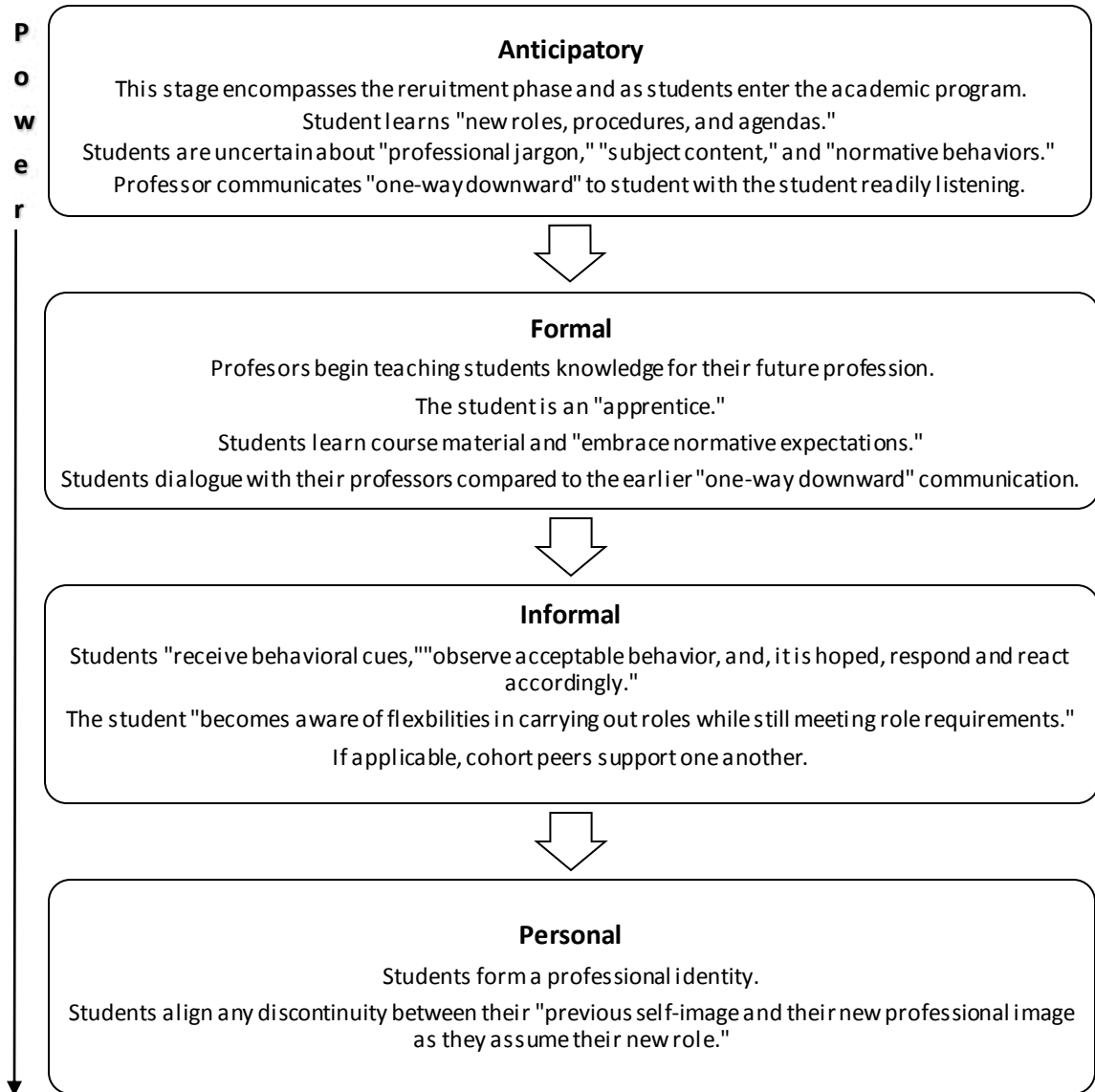


Figure 1. Socialization into Professional Career with Power Analysis.

Research Questions

In light of the research problem, purpose, and conceptual framework, I set out to answer the following questions:

- How do graduate students who have alleged that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?
- How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been allegedly misattributed by a professor?

Interestingly, while analyzing the data secured for this study, I learned that my research questions were not in keeping with the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis. For example, a participant brought to my attention that using the word “alleged” was disrespectful. More specifically, the participant stated, “I hate to see the word ‘alleged’ . . . it’s like a rape victim seeing his/her rapist labeled as ‘alleged rapist.’”

Although I did not use the term “alleged” in any of my interviews, I used the term in the consent forms that participants signed. A participant brought it to my attention while confirming demographic information in an e-mail correspondence. Because of his comments, explaining his perception of the word, I realized that the participants’ works, from their perspectives, were not “allegedly” taken; rather, they *were* taken.

Although only one participant voiced strong concerns over the use of the word “alleged,” it gave me a better understanding of the perspectives of the other participants.

I resolved that the best solution was to be responsive to the concern raised by that one participant and not include the term “alleged” in the research questions.

Subsequently, I modified the research questions to remove the word “alleged”:

- How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?
- How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor?

Continuing in this line of thought, although the participants’ words presented in Chapter IV may sound extreme, one participant specifically requested that I let readers know that while there may be times when their quotes seem “crazy,” they are speaking truthfully about an emotionally difficult period in their lives.

Researcher’s Perspective

I did not set out to study academic integrity in graduate school. Rather, academic integrity emerged as a topic of great interest. When the time came in my doctoral program to choose a dissertation subject, I met with my doctoral advisor and presented him with a list of topics that I was interested in pursuing. After discussion, my advisor suggested studying students who have encountered academic misconduct by a professor during their socialization to research and other academic processes. I was immediately interested in this topic because I could relate to the indignity of not receiving credit for one’s own work but not in the manner of the participants. Because I would be too fearful of retaliation, I appreciate the courage of the participants who proceeded with reporting

their cases. After deciding on my dissertation topic and announcing it, I was surprised by individual responses such as “That happened to me” or “I know someone who experienced a professor taking their work.” It disturbed me that these acts could occur in higher education.

Definition of Terms

The following definition of terms provides clarity to this study and understanding on how terms are related (when applicable):

- **Academic Misconduct:** Adapted from Stone et al. (2014), when standards of academic integrity are breached, academic misconduct results. For the purpose of this study, this definition encompasses all violations of academic norms and is broader than misattribution or plagiarism.
- **Misattribution:** Adapted from Lerman (2001), misattribution is not giving proper credit to an author of a work. For the purpose of this study, this term focuses on credit for authorship.
- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism was first defined in 1755 in the Dictionary of the English Language as “theft; literary adoption of the thoughts or works of another” (Mallon, 2001, p. 11). Currently, the Office of Research Integrity (2011) defines plagiarism as, “the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.” Park (2003) summarized how plagiarism has been situated, that is, as a matter of academic misconduct, academic dishonesty, or academic integrity. For the purposes of

the present study, I situate plagiarism as a matter of academic misconduct and a form of misattribution.

- **Power:** Power is “any advantage one person has over another” (Rocco & West, 1998, p. 173). For the purpose of this study, I discuss power in the context of a professor exerting advantage over a student.
- **Socialization:** For the purposes of this study, I adopted the following definition of socialization: “Socialization in graduate school refers to the processes through which individuals gain the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for successful entry into a professional career requiring an advanced level of specialized knowledge and skills” (Weidman et al., 2001, p. iii).

Chapter Summary and Preview of Other Chapters

In summary, this chapter has discussed the research problem, purpose of the study, conceptual framework, and research questions guiding this study. Students experience academic misconduct, yet few studies have been conducted on this important topic. In this study, I will explore the conflict between the expected academic socialization process and graduate students’ actual experiences of misattribution by a professor. This study builds upon previous research to understand the phenomenon of faculty–student academic misconduct.

In Chapter II, I will review the literature on the socialization process of graduate students, explain the power dynamics between faculty and graduate students, and provide an overview of the literature on student experiences of professor misattribution. In Chapter III, I will share details of my study’s methods, which include presenting my

philosophical assumptions and how I applied them, the selection of participants, interviews protocols and occurrences, steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of data, and limitations of this study. In Chapter IV, I will outline the results of the study and identify a total of four research propositions. In the final chapter, I will provide interpretations of the research findings, the implications and limitations of the study, and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Plagiarism by professors is one of the most serious ethical failures occurring at universities (Kelley & Chang, 2007). It is considered a form of research misconduct (Gilbert & Denison, 2003). Professors' engagement in research misconduct is thought to be a relatively uncommon occurrence, yet some speculate that this activity may be on the rise (see, e.g., Roig, 2001). According to O'Neil (2008), as many as 50 dismissals of tenured professors occur in any given academic year; these are typically related to serious violations, including acts of plagiarism. Professors are held to high ethical standards, so when professors commit ethical breaches, the impact is detrimental, extending to the public who may lose faith and trust in academic organizations (Bruhn, Zajac, Al-Kazemi, & Prescott, 2002). At the same time, these professors are responsible for the development of students through their graduate student socialization process.

Because the literature on violations of academic integrity, as discussed in Chapter I, primarily revolves around socialization and power dynamics, in this literature review, I focus on those areas. First, I expand on socialization literature to better understand the participants' perspectives and subsequently aid in making meaning of the participants' experiences. I focus on the themes that have emerged in the socialization literature, which are socialization expectations, processes, and outcomes. Second, because the

studies discussed in Chapter I suggest that students are reluctant to challenge their professors about authorship or proper attribution because of the inherent power differential in professor–student relationships, I provide background information on the power dynamics between faculty and students, focusing on the positive and negative aspects of power differentials. Lastly, in this literature review, I discuss literature related to students’ experiences with professors’ misattribution. In summary, I will explore socialization, power dynamics, and how these aspects relate to misattribution of student works by professors.

Introduction to Socialization Literature

Literature on the socialization of graduate students has illuminated students’ experiences and normative behaviors in relation to their socialization processes, which aids in distinguishing abnormal or unusual socialization experiences for this study. In this review, I uncover what is expected to occur in socialization, what actually happens, and how socialization prepares graduate students for independent research. Although undergraduate student socialization literature is abundant and may have relevant similarities, my literature review surveys key studies on graduate students’ socialization experiences and normative behaviors because the focus of this study is on graduate students. I draw on literature related to socialization expectations, processes, and outcomes.

Socialization Expectations

The literature on graduate student socialization expectations illustrate a divide between the actual experiences graduate students encounter versus the expectations in

which they have from the outset. Graduate students enter graduate programs with varying socialization expectations, and, depending upon the conflict between their expectations and their graduate school experiences, they may decide to leave graduate school. Golde (1998) interviewed 58 doctoral students who left doctoral programs in their first year. The students were enrolled in four departments: Geology, biology, history, and English. The reasons for departure differed between humanities and science students. Humanities students noted that graduate study was significantly different than their undergraduate studies, emphasizing the transition from learning content to mastering theory and methods. Additionally, faculty uncovered undesired aspects of their discipline previously unknown to them, and, as a result, graduate studies did not fulfill their expectations. Lastly, these students wanted to become teachers; instead, they learned that research is a large component of a faculty member's job. Science students left their program primarily because of difficult relationships with their advisors, concerns about the job market, and feelings that the particular department "was not a good home for them" (Golde, 1998, p. 58). This study helps one understand various expectations graduate students may have of the academic socialization experience.

When graduate students' expectations differed from what they actually experienced in graduate school, student satisfaction was impacted. Hardré and Hackett (2015) examined students and alumni perceptions of what their graduate school experiences included and what they thought graduate school should have included. They administered a questionnaire to 1,430 master's and doctoral students and 199 recently graduated alumni at various points in the program: Entry, midpoint, exit, and alumni.

The questions revolved around mentorship, faculty, research, learning environment, academic community, university support, peers, relevant curriculum, and so forth. Statistically significant differences ($p < .001$) were found between what the individual thought graduate school experience should be and what they experienced across all areas of study (i.e., hard sciences, social sciences, arts, and interdisciplinary) and degree type (i.e., master's or doctoral). In other words, the graduate students felt that their graduate school experience was inferior to their expectations. Differences between student viewpoints on what graduate school "should" and "does" provide predicted overall graduate school satisfaction.

Socialization Processes and Outcomes

The studies in this section examined normative socialization processes and outcomes. Socialization processes can be viewed from many angles, such as framing how students proceed from novice to professional, how academic programs socialize students, and the differing outcomes of the socialization process. As discussed in Chapter I, according to Weidman et al. (2001), students progress through different stages in the educational process. How students communicate with and view their professors changes from the beginning to the end of graduate school. For example, when students first engage in their graduate career, communication flows top-down from professors to students. Students are novices as they learn "knowledge of subject content, normative behaviors, and acceptable emotions" (Weidman et al., 2001, p. 12). Through the socialization process, students trust their professor to mentor them in their career path (Weidman et al., 2001).

Students can experience how they are socialized in different ways. Van Maanene and Schein (1979) identified the six polar dimensions of the socialization process (as cited in Austin & McDaniels, 2006). The six dimensions are (a) collective versus individual, (b) formal versus informal, (c) random versus sequential, (d) fixed versus variable, (e) serial versus disjunctive, and (f) investiture versus divestiture. A brief description of each dimension follows (as cited in Austin & McDaniels, 2006).

In the first polar dimension, students are socialized in experiences common to all or in a solo experience. In the second dimension, they focused on formal socialization, which occurs in specific predesigned ways versus more informal or nonplanned socialization opportunities. In the third dimension, they contrasted graduate students who experience socialization as a sequence of events versus a random nonsequential socialization experience. For the fourth dimension, the researchers expressed how some graduate socialization occurs in a fixed timetable in contrast to the more common variable socialization experience. Next, the authors acknowledged that graduate student socialization can vary greatly depending on whether the advisor strictly plans each step for the student in a serial socialization or uses a hands-off disjunctive socialization approach. Sixth, Austin and McDaniels (2006) stated that when newcomers are welcomed with an openness to differences, the students experienced investiture socialization; however, when the students are expected to be just like the existing group, they experienced divestiture socialization. These six polar dimensions impact the socialization experiences of graduate students.

For students pursuing an academic career, graduate education plays a key role in socializing students into the profession. Austin (2002) discussed graduate school as socialization for one's academic career and argued the doctoral experience is the first stage. Her study also defined socialization as a process through which an individual becomes part of a group and helps the graduate student answer questions such as "Do I want to do this work?" and "Do I belong here?" Furthermore, Austin's study reaffirmed socialization as an ongoing process where students observe, listen, and interact with faculty and others, similar to an apprenticeship. Additionally, Austin found that a graduate student's socialization experience begins with enthusiasm and idealism about engaging in meaningful work, and she suggested that graduate students can expect the socialization process to be more successful through regular feedback, more peer relationships, and more self-reflection on how one's values relate to the academic profession.

As a result of socialization, students experience numerous outcomes, one of which is persistence. Gardner and Barnes (2007) posited that Tinto's working theory of graduate persistence is clearly linked with socialization. Successful socialization through three stages (transition, candidacy, and doctoral completion) results in persistence. Gardner and Barnes explained that Tinto's (1993) first stage, transition, typically occurs during the first year of graduate study. In this stage, the graduate student attempts to become a member of social and academic communities within the university. If the graduate student makes the decision to commit to the academic program, the student will persist. The graduate student's decision to commit is influenced by the appeal of

membership and the costs and benefits of persistence. The next stage, candidacy, involves the student's learning and developing competencies in preparation for doctoral research. Success in this stage emerges from the graduate student's abilities, skills, and interactions with faculty members.

Gardner and Barnes (2007) further described that at the time of gaining candidacy, the graduate student moves into the third and final stage: Doctoral completion. During doctoral completion, the graduate student completes the doctoral research proposal and dissertation research and successfully defends his or her dissertation. Because the student has concluded his or her coursework and embarked on dissertation research in this stage, interactions with faculty members decrease from interacting with many faculty members to interacting with only a few faculty members, with the student's advisor maintaining the greatest number of interactions. The graduate student's communities, such as family and work, play a key role in successful completion in terms of the student's commitment to those communities as well as the level of support they provide to the student. Overall, a more successful socialization experience will have a greater impact on persistence than a less successful one.

Students who are successfully socialized will transform in terms of knowledge of the profession, identity, and commitment to the profession. Austin and McDaniels (2006) shared the outcomes of Weidman et al.'s (2001) socialization process: Knowledge/role acquisition, investment or identity formation, and involvement or commitment. Knowledge/role acquisition includes learning the language, history, problems, and ideology of the profession. Investment or identity formation occurs when

the graduate student's self-esteem is connected to the organization, and it is greatly impacted by advisor relationships. Involvement or commitment is the third core element, evidenced by graduate students spending more time conducting research and attending professional conferences. These studies on socialization processes and outcomes aid in understanding academic socialization.

Literature Exploring Power in Graduate Student Socialization

As the literature on graduate student socialization suggests, power plays an important role in cases where professors misattribute student work. Macfarlane, Zhang, and Pun (2014) completed a comprehensive review of the literature on academic integrity in higher education. They recommended future research to include fine-grain analysis to untangle complex academic integrity issues. However, they noted that conducting such research is methodologically challenging, and it takes courage to tackle a controversial topic. As mentioned in their literature review, the concept of power emerges repeatedly when students experience an ethical conflict with a faculty member. In other words, when professors do not maintain ethical standards with a student, they abuse their power. To understand the concept of power, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of power as it relates to professors and students.

First, one way to understand how power dynamics influence the student-professor relationship is through French and Raven (1959), who provided definitions and types of power. The French and Raven power taxonomy illustrated a theory of power that applies to dyadic relationships and is especially relevant to the study of professor-student power interactions (Aguinis et al., 1996). Schrodtt, Witt, and Turman (2007) applied French and

Raven's 1959 typology of relational power to the college classroom. Students perceive their professors to have power (e.g., reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert), as summarized below:

- 1) Reward Power. The professor provides the rewards (e.g., extra credit, affirmation, public praise) sought after by students.
- 2) Coercive Power. The professor is critical, disciplines students in front of their peers, and punishes students with low grades; therefore, students comply with requests to avoid negative feedback.
- 3) Legitimate Power. In societal norms, hierarchical roles exist between faculty and students. Students accept the societal norm that professors exercise authority over students.
- 4) Referent Power. Students identify with and admire the professor; consequently, they are more receptive to the professor's guidance.
- 5) Expert Power. Students perceive professors as holding knowledge or expertise, which results in professors' influencing students because they are viewed as expert educators.

Although this taxonomy can be helpful, different authors have criticized the five types of power in professor–student relationships. For example, Chapman and Sork (2001) offered differing opinions about this conceptualization. Chapman criticized the “masculinist” nature of the typology, which does not take into account factors such as “gender, race, class, and other differences” (Chapman & Sork, 2001, p. 99). Furthermore, Chapman was “suspicious of the classificatory grid of the taxonomy”

(Chapman & Sork, 2001, p. 99). However, Sork indicated that he is more supportive of the typology than Chapman because there is little research about power that specifically pertains to faculty–graduate student relationships. Through their personal narrative methodology, Chapman and Sork aimed to “deepen understandings of the student–supervisor relationship, and to explore how the power dynamics of this relationship affect both knowledge creation (and its legitimation) and the socialization process in graduate education” (2001, p. 94). Chapman and Sork argued that “power is not entirely repressive, nor need it be negative. Power can be productive” (2001, p. 104). Chapman and Sork can help one understand that power does not always fall into the five French and Raven definitions.

In apparent contrast to the preceding argument by Chapman and Sork regarding the productivity of power, the following researchers explained that students may fear reporting violations of academic integrity *because* of the power dynamics between students and faculty. According to Anderson et al. (1994), many graduate students hesitate to report concerns with faculty because they fear retaliation. Graduate students observe various types of faculty misconduct, such as research misconduct, employment misconduct, and personal misconduct, but consistently express hesitation in reporting such incidents (Anderson et al., 1994). In a study of 2,000 graduate students from four disciplines, 53% of the respondents said they probably or definitely would not report cases of suspected faculty misconduct for fear of retaliation. Students who work in collaborative settings are more likely to encounter “down-right white collar crime” (p. 343).

In examining power between faculty and graduate students who are engaged in research projects, questions of research attribution present one line of inquiry. Specifically, this line of research is examined through authorship order and credits associated with the students. Illustrating this line of research, Oberlander and Spencer (2006) indicated that there are a few notable examples of student researchers whose works have been misattributed by faculty; however, the more common reports are students who receive less authorship credit than expected. As Oberlander and Spender and other similar studies have pointed out, students experience an inherent power differential in a professor–student relationship and are unlikely to question authorship credit through any official complaint or public accusation. In addition to power differential, students’ lack of knowledge and limited research experience increase “their vulnerability to exploitation” (p. 217) in not receiving proper credit.

Similarly, this line of research also highlights how graduate students feel they are not permitted to question authorship credit. Street, Roger, Israel, and Braunack-Mayer (2010) interviewed staff, student advocates, and doctoral candidates working in health research at two universities in Australia to examine behaviors in the attribution of authorship for health research publications. Several participants in the study, which included junior staff and doctoral candidates, described the decision for attribution of authorship and authorship order as one being handed down from a senior staff member or supervisor in such a way that one doctoral candidate described it as, “you didn’t feel like you had an opportunity to challenge it” (p. 1462). Many themes developed in their research, including the theme of power and its effect on authorship. The authors indicate

a need to explore further how programs might better prepare graduate students and support researcher integrity in the publication of research. Oberlander and Spencer (2006) found that students are unlikely to question authorship credit because of the inherent power differential in a professor–student relationship. The literature about power dynamics between faculty and students is robust (see, e.g., Grady, LaTouche, Oslawski-Lopez, Powers, & Simacek, 2014; Kantek & Gezer, 2010; Morris, 2011). All of these studies revealed that because of the inherent power differential, students may hesitate to report academic misconduct.

Another study that showed how power can emerge in the student-professor relationship comes from Morris’s (2011) inaugural study where she showed how students can be bullied by their professors. In her study, Morris (2011) applied the concept of “bullying” to doctoral student–supervisor relationships. Previously, studies examined bullying in the context of workplace and schoolyard bullying (Morris, 2011). While students’ experiences with bullying are not protected by employment legislation, they may be protected “under harassment and discrimination policies and legislation” (Morris, 2011, p. 549). Because of students’ reluctance to voice concerns face-to-face, Morris located experiential evidence through blogs on Internet sites. Taking data from eight blogs, six themes emerged: Confusion, unrealistic work demands, criticism, anger and rage, inappropriate attention, and abuse of power. To begin, “confusion” is not a bullying behavior, but it may represent a premise for subsequent bullying. Examples of the other identified themes include: Being made to work long hours and weekends, the supervisor speaking condescendingly to the student, a supervisor “slam[ming] her fists on the desk

while raising her voice” (Morris, 2011, p. 550), a student feeling like her supervisor was “interested in her personally rather than professionally” (Morris, 2011, p. 551), and the student experiencing abuse of “physical, emotional, and academic power” (Morris, 2011, p. 552).

Morris pointed out that the themes in her study illustrate some of the bullying behaviors described by other researchers. For example, Rayner and Hoel (1997, as cited in Morris, 2011) organized workplace bullying into five categories:

- 1) threat to professional status (e.g., public professional humiliation)
- 2) threat to personal standing (e.g., name-calling, insults)
- 3) isolation (e.g., preventing access to opportunities)
- 4) overwork (e.g., impossible deadlines)
- 5) destabilization (e.g., failure to give credit when due; p. 183).

Similarly, Lewis (2004, as cited in Morris, 2011) described bullying behaviors as “giving persistent insults or criticism, ignoring the victim, and expecting the victim to undertake demeaning tasks and unrealistic work demands” (p. 548). Morris concluded, “Given that most bullying episodes can be characterized ‘as entailing high levels of inequality and powerlessness’ (Rosigno et al., 2009, p. 1580), it is not surprising that doctoral students can experience bullying in their supervisory relationship” (2011, p. 552). Morris’s study revealed that power plays a large role in the faculty–student relationship, including faculty not giving students credit for work completed.

Another study that analyzed power differentials focused on why graduate advisees do not disclose certain matters (i.e., advisee nondisclosures), such as family issues,

negative multicultural issues, and personal issues to their advisors (Inman et al., 2011). For the purposes of this study, an advisor is defined as “the faculty member who had the greatest responsibility for guiding the student through their program (e.g., advisor, major professor, dissertation chair)” (Inman et al., 2011, p. 151). Inman et al.’s study coincided with other studies that the doctoral advisor has the greatest responsibility for helping an advisee progress through and complete a doctoral program. The researchers found in their mixed-methods study of 109 clinical and/or counseling psychology doctoral level students that the following two types of student disclosures were not shared out of fear of damaging the advising relationship: Advisor’s unprofessionalism and advisor’s personal life/personality. Inman et al. (2011) defined unprofessional or unethical behavior as “advisor behavior that does not adhere to APA ethical and professional guidelines” (p. 152) and advisory personal life/personality as “thoughts or reactions related to advisor personality or interpersonal style (p. 152).” Once again, the research has shown that power affects the student–faculty relationship, and the authors concluded that students might fear disclosing information because of fear of repercussions.

In spite of the inherent power differential in advisor–advisee relationships, many graduate faculty members advise their students in positive ways so that students do not feel oppressed. Because of the deficits cited in research regarding graduate advisor–advisee relationships, Barnes, Williams, and Stassen (2012) sought to examine the advisee experience across disciplines. They surveyed 870 graduate students at nine schools/colleges in the northeast United States in four disciplines—education, humanities and fine arts, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences—and

found advisor satisfaction similar across the disciplines. A high percentage of doctoral students expressed satisfaction with their relationships with their doctoral advisors. In fact, nearly all participants reported very satisfied (65%) or somewhat satisfied (29%). For the doctoral students allowed to select their own advisors, interest in the faculty member's research and the faculty member's expressed interest in helping them to succeed were by far the top two reasons students selected their advisor. Students who selected their advisor experienced more satisfaction than those who did not get to choose. Their study illuminated the attributes of the advising relationship that enable "doctoral students to emerge from their experience feeling emotionally and psychologically whole and healthy, despite going through a process that can be oppressive, given the enormous power differential inherent in the structure of the advisor–advisee relationship" (Barnes et al., 2012, p. 327). Overall, this study showed how power dynamics in an advisor–advisee relationship can be used to empower students.

Literature on Student Experiences with Professor Misattribution

The issue of academic dishonesty that occurs when professors take credit for students' works is complex. As the literature has stated, students expect a positive socialization experience in higher education despite the power differentials with faculty that exist. An examination of literature about when a professor misattributes a student's work is necessary because both the graduate socialization and power dynamics can be negatively affected. Thus, in this section of the literature review, I present the line of research that examines instances of professors' misbehavior through misattribution. For example, Clark, Harden, and Johnson (2000) surveyed 787 recent psychology doctoral

graduates to provide a picture of mentor relationships in a clinical psychology doctoral program. The survey results revealed the graduates' most frequently mentioned ethical concerns to include faculty mentors' sexualized relationships with other students in the program, research-related concerns, mentors having poor boundaries or being too emotionally involved with students, mentors' sexualized relationships with protégés, and, lastly, mentors' claiming credit for their protégés' work. The researchers noted that graduates who discontinued an earlier mentor relationship would not be included in the survey, so the numbers of ethical concerns may be higher. Nonetheless, a faculty mentor's claiming credit for a student's work certainly rises to the level of academic dishonesty and could harm graduate students and the educational system itself.

Although studies have noted students' concerns of faculty misattributing their work, little is known about the topic other than that it occurs on campuses. As previously discussed, the literature addressing reports of plagiarism has largely been studied in the context of the following relationships: Students' experiences with fellow students' plagiarism (see e.g., Nitsch, Baetz, & Hughes, 2005; Simon et al., 2004), and faculty experiences with student plagiarism (see e.g., Maramark & Maline, 1993; McCabe, 1993). In the existing literature, there is a paucity of information regarding the complexities of faculty to student academic misconduct.

Other studies on misattribution, such as that by Fine and Kurdek (1993), describe two ethical violations in student–faculty collaborations. The first is faculty who take authorship credit that was earned by the student, and the second are students who are given credit for work that they did not complete. Additionally, Hamilton (2002) explains

the value of ethical research conduct in academics by stating, “The major canon of academic work has been honest and accurate investigation, and the cardinal sin has been stating or presenting a falsehood ... This includes misrepresenting the strength of one’s findings or credentials, plagiarism, or improper attribution of authorship (p. 41).”

Furthermore, McSherry (2001) stated, “Authorship depends on and helps create a trust relationship between advisor and advisee. To question it is to question that relationship and the advisor’s authority” (p. 86). Thus, this literature has affirmed that misattribution not only violates academic integrity, but it also affects socialization through power role differences between the student– faculty relationship.

However, Brown-Wright, Dubick, and Newman (1997) presented little agreement about appropriate conduct in authorship, which helps explain how professors and students may differ in their understanding of attribution of authorship. For example, faculty and students differ in their beliefs about appropriate and inappropriate conduct regarding authorship. In other words, students can dispute authorship even when the authorship is handled correctly. Brown-Wright et al. (1997) surveyed 151 graduate assistants (GAs) and 72 faculty members with at least one GA and found that professors and students vary in their opinions regarding authorship. When a GA assists with the analysis of research data, a greater majority of GAs (96%) than faculty (88%) felt that the student should be listed as an author. Conversely, if a GA assists in typing, proofreading, the literature search, and/or coding data, faculty and staff were divided as to whether the GA should be listed as an author on any ensuing publications; about half of each group responded yes,

and the other half responded, no. From this research, one can see that faculty and graduate students may hold differing beliefs about authorship.

In addition to faculty and students holding differing beliefs about authorship, students may hesitate in asking faculty questions related to authorship. Welfare and Sackett (2011) surveyed 1,009 doctoral students and faculty in education-related disciplines to learn about current and best practices for authorship determination in student–faculty collaborative research. The findings revealed that students and faculty believe that authorship should be more thorough and egalitarian than it currently is, but both groups reported discomfort with this issue. Although students believed it was their responsibility to bring up authorship with faculty, they were uncomfortable doing so. Both students and faculty suggested that authorship should be decided together; however, approximately half of the students and one quarter of faculty said that they would be uncomfortable advocating for greater recognition. Geelhoed, Phillips, Fischer, Shpungin, and Gong (2007) reported similar findings related to students in their survey of 109 authors in psychology and counseling-related disciplines about authorship decision-making. In such matters, students felt that they had less power relative to their coauthors than faculty did. Additionally, students were more likely than faculty to report that power differentials influenced their decision-making processes. Even when a student “consents” (Mitchell & Carroll, 2008, p. 224) to a supervisor’s suggested authorship arrangement, due to power differentials between a student and a supervisor, the student may feel coerced into authorship arrangements (Mitchell & Carroll, 2008). These studies point to students who experienced misattribution of their work, but the literature is less

developed regarding the reasoning behind their responses to misattribution and how those students managed that environment.

In summary, the literature provided insight into academic socialization expectations, processes, and outcomes as well as the positive and negative aspects of power dynamics in the faculty–student relationship to provide a basis for understanding those behaviors that fall away from normative experiences, such as those instances when graduate students’ work is misattributed by a professor. Students entrust their academic work to faculty members as part of their academic socialization experience. Many studies explain the power dynamics between graduate students and faculty and how the power differential interplays with socialization. Generally, graduate students proceed through a normative socialization process with students starting graduate school as a novice, then learning their fit in a program, and finally moving into the formation of their own professional identity. Occasionally, threats such as misattribution occur to the normative socialization process.

Conclusion

In this literature review, I looked at concepts of socialization expectations, processes, and outcomes as well the positive and negative aspects of power differentials in the faculty-student relationship. Literature on socialization expectations, processes, and outcomes informed me about what students expect from graduate education, instances when graduate student expectations are not met, different processes that students proceed through during academic socialization, and the expected outcomes of a normative socialization process. The positive and negative aspects of power differentials

in faculty-student relationships informed me about ways in which students perceive power differentials and how the power differential influences student behavior particularly when students have observed instances of unethical faculty behaviors. These studies demonstrate that the literature omits or has not developed a full discussion on understanding graduate students' experiences with faculty power dynamics in an academic socialization setting when the student claims the work as his or her own. In light of this omission, my study examines the *why* and *how* concerning the reasoning and actions associated with graduate students' reporting of their professors' research misconduct, and I use the literature concepts of socialization and power dynamics to help draw out the underlying phenomenon.

CHAPTER III

STUDY METHODS AND ANALYSES

In this chapter, I outline the details of my study's design, research methods, and analyses. These details include: research questions, selection and sampling of participants, and my perspective of the research at hand. I also explain the methods of data collection, including how I conducted interviews with an overview of questions. Lastly, I describe the methods of data analysis and establish the trustworthiness of the data.

This study focuses on graduate students' perceived experiences of professors' misattribution of student works. Study participants included only graduate students who *reported* academic misconduct because they believed faculty plagiarized their work. Because the nature of the study focuses on how participants make sense of what happened to them, qualitative research methods are appropriate. Qualitative research helps seek answers to questions that focus on a person's unique social experience and helps give meaning to that experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). More specifically, interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) helps analyze graduate students' individual experiences. IPA suits this study well because it is a "qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences" (Smith, Flower, & Larkin, 2009, p. 1). In essence, this study is an

interpretation of encounters from the viewpoint of the graduate students who believe that their work has been misattributed by their professors, which is appropriate.

The inquiry that I have established is different from a social constructivist approach. A discussion of how IPA is similar but different to social constructionism is provided to help the reader distinguish between how this study's methodology of IPA compares and contrasts to traditional qualitative analyses through social constructionism. According to Eatough and Smith (2008), IPA resembles social constructionism in that "sociocultural and historical processes are central to how we experience and understand our lives" (p. 185). Additionally, IPA and social constructionism are in agreement that our sense of self emerges from intersubjective communication. IPA differs from social constructivism; however, in that IPA goes beyond individuals "drawing on the culturally available stock of meanings" to tell their life stories, rather than individuals who may attempt "to achieve a whole host of things with their talk such as save face, persuade, and rationalize..."(Eatough and Smith, p. 185). While IPA has similarities to social constructionism, differences exist. I emphasize the distinction between IPA and social constructionism to articulate more clearly how this study's interpretivist approach does not follow the typical social constructivist approach in graduate student socialization literature.

Research Questions

Taking an interpretivist approach, the purpose of this study examines how individuals understand their experiences with a, "focus on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for people who share a particular experience" (Smith et

al., p. 45). In this study's setting, the personal meaning and sense-making refers to the graduate students' encounters of professors' misattribution of the students' works and the circumstances leading up to the reporting of the academic violation. Accordingly, two central research questions emerge in this study:

- How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?
- How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor?

Participants

In this section, I will discuss the types of individuals who can serve as participants, the sufficient number of participants, the search techniques for locating participants, and the actual number of individuals who participated in the study.

Given the focus of my study is to expand the inquiry on academic misconduct by investigating the experiences of graduate students who reported that a professor misattributed their work, my participants included graduate students who formally reported academic misconduct because they believe a faculty member misattributed their work. During the incident, the faculty and students participated in an academic setting in one or more of the following types of relationships: committee chair/advisee; committee member/student; classroom professor/graduate student; and research supervisor/graduate assistant. Participants included any former graduate student from any university or academic program as long as they formally reported academic misconduct. I focused on

institutions in the United States. For purposes of sampling, I did not consider whether a student won their case or not.

Furthermore, in determining the type of student to include, I did not take into consideration the years that students reported as a criterion for inclusion in this study. Certainly, reporting processes of plagiarism have changed throughout the years. However, the intent of this study focuses not on analyzing the effectiveness of each institution's reporting policies or accrediting bodies but rather analyzing the individuals who came forward in terms of "why" they reported and "how" they managed their environments. In the study, the years of cases resulted in ranging from the 1980's to the early 2000's.

In terms of sample size, Smith et al. (2009) express the difficulties in determining a sample size. As the IPA approach has matured and researchers have become more experienced, the needed sample size has lessened. "The issue is quality, not quantity..." (p. 51). Smith et al. encourage a sample size of three participants for an undergraduate or Masters-level IPA study. For a professional doctorate, the recommended number of interviews (not necessarily participants) ranges between four and ten. The authors note the importance of not seeing higher numbers of participants as indicative of better work. Thus, I sought five participants with two interviews per participant to ensure a sufficient number of cases.

Given what Smith et al. (2009) said, I worked to hit the suggested number of participants; however, locating contact information for individuals who experienced the phenomenon proved challenging. To identify people who experienced the phenomenon,

I reviewed pertinent court cases, articles in the media, and journal articles. I contacted identified participants who met the selection criteria by utilizing leads in records (e.g., last known address, occupation, degree, university attended, and exhaustive Internet searches). I attempted to secure prospective participants' phone numbers in the White Pages online, but rarely succeeded. However, most times I found a mailing address that I sent a letter to. When unable to locate a telephone number or mailing address on White Pages, I attempted to see if the prospective participant had a LinkedIn account or Facebook account. Through LinkedIn and Facebook, I sent a message to the prospective participant to see if they would be interested in participating in my study without sending a request to become "Facebook friends" or "connect." The contact occurred via phone, mail, or e-mail, depending upon the located contact information.

I obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A) and then reached out to 13 prospective participants with a total of seven consenting to the study, one who declined, another one did not meet study criteria, and from four participants, I did not receive responses. I believe two of those individuals who I did not receive responses from could have received the letter because they did not come back as undeliverable. The individual who did not meet study criteria came about because her case involved her research advisor "sabotaging" her work "and making false allegations against [her]" instead of misattributing her work. Out of those seven participants who consented, five actually participated. I reached out more than once to the two individuals who initially consented to the study to schedule an interview but did not receive a response. The prospective participant who declined indicated that, "it was too hard to

talk about.” Additionally, through snowball sampling, I contacted an attorney and two faculty members who were potentially aware of students who had experienced the phenomenon. Two of the faculty members forwarded information about the study to the prospective participants, but the students never contacted me. Additionally, the attorney did not respond to me. In short, I started with seven participants who consented to the study and ended with five participants.

Pilot Study

In the Spring of 2009, I completed a pilot study of former or current graduate students who reported an allegation of research misconduct because their ideas, processes, results, or words were plagiarized by a faculty member. The purpose of this qualitative study focused on gaining an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of graduate students who have been plagiarized by their professors.

From the pilot study, I learned to clarify confidentiality for this study. The network that exists among graduate students, junior researchers, and post-doctoral researchers who have been plagiarized by their professors and mentors quickly became clear in the pilot study. One participant spoke to me as if she had run into an old friend from her hometown and wondered about the current status of mutual friends. I did not expect specific questions about prospective participants and thankfully I had not interviewed them. If confronted with a similar question, I could say that I cannot disclose individuals who I have interviewed. A change that I made to this study included an addition to the informed consent form to make confidentiality very clear.

The pilot study informed how I carried out the study. Seven themes became identified in the pilot study: 1) seduction, 2) getting to know the professor, 3) students' response to mistreatment, 4) fear of retaliation, 5) formal procedures, 6) institutional support, and 7) cycle of abuse. I chose grounded theory as my methodology for the pilot study. However, for this study, the methodology changed to IPA in order to delve deeper into the phenomenon of a professor misattributing student work by developing an interpretive understanding of the students' experiences. Previously, I asked very open questions to learn about their general experience. After the pilot study, I desired to learn more about their experiences specifically related to socialization, power dynamics, and how they decided to report. The data analysis differed in this study from the pilot study as I used exploratory and conceptual comments to aid in developing codes. The codes focused on the participants' *understanding* of their experiences. My findings were deeper in this study about the participants' experiences and differed from the pilot study as I specifically studied socialization through the critical lens of a power analysis.

Methods of Data Collection

In order to gather rich, deep data for an understudied phenomenon I chose a qualitative research method. One of the best ways to acquire rich data from participants requires that you give them "...an opportunity to tell their stories, to speak freely and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 56). Interviewing participants became my primary way of collecting data.

Interviews

Before interviewing, I began with a discussion of the research project and the informed consent that appears in Appendix B. Upon receiving permission from the participant, I turned on the digital recorder for the duration of the interview. In order to clarify comments that arose during transcription, I requested subsequent communication (e.g., telephone call or email) and asked for documents from participants that related to the identified phenomenon.

Each participant took part in two interviews. I desired Skype interviews as the first preference however most participants did not have Skype. One participant wished to complete the interviews via Skype, but when I reached out to him for the first round interview, he had technological difficulties, so we opted for a telephone interview. By the second interview, he did not have Skype working. Another participant also had computer issues before we even attempted a Skype interview, so we agreed to complete a telephone interview. Later, at the end of the first-round interview with him, he shared, “[T]here’s no way this interview could’ve been done on Skype because I have been pacing the whole time I’ve been talking to you.” In short, I completed all first round and second round interviews via telephone recording and then hired a transcriptionist who transcribed the data verbatim. Please see Appendix C for the confidentiality agreement.

All first round interviews occurred before any second round interviews began. A minimum of one week between the first round interview and the second round interview occurred to allow time for participants to process. Because the second round interview focused on follow-up questions from the first interview, including a question offering

them an opportunity to provide input about anything else they wanted to add since the first interview. I wanted to give the participants time to process what we had talked about to allow for a richer second interview. If I had interviewed the participants for the second-round interview a day or two later after the first interview, I believe they would not have had enough time to process. Appendix D provides a table of interview dates and durations and number of pages of transcription. I reviewed individual participants' transcripts before second round interviews came to completion in order to have another opportunity to ask participants questions and clarify from the first interview. Over the course of the Fall 2014 semester, I completed all interviews. Smith et al. (2009) note that IPA interviews can be completed semi-structured or unstructured; however, for the beginning interviewer, a semi-structured interview style provides a good place to start. They note the importance of open-ended questions and the necessity to stay flexible in asking questions. Generally, the interview schedule has between six and ten open questions, along with possible prompts, for an interview that will last between 45-90 minutes. In-depth interviews generally last for an hour or more.

Smith et al. (2009) discuss the importance of having participants feel comfortable with and trust the researcher before asking questions, which I attempted to do. To accomplish my goal of building rapport with each of the participants, I tried to start the initial conversation with "small talk." For instance, because I live in North Dakota, I started conversations saying, "it's 10 below zero here. What's the weather like where you are?" and would get a chuckle from the participant. Additionally, some participants inquired about why I was interested in this topic, so we discussed my thoughts behind the

idea. Those discussions appeared to develop trust. Early in the interview, I provided an overview of the organization of the interview, and the types of questions that I would ask. Also, I asked permission from the participants before I started recording interviews, and I think for one in particular that helped to build rapport as he expressed his appreciation in me asking. Overall, the participants appeared comfortable in talking with me early on in the interview.

Although, the interviews followed a semi-structured list of questions (see Appendix E for interview questions), information flowed in a free-flowing manner, so we did not necessarily follow the order of the interview schedule. I asked participants questions from the interview schedule and let them tell their stories. Many times they answered the questions from the interview schedule without the need to directly ask every question. The content of first round interviews included background questions asking participants to step back in time to why they went to graduate school, what they were looking forward to, what their fears were, relationships with peers and faculty, and what their actual physical space was like (e.g., classrooms). We moved into discussing the plagiarism incident including any authorship discussions, how the relationship with the professor changed, and how they decided to report. Also, we discussed the reporting process, their satisfaction with how the university community handled the incident, and the impact that it had on their life. The in-depth first round interviews lasted a minimum of one and a half to two plus hours.

The second round interviews started with a very open question asking participants to share anything that they wanted to since last interview. Then I asked ‘hindsight is

20/20” questions such as: “If you could do it all over again, would you report the professor? What may have decreased the likelihood of plagiarism occurring, and what was your understanding of the institutional research guidelines, and how you learned about them.” I found the second round interviews much briefer than the first round interviews lasting approximately 30 minutes to an hour in length. The shorter second round interviews possibly occurred because there were not as many questions to cover. Also, they shared much of their experiences in the first round interview because when I initially asked in the second interview if they had anything to add from the first interview, they responded that they did not have or had little additional information to add. Furthermore, prior to the second interview, one participant sent me a thoroughly written email with things that he forgot to tell me in the first interview. By the time of our second interview, I asked him if there was anything else that he wanted to add, but he said that he got it covered in the email that he sent. Even though the data decreased in the second round interviews, the participants provided rich data.

Confidentiality

To maintain confidentiality, I did not include the names of participants on the transcriptions of electronic files, digital files or the interview form. No analysis or presentation of results contains actual names. In addition to protecting the confidentiality of participants, I protected the confidentiality of professors and institutions by attempting to use broad classifications for departments and universities such as “physical sciences at a Midwestern University.” I generalized majors, for instance, science or social science and made generalized statements/categories of individual characteristics when they did

not alter the findings. Additionally, I described a span of years for selected cases instead of identifying the specific year of each case. Please see Table 1 for demographics of participants.

Table 1. Participant Demographics.

Pseudonym ¹	Program	Received PhD	Faculty type	Work Plagiarized
Lisa	PhD Social Science	No (but went to another university and received)	Committee member	Dissertation Work
Candace	PhD Social Science	Yes	Chair	Dissertation Work
Shane	PhD Social Science	Yes	Graduate Assistantship Faculty Supervisor	Term Paper
Mike	PhD Science	No	Co-Chair & Committee Member	Dissertation Work
Elizabeth	PhD Science	Yes	Thesis Advisor	Dissertation Work

¹ Date(s) of reporting occurred during the following years: Early 2000's (2 cases), 1990's (3 cases), 1980's (1 case).

Secondary data

I requested secondary data from all participants (e.g., court records, emails, student handbooks, the paper at issue, etc.). As needed, I used the archival data to aid in writing up the chronology of events and to assist in spurring reflection. As one might expect, participants expressed difficulty in releasing documentation to me. One shared that he would consider releasing papers to me if he met me in-person. Another participant stated that all her records were at her mom's. Another participant said he no longer had the documents. Only two participants provided secondary data. They gave me newspaper articles, articles pertaining to academic dishonesty, and communication regarding appealing the decision relative to plagiarism. Even though I only received secondary data from two participants, I accessed secondary data for all in the form of either a newspaper article or court ruling. Relevant secondary data did not only confirm the truthfulness of a participant's story, but provided accuracy in how I understood the participant's stories. I carefully examined their recounts in the data analysis, especially with one participant who provided a newspaper article and informed me that not all of the information was correct. All in all, most information shared in secondary data mirrored what the participants shared, but of course, the in-depth interview details and much of the information that I acquired expressed richer data than could have been learned in a newspaper article or court ruling.

Methods of Data Analysis

Next, I explain how I completed data analysis drawing on Smith et al. (2009). Smith et al. constructed a six step process to analyze IPA cases. The first step that I

completed from IPA analysis involved reading and re-reading the transcript. They encourage the researcher to slow down and be mindful of the interview instead of “our habitual propensity for ‘quick and dirty’ reduction and synopsis” (p. 82). They recommend analyzing one case at a time during the initial review, which I carried out. In addition, I utilized a step outside of this six step process. Specifically, I used memoing by writing stories about each participant after the interview.

The second step of IPA analysis requires completing initial noting. “This step examines semantic content and language use on a very exploratory level” (p. 83). This step involves writing comments on the transcript. The three types of comments start with descriptive comments, which focus on describing the content of what the participant said as well as to identify the subject of conversation. Here the researcher records key words, phrases, or explanations. The second type of comment focuses on linguistic comments which explore the participant’s specific use of language. For example, noting such nuances as pauses, laughter, tone, repetition, etc. Lastly, conceptual comments represent a more interrogative and conceptual level. This stage takes a great deal of time, and requires the researcher to shift towards the participant. At this point, the researcher “moves towards the participant’s overarching understanding of the matters they are discussing” (p. 88). Smith et al. (2009) indicate that the three ways of exploratory comments just described “are not intended to be exhaustive or prescriptive but are presented as useful analytic tools which the analyst may wish to employ” (p. 84). In my analysis, I reviewed each transcript and made descriptive and conceptual comments throughout. I reviewed a total of 118 single-spaced pages of first round transcripts and

50 single-spaced pages of second round transcripts. To help illustrate, I provide examples of my conceptual and descriptive comments below, with descriptive comments underlined and conceptual comments italicized.

Table 2. Exploratory Comments.

Example	Transcript	Comments
1	Participant: Well, I was devastated and really the whole thing made me physically ill. The stress of it was tremendous. And I think it was extremely hard for my husband to watch me have to go through that. (Inhale) Um, (pause) I, I didn't realize it until later that a lot of people just didn't believe me. (sniffle) ... "Who could make it up?"...	<u>Incident made her ill.</u> <u>Tremendous stress.</u> <u>Many didn't believe her.</u> <i>Trauma</i>
2	"I was just thinking... [the professor's] really going to screw me. He, totally has the power to screw me ten different ways."	<u>Struggling with reporting.</u> <i>Power dynamics</i> <i>Fear of retaliation</i>

In the third step of IPA, I developed emergent themes. The main task involved turning notes into themes. "Themes are usually expressed as phrases which speak to the psychological essence of the piece and contain enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual" (p. 92). These "emergent themes" or what might be

The fourth step of IPA involves searching for connections across emergent themes. At this point, I identified themes in the transcript and listed them in the order that they came up. This step involved mapping to see how I thought the themes fit together. They suggest various ways of searching for connections. I did not use a specialized computer program for qualitative data analysis. I grouped the themes into a list in Microsoft Word with the use of the Navigation Pane feature and then moved the themes to form clusters around related themes. For example, originally, I clumped codes of “happy family,” “beginning relationship,” and “luring” into a theme entitled “abusive relationship.” However, upon wrestling with the data and, and through peer review and debriefing, I realized that my initial data analysis appeared imprecise. While initially it seemed like the participants experienced an abusive relationship with their faculty members, in deeper review of the data, they actually voiced experiencing similarities to an “abusive relationship.” Early on, I thought enough components in the data showed that the participants experienced an abusive relationship, but in reality, the data revealed that the participants experienced *similarities* to an abusive relationship. This precise distinction is discussed further in Chapter V. With this new insight, the codes of “happy family,” “beginning relationship,” and “luring” moved to the theme “set-up” because those codes actually appeared as part of their early socialization experiences. Please see Appendix F for the codes and themes.

The fifth step of IPA entails moving to the next case, repeating the above steps, and then the looking for patterns across cases. After a long and arduous process, I developed a master table of themes. All of the themes experienced various iterations in

order to reflect the data as precisely as possible. As a result of peer review and debriefing, many theme changes occurred. To provide an example, the theme making the decision comprises the subthemes supports and threats; however, this theme went through variations before it finally led to making the decision. Early on, I entitled the theme weighing the costs, which only considered the negative influences. That was a problem because positive influences also played a part in participants weighing the costs to report, so this theme changed to coming forward to encompass both the positive and negative influences in the participants' decision to come forward with reporting. Through peer reviewing and debriefing, the theme name changed from coming forward to what's at stake because what's at stake seemed to more appropriately encompass the data. Yet, upon further review, the theme of making the decision with subthemes of supports and threats appeared to better represent data instead of what's at stake. Thus, this discussion illustrates how a theme changed many times, primarily through the use of peer review and debriefing, to report on the data in the most accurate manner. I changed the master table of themes multiple times and kept a list of how the themes changed in the process of data analysis as part of the audit trail. During data analysis after the second interview, I contacted the participants as questions arose.

Trustworthiness of Data

Smith et al. (2009) identified the importance of an independent audit for validity in qualitative research. In other words, "...the trail might consist of: initial notes on the research question, the research proposal, an interview schedule, audio tapes, annotated transcripts, tables of themes and other devices, draft reports, and the final report" (p.183).

I have those records and had my advisor review much of the “trail” to ensure validity. In this section, I address how I applied Creswell’s verification procedures and used self-awareness to limit biases.

Creswell’s Verification Procedures

Verification of data may occur in several ways. Creswell (1998, as cited in Glesne, 2006), described the following accepted verification procedures in qualitative research that strengthen validity: prolonged engagement and persistent observation; triangulation; peer review and debriefing; negative case analysis; member checking; rich, thick description; external audit; and clarification of researcher bias. I will discuss each of these verification procedures as they relate to how I conducted this study.

First, prolonged engagement and persistent observation include an extended time in the field to develop trust and learn the culture. While I did not spend time with the participants, I have spent years in the field as a graduate student and a faculty member. I believe that by having this experience, I have increased knowledge in understanding the participants. For example, when a participant said, “IRB,” I didn’t have to inquire what IRB stands for or what an IRB is. Likewise, many were working on their dissertations at the time of the plagiarism incident, so I was familiar with the process when they talked about the “topic proposal,” “committee,” and “defense.” Although I had a pretty good understanding of terms and concepts, there were still times when confusion arose. When my understanding of a term differed from a participant, we both confused each other, but then figured it out. For example, I refer to the head of my dissertation committee as my “chair” or “advisor,” whereas this participant referred to that individual as a “thesis

advisor.” The participants’ dissertations were mostly beyond my understanding, particularly in the science fields, but my purpose was not to understand their complex dissertations but rather their experience related to their work being plagiarized. My understanding of academic culture helped to streamline the interviews because I did not have to ask basic academic questions.

Second, triangulation includes gathering data in multiple ways, from multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives. I utilized triangulation by requesting from participants any written documents that would be relevant to this study, for example, court records, emails, student handbooks, and the student paper at issue. Although I requested documentation from all participants, not everyone provided me documentation. Nonetheless, I secured one or more written documents related to the participant’s case, such as a newspaper article or court ruling. As needed, I used the archival data to aid in writing up the chronology of events and to assist in spurring reflection. Having archival data proved very helpful at times to cross-reference my interviews with participants for names of individuals involved and timeline of events. It is important to note that the purpose of triangulation in this study was for understanding the experience, not verification of truth. Additionally, I completed a literature review that included articles about misattribution of student work in order to put the participants’ experiences into perspective. The literature review revealed normative and abnormal socialization experiences.

I requested secondary data from all participants (e.g., court records, emails, student handbooks, the paper at issue, etc.). As one might expect, participants expressed

difficulty in releasing documentation to me. One shared that he would consider releasing papers to me if he met me in-person. Another participant stated that all her records were at her mom's. Another participant said he no longer had the documents. Only two participants provided secondary data. They gave me newspaper articles, articles pertaining to academic dishonesty, and communication regarding appealing the decision relative to plagiarism. Even though I only received secondary data from two participants, I accessed secondary data for all in the form of either a newspaper article or court ruling. Relevant secondary data provided accuracy in how I understood the participant's stories. I carefully examined their recounts in the data analysis, especially with one participant who provided a newspaper article that informed me that not all of the information was correct. All in all, most information shared in secondary data mirrored what the participants shared, but of course, the in-depth interview details and much of the information that I acquired expressed richer data than could have been learned in a newspaper article or court ruling.

Third, my advisor and colleagues used peer review and debriefing as well as external audit to review my work. I conversed with my advisor several times throughout the data analysis process. In addition, I also visited at length with colleagues about my data analysis without identifiers, and another colleague read my data analysis and offered feedback. As they read my data analysis, they offered suggestions for other ways that the data could be interpreted. For example, when a colleague read my report, she provided feedback about one participant in particular whose faculty member appeared to harass her. My colleague suggested that because of the harassment, the participant perhaps

could have filed a Title IX claim in addition to reporting the plagiarism. This colleague helped me to consider other options, and her suggestion is added in Chapter V.

Additionally, during peer review, when my advisor or colleague asked for clarification in the data analysis report, I thought I had written about the question he or she asked of me. But when reviewing the written product, I realized I had become so inundated with the data that sometimes the data were in my head instead of written in the data analysis report. For instance, when a colleague reviewed my data analysis, she inquired about the outcomes of the participants' reporting of misattribution—whether they received credit or not. I knew the outcomes, but they were not in the report. As a result, I added the outcomes to Chapter IV. Thus, feedback from my advisor and colleagues was very useful.

Fourth, negative case analysis is a search for cases that challenge my interpretation of the evidence. I looked for cases in the data that suggested that the themes were not universal. I have learned to become more comfortable with negative case analysis. I realized that if a theme was not addressing each participant, then I should perhaps explain the negative case. There was one case in particular where the themes were not always applicable, and it was therefore challenging to determine the fit in the analysis. For example, all of the participants with the exception of one described an identity shift stemming from feelings of trauma or abuse. The participants articulated the importance of these experiences with the exception of one participant who had no such experience. I resolved this discrepancy with the negative case by articulating how the theme did not apply to one participant immediately after discussion of the theme.

Additionally, I more fully described the negative case and all of the participants at the beginning of Chapter IV. The negative case will be explained further in the next chapter.

Fifth, I utilized member checking by providing the interview transcripts upon completion of transcription to the respective participant for his or her feedback on accuracy. I sent full transcripts via email to participants for their review with the option of withdrawing, adding, or modifying any comments. Additional questions were also included to clarify comments from the transcripts. One participant specifically requested that I not send the transcripts, so I honored this request. However, this participant was fine with me asking any follow-up questions after our interview, which I did via email. Furthermore, I emailed each participant the data analysis report upon completion without identifiers, requesting their feedback.

Sixth, I strived to write with rich, thick description. Each participant interviewed with me for nearly two—three hours and each provided 24—39 pages of transcription for analysis. A challenge to writing with rich, thick description was that some participants gave more details than others.

Awareness of Self to Avoid Biases

Throughout my research, I reflected upon my own biases so as not to influence the results. First, I had previous contact with some of the participants from interviewing them for my pilot study. While I worked to remain objective, I interviewed them while holding prior knowledge of what they shared with me during the pilot study. Second, I bring biases from working in the dual roles of educator and graduate student. I am an educator in higher education, a graduate student in higher education, and a social worker.

As an educator, I bring expectations for academic integrity. Additionally, I have biases as a graduate student regarding my own socialization experience.

In qualitative research, philosophical assumptions are reflected upon prior to interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). For validity in qualitative research, reflecting on and stating philosophical assumptions are critical. First, from an ontological perspective, I believe that every individual experiences and perceives an identified phenomenon in different ways. Each experience is valuable and contributes to a greater understanding of the phenomenon. There is no one right way or wrong way to experience a phenomenon. Through interviews and data analysis, I valued each participant's experience and believe that they each contributed to greater understanding of the phenomenon. I accomplished this by letting their voice be heard through their own quotes as well as through member checking to ensure that I accurately told the participants' stories. Second, my epistemological perspective is that the researcher and the participant have a professional relationship. The relationship is not that of a therapist–client, such that the therapist attempts to counsel the participant. However, a similarity is that the participant shares a great deal of information with the researcher, but the researcher provides little information to participants. The role of the researcher is to guide the interview, actively listen, and gain truth. Listening to the participants' stories, it was extremely hard not to give words of insight or advisement, as a social worker would. I tried my best to stay in the capacity of a professional researcher and told myself during the interviews not to wear my “social worker” hat. Third, my axiological perspective is that researchers and participants have personal and professional values and belief systems. However, the

researchers should be reflective about how their values impact their research project in order to be objective and bias-free. Self-disclosure of values may be necessary depending on the project. I believe that I was objective during the research process. However, I should clarify that I believe what the participants told me as truth. I did not find myself too often, in my own head, disagreeing with a participant. Last, my rhetorical perspective is to use the language of the participants whenever possible. Graphs, pictures, and charts are a welcome element in a written product. In the next chapter, the reader will see that I richly use participant's words, and I provide figures of themes and subthemes to provide a visual representation of what the participants experienced. All of the comprehensive verification strategies outlined in this section increase the trustworthiness of data.

Summary and Conclusion

In summary, I gathered data primarily through interviews but also reviewed secondary data. I interviewed five graduate students whose work was misattributed by a professor. I used interpretative phenomenological analysis to examine the graduate students' experiences and used the process proposed by Smith et al. (2009) for data analysis. To recap, Smith et al.'s six steps are: (a) reading and rereading the transcript, (b) initial noting, (c) developing emergent themes, (d) searching for connections across emergent themes, (e) moving to the next case, and (f) looking for patterns across cases. Great measures were taken to ensure validity of data including an audit trail; triangulation; peer review and debriefing; member checking; writing with rich, thick description; an external audit; and reflection upon my biases. While limitations exist

because of the small number of participants, qualitative research utilizing IPA was well-suited for exploring the phenomenon at hand.

In the next chapter, I report on the results of the data analysis, but I provide a brief overview here. A total of four themes were identified. Initially, the graduate students experienced socialization in a positive way. After some point during the initial socialization experience, the participants noticed a transition into an awkward and unwelcoming situation. The mentor relationship from the perspective of the participants transitioned from adulation to concerns and frustration regarding academic interactions. These encounters revealed the participants' realization that they were subjects of perceived deception and manipulation. The relationship turned from pleasant socialization to loathsome socialization encounters.

The participants compared their experiences with their professors to an abusive relationship. Like an abusive relationship, the professors were very kind in the beginning and then switched. The participants felt that they were abused from the exercise of the professors' power and control over them while they were in the vulnerable position of a graduate student.

The graduate students sought help from individuals in positions of authority as they formally reported. Unfortunately, the participants suffered from those in positions of authority failing to use power. Two of the participants were literally turned away by university officials as they initially attempted to report. Likewise, another participant experienced a university policy not being followed as the university attempted to sweep the situation under the rug instead of informing people of the formal procedures to bring

concerns forward. In another way, some of the participants experienced university administrators not using their positions of power to help them receive credit for their work or support them through the formal reporting proceedings. It appears that the students were revictimized by university officials as they went through the reporting process.

All of the participants assessed the risks in determining if they should report, and while doing so, they contemplated if reporting was worth the risk. Years of study were poured into securing this degree. Four out of the five participants described how much was on the line for them if they decided to report the plagiarism, including not receiving a recommendation letter for a scholarship or even worse, getting kicked out of school or not receiving their PhDs. Even harsher was a death threat made against one of the participant's future children. They all resolved that it was worth the risk to report.

Advisement from trusted individuals played a key role in helping the participants navigate power dynamics with professors and determine that it was worth the risk to report. A variety of influences impacted the decision making of the participants in deciding to report. Influences were positive and negative and came in a variety of forms including a threat, participants' emotions, faith in God, and counsel of trusted individuals. Ultimately, the graduate students who participated in this study determined that it was worth the risk to report with the support of trusted individuals.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter reports on what I learned about the experiences of graduate students who reported that a professor plagiarized their work. Central to the research is an examination of the conflicts between the expected academic socialization process and the actual experiences of graduate students who reported academic misconduct arising from a professor misattributing their work. As stated in Chapter 1, the concepts that I wished to explore in this study include a process involving academic socialization and power dynamics. The process captured includes experiences that the graduate students who participated in this study had during the phenomenon of interest (i.e., a professor misattributing their work) before, during, and after reporting. This chapter includes four themes and six subthemes. The main themes that emerged are (a) the set-up, (b) making the decision, (c) jumping hurdles, and (d) identity shift.

In examination of the research findings, Themes 1, 3, and 4 (the set-up, jumping hurdles, and identity shift) respond indirectly to the research question: *How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?* The second theme (making the decision) responds indirectly to the second research question: *How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a*

professor? I describe each theme by first listing the research question that it addresses, followed by presentation of evidence in support of the theme. In the conclusion of Chapter IV, I explain how the findings directly address the research questions. To begin, I briefly introduce the reader to each participant's journey as they enter and progress through doctoral education.

Participant Introductions

In order to familiarize the reader with the participants, I provide a brief introduction for each participant. The introductions begin with a background about why they sought a doctoral degree, then move into their beginning socialization experiences in graduate school, the gradual progression of events leading to learning of the misattribution of their work, and finally their reporting the misattribution.

Lisa

Events Prior to the Incident. "Get that doctorate." Those decisive words of Lisa's father played a key part in her pursuit of a doctoral degree. For 20 years, Lisa had been working on an idea for a business, but she knew that she needed more education in order to cultivate that formal knowledge to pursue that interest. She thought that the doctoral program would help her create a business model, which would jump-start her business ideas.

Lisa knew that a traditional doctoral degree on a campus might not work for her. There was a clear personal reason. Lisa lost her first baby, so she wanted to stay at home with her children. Her family was her top priority. Consequently, her choice for doctoral education hinged on the ability to stay at home with her children while attending classes

and doing her school work. Although, Lisa's commitment to staying at home did not diminish, she did have concerns about its effect on her learning. She knew it would take an incredible amount of time and self-discipline to complete an online degree at home. As she noted, there would be no faculty, staff, or students in arm's reach within an online school, unlike a traditional campus-based institution. Despite that, she expressed her goal of obtaining the doctoral degree as it would, in her mind, further her efforts toward her dream of starting her own business.

The doctoral program started somewhat with lackluster welcome. When Lisa began her doctoral program she received minimal orientation. She just started taking classes and found them lacking rigor and fulfillment. Because of the quality of the other students' works, she questioned the other students' credentials, and in her eyes, the value of her program slowly declined. Her program did not offer a cohort model. Additionally, Lisa received little interaction with professors due to their inaccessibility. By contrast, Lisa did interact frequently with peers, which sadly did not give her any confidence in the value of her degree. She did not think highly of the program, nor did it serve her needs. She debated whether to stay, but she figured that at that point, she invested enough that she wanted to complete the program.

When it came time to her dissertation proposal, Lisa felt ill-equipped. She had not taken any research courses in her doctoral program, relying exclusively on her research courses taken during her master's program. According to Lisa, the online university did not provide the bare minimum research classes, which the accrediting body requires.

Lisa did not know whom she would seek for assistance. As she worked on her dissertation proposal, she did not get the support she desired from her Dissertation Chair. Instead, she relied on the assistance of another dissertation committee member, Susan. Lisa connected with Susan, who took Lisa “under her wing.” Lisa explained, “We had a lot of things in common that we shared. One of which was a desire to see women in leadership roles and that’s how she wound up on my committee.” Unlike her experiences with other professors at the online school, Lisa described her experiences with this faculty member recounting how “[s]he would actually engage and interact with me ...”

The Incident and the Aftermath. Although Lisa found the interactions with the professor productive, several subsequent encounters started to give Lisa some pause. Without any explanation, Susan began putting the seed in Lisa’s mind that the committee would steal her work. Lisa’s committee members never had any discussion about the use of her work for publication or other purposes beyond the dissertation, so the discussion perplexed Lisa. She assumed the dissertation work was hers and there was no problem with attribution or ownership initially. Over time, Lisa saw how her fate rested in the dissertation committee as odd events started to unfold. Lisa believed she made good progress as the committee passed her dissertation defense. Then, all of a sudden, her committee reported her progress as unsatisfactory. According to Lisa, the committee changed the pass to a fail. As Lisa put it, the “committee holds your life in its hands,” and she now received a failing defense.

Despite how much Lisa trusted Susan and relied on her guidance, she took Lisa’s work. Much to Lisa’s surprise after she failed, Susan told Lisa that she was going to

publish Lisa's work: "Well ... as a matter of fact, I did all the work on this, I'm gonna publish it." To which Lisa responded, "Hey, knock it off. This is not your material!" Her committee member replied, "Well, you wouldn't be anywhere if it wasn't for me." They never spoke again.

In reporting, Lisa consulted with her attorney and an instructor at the university, but she never had any doubt that she intended to report. Lisa sought assistance from the university and entities outside of the university to no avail. About two months after Lisa reported the plagiarism, the professor accused her of plagiarizing her own materials. The university then asked Lisa to submit all her research. The university determined, "Well...we really can't tell who's [research] is what." I'm like, "Unbelievable! You people have NO integrity, honesty, decency or ethics." After Lisa did not receive help from university officials, she pursued many other venues including the courts, the Higher Learning Commission, and the Office of the Inspector General, but one office referred her to another office creating a bureaucratic nightmare. Her trust in administrative officials and entities doing the right thing diminished. In pursuing litigation, the appellate court rejected her case. Lisa further explained that the courts do not adjudicate such academic matters due to their stance that a fiduciary relationship does not exist between a faculty member and a student. According to Lisa, the university later let Susan go, "[n]ot because she stole my stuff and robbed me blind..., but because she had too close of a relationship with me." Interestingly, the first time that Lisa ever met her committee member face-to-face occurred at court.

Lisa described her situation as “traumatic.” Lisa emphasized that a student enrolled in a for-profit university creates a greater risk for plagiarism than a campus-based university because the online environment creates “isolation which helps an instructor abuse the student and play both sides of the fence with administration and other faculty.” The incident made her “ill.” She worried that people would not believe what happened to her. She even had legislators who responded, “Well, what did you give her your research for?” and I thought, Are you really that ridiculously insensitive and ignorant?” As Lisa feared, many did not believe her. Lisa now advises graduate students, “So don’t do anything good. That’s...the rule! That’s what we learn here in the United States of America. Do not excel! You will be punished.” Lisa shared, “I don’t think what happened to me should ever happen to anyone. And I think any institution that perpetrates that kind of behavior should not be in existence.” Lisa did not receive credit for her work. She went on to complete her PhD at another university.

Candace

Events Prior to the Incident. Candace dreamed of being a psychologist in high school. Upon completion of her bachelor’s degree in psychology, she planned to enroll in a master’s degree program, but she wrestled with what direction to take her focus in psychology. Not knowing her focus, she put her dream of a psychologist on hold to take a full-time job. Then, the unexpected lay-off happened. This provided her time to contemplate new directions. She made the decision to enroll part-time in a master’s program in counseling to test the water. Working and going to school, she finished the master’s degree in three years and started working, but the dream to be a psychologist

still lurked in the back of her mind. The dream never left her. Candace found acceptance into doctoral programs in psychology difficult because of the competitive nature of the programs and had to build up the courage to apply. She accepted an opening at a doctoral psychology program and was about to fulfill her dream.

Early on in her doctoral program, Candace enjoyed how faculty built community and invested in students. Candace viewed faculty members as approachable and helpful. For example, faculty assisted her in finding a job and a teaching assistant position. Faculty in Candace's doctoral program worked to build community through different opportunities such as a seminar-like class where Candace got to know her cohort as well as the cohort ahead of her. Additionally, the program required students to work in research teams which provided the benefit of developing relationships with faculty members. Candace explained, "So, automatically you were linked to a faculty member to establish a relationship.... You didn't have to seek them out, you were connected automatically ... so that was very, very helpful because ... you know this person is responsible for you, they want you there and they're gonna work with you." Candace's mentor, the professor who would later plagiarize her article, worked with her on this research team. Candace found her mentor particularly approachable and would take care of the issues that Candace brought to her. However, her mentor's general openness in professional availability (e.g., access to her cell phone number, open door policy) and also in personal matters early in their relationship caused Candace to feel uncomfortable with the premature closeness in relationship.

The Incident and the Aftermath. Overall, faculty members appeared to get along very well with one another, but Candace “learned later that they hated each other.” In a way, Candace explained that conflict “trickled down” to the students because “we then became like enemies against each other acting out on mentors’ craziness.” As time progressed, faculty, including her mentor, pulled away from students even though students needed them more as they went through the program. Her mentor’s treatment of Candace changed to the point of Candace feeling that she abused her.

Soon, Candace heard rumblings that her mentor had plagiarized a student’s work, so Candace searched for articles by her mentor online. Much to her surprise, Candace “...came across this ... article that was the same as [my work]! And I’m like, ‘Wait. What’s this?’ So, I decided to print it out, and I read it and I’m like, ‘Wait, this is my [work]!’” Candace exclaimed disbelief as she continued to read the article, as “it sounded like my writing because I don’t write as well as [the professor] does.” Candace choose not to tell anyone about what she saw.

In spite of Candace not telling anyone about the incident, a university administrator and her current Dissertation Chair sought her help with an investigation against the professor. They asked her if she had heard of the plagiarism allegations against the professor. Candace replied, “Yes, I heard some rumors.” Then, they asked if the professor took any of her work to which she responded, “Well, actually, yes.” Candace proceeded to tell them about the professor plagiarizing her article, and Candace forwarded the article to them. They shared that it was only an investigation at this point, but a lawsuit may occur. Candace clearly let them know that she would provide any

information that they needed, but she did not want to be involved in a lawsuit. They assured her in saying, "...you don't have to worry...there are so many students and plagiarism is a hard thing to prove...and they probably won't use your [information] anyhow."

The university yet again pursued Candace for her involvement in the lawsuit. Despite all the students interviewed, the university sought Candace and few others because she had compelling evidence. Her feelings of discomfort about getting involved with a lawsuit continued because she felt "extremely vulnerable" as a student who had not yet graduated. Candace explained the following thoughts that went through her mind regarding the university's request, "...I have nothing [no degree] and you [university] want me to now stick my neck out to be part of this...whole plagiarism big nonsense while [the professor] is still here? And...she has power over me..." After much deliberation, she complied with the administrator's request with Candace's dissertation sponsor playing a key role in persuading her to proceed. Candace repeatedly described the experience as "horrible" because of the university's response, the legal proceedings, and fear of retaliation by the professor.

Three weeks before graduation, Candace received a threatening letter from the professor. She feared going to her own graduation. Her dissertation sponsor stood by her through the whole process and despite not normally attending commencement ceremonies, attended to support her. Thankfully, the professor did not attend.

Candace explained that she endured "a form of abuse. It really is and so you always have those feelings. I mean, you move on. You live on. But it reminds me of that

and it reminds me of being abused.” A “survivor” is how Candace referred to herself because of what she experienced in graduate school. Candace reflected, “I may have sacrificed a little bit too much of myself trying to get the dream. But as I said, in the end it turned out to be okay and I’m fine.”

To this day, Candace feels “used” by the university, essentially that the university got what they needed from her and moved on. Occasionally, Candace sees a job at the university that she would like to apply for, but it “doesn’t go beyond that” because she never wants to go back into that academic work culture. Many times, Candace will pass by her alma mater but doesn’t care to go in. Although, they “won” the lawsuit, Candace “doesn’t feel happy about the whole situation... I just want it to be washed from my existence, but it really is not.”

Elizabeth

Events Prior to the Incident. Another participant, Elizabeth, fell in love with math and science while in junior high. Chemistry truly captured Elizabeth’s heart. Her family history was a critical part of her story. Her mother had been accepted into a prestigious medical school during a time when a woman of Jewish descent was rarely admitted to any medical school, but her father would not allow her to attend.

Consequently, Elizabeth’s mother’s pressured her to pursue a medical degree, which weighed heavily on Elizabeth as she contemplated what major to complete in college.

Deciding among chemistry, physics, or premed, she determined that chemistry would afford her enough flexibility to apply to medical school if she decided to fulfill her

mother’s dream for her career. At college, her inspirational, dedicated professors fueled

Elizabeth's love for chemistry. She was successful and went on to secure her master's degree in chemistry. After that, interdisciplinary research in biochemistry fascinated her. At her university, that would mean switching from pursuing a PhD in chemistry to a PhD in biology and would result in two more years of course work. After weighing the pros and cons, she decided that it would be worth the extra work. Eager to learn and practice interdisciplinary medical research in biochemistry, she made the switch from chemistry to biology.

Elizabeth's experience in her doctoral education program was initially rewarding. Her future thesis advisor aggressively recruited her to join his lab. She asked around in the small department where all faculty and students knew one another. Everyone gave him rave reviews, so she joined his lab. He welcomed her warmly into the lab and conveyed a father-figure image to her. He expressed how talented she was and what a good addition to the lab she was.

The Incident and the Aftermath. Elizabeth did not suspect that anything could go wrong, but eventually she experienced plagiarism by her thesis advisor. Elizabeth and her mentor did not have authorship discussions prior to his taking her work the first time. When she returned to the lab after completing part of her research at the library, her mentor told her that the project was no longer hers. Elizabeth was shocked, "went totally berserk," and confronted her mentor: "How could you do that? That's duplicity... You know I came into the lab and you know I created this ... now you're telling me it's not my project?" He said, "That's right. It's not your project." Elizabeth impulsively reported this first incident of plagiarism to the university. Elizabeth explained her

impulsivity in reporting, “I was naïve because I thought...when there’s something so egregiously wrong done to somebody...there has to be other people in the world that, that see it and help you retribute or remedy, and I just didn’t think twice.”

However, in reporting, Elizabeth learned that not one person in the university who she contacted would address her claims because they did not want to become involved. Elizabeth attempted to report her first incident of plagiarism to various individuals including the chair of the department, other departmental faculty, the head of academic affairs for the president, and her university’s legal counsel, but all of them declined to get involved. The university attorney advised, “Well, why don’t you write up what it is that you created, and I’ll see what I can do.” Elizabeth followed the attorney’s direction, but the university attorney did not do anything with the information to her knowledge. With the frustration of receiving no help from the university, Elizabeth wanted to quit her PhD program because there was no one else for her to work with, but one of Elizabeth’s friends and her therapist encouraged her to continue working on her PhD. Elizabeth continued under the same mentor. Her therapist advised her, “If your goals are to get your PhD, then you have to be careful about who, where, and when and who you make waves to because....they’re going to try and protect their faculty member, not you.” Later in Elizabeth’s doctoral education program, and after she had defended her dissertation, Elizabeth attended a symposium, only to meet her thesis advisor with his name attached to her dissertation work on a poster. Once again, she asked university officials for help, but the university did not view plagiarism in a poster as something worthy to report.

Although the university awarded Elizabeth her PhD, she never received credit for any of the work that the professor took. She consequently reported to an outside entity, at which time the university threatened to retract her PhD, but the university did not actually retract her PhD. Elizabeth continues to this day to seek credit from the university for the work the professor plagiarized; eventually the professor was dismissed from the university, as Elizabeth explained:

It's really interesting because I went up to that department last week because I reactivated this thing about them denying me credit...I said to the woman. It's the same, exact woman that was there when I was there. She's an administrative person in the department.... 'What happened with him [the professor]? Why did they throw him out of here?'... 'Oh you, I can't even talk about it,' she said. 'He did so many outrageous things that we...just couldn't wait for him to [leave]....'

Elizabeth keeps trying to get credit for her work to no avail. Recently, she sought assistance from a federal agency that previously awarded dollars to her project but was dismissed. In the past, she lobbied Congress. Elizabeth changed as a person forever in her ability to trust others, "No, you can't trust anybody (scoffs). You can't." Elizabeth used to describe herself as a "very friendly, open, trusting person." After this occurred, she described herself as much more distrustful. The professor also harmed Elizabeth in another way. She was unable to obtain letters of reference for postdocs after graduation. She described feeling humiliation and embarrassment when she explained to prospective employers that the reason she had not published her thesis research was because her

research mentor had plagiarized her work. To this day, very reputable labs are citing her research work, which is very upsetting to Elizabeth.

Mike

Events Prior to the Incident. Having grown up on a farm, Mike enjoyed hunting and fishing. He aspired to become a professional researcher in wildlife biology or in a related field. Not growing up in a family with a background in higher education, he was unfamiliar with many of its aspects but remained enamored with the idea of becoming a part of a culture where he would learn how to conduct research. He was a first-generation college student.

From the time he was a freshman in college, he was fortunate to have seasonal jobs that gave him work experience in research that he would later continue in his doctorate program. He worked hard in those jobs. With one job in particular, he was out in the heat and the rain for weeks at a time with minimal contact with people, but that was where an idea hit him, a theory that he wanted to develop, which he wrote about in his applications to doctoral education programs. His humble personality drove him to explore applied research that would better society. Coming from a culture that did not encourage self-aggrandizing, he did not promote himself. He was not out for fame or to see his name as a first author on journal articles. Instead, he cared about contributing to society through his research. To better his research skills, he sought doctoral education and was accepted to a prestigious university.

Early on in the doctoral program, the faculty promised that his ideas were safe. Mike stated that it was emphasized so much that he almost became suspicious, but

nonetheless, he believed his ideas would not be taken by a faculty member. He had “healthy, friendly” relationships with faculty. He truly enjoyed his professors and revered their academic prowess. Interactions between faculty and students were primarily formal.

The Incident and the Aftermath. In Mike’s first semester of graduate school, he completed a doctoral seminar course with approximately 20 other students. He learned how to write a research proposal, and he and his colleagues presented their research ideas. Additionally, the course instructor emphasized learning the scientific method. Mike’s professor saw his research abilities in the doctoral seminar course and invited him to work in her research lab. Consequently, very early in his graduate program, Mike published work as a first author in top journals in his field. Initially, Mike refused first authorship on the article because authorship recognition did not matter to him. However, Mike explained that his professor told him about “the importance of authorship order and ... that’s part of the professional responsibility that somebody has in the traceability of scientific ideas and scientific work that you take ownership of your work.” Then, he understood the importance and agreed to be lead author. That professor did not plagiarize his work; however, he found that another faculty member had published other work of his online.

Eventually, after consulting with his parents, he went to the graduate program director for assistance, but she advised him to do nothing. The director consulted with another professor who was not known to be involved in the plagiarism incident informed her, “Tell him NOT to do anything or he’ll be done in science....” She even threatened

that, if he went forward with reporting, his future children would be killed. His faith in God helped lead Mike to the decision to report despite this terrible threat made against him.

Then, Mike requested information from the university “about what a student would do to report academic dishonesty,” and he followed the procedures. The university responded, and “True to the [graduate program director’s] word, there was reluctance to do anything.” Mike further explained that the other professor with whom the graduate program director consulted “was appointed to the inquiry committee to investigate my claims. Well, with someone like that on there who I didn’t follow his advice and he said there’s nothing you can do...that’s one example of the makeup of that committee.” The university did not follow its own procedures, including meeting time lines. Additionally, the university personnel investigating Mike’s report did not have any face-to-face interactions with him. Mike was deeply disappointed with how the reporting system within his university failed him and wished he had accepted a fellowship he was offered at a different university. Not only did Mike feel disappointment with the university officials because they did not help him, but he also described his loss of faith that university officials cared about students and realized that no one would advocate for him. Mike eventually went to court when he did not receive credit, and the professor admitted that the work was Mike’s, but nonetheless, he never received credit from the university for his dissertation work. Mike felt he made the right decision to report.

After Mike reported to the university, about 8 weeks later, he had received no credit for his work, and the university no longer listed him as a student. Mike described

the plagiarism incident as affecting his family, “This has hurt us forever.” Mike articulated, “The heaviness is having to live with everything that happened.” For years after, the university that Mike attended sent alumni request mail to his parents, “harassing” them. His mother “would call in tears and tell them to stop, and they would keep sending it.” Mike has changed as a person as well, “I’ve lost all faith in anything that we could be proud of as Americans...And the only thing that, the only entity that’s ever been there for help, now or in ages past, is God. Everything else is an idol.”

Mike explained that, when it is time for Mike to send one of his children to graduate school, he will ensure that his family looks “capable and ready to finance the fight if it was necessary, and I would have an attorney friend with us to also make the rounds and meet the faculty.... There’s no way I’d let them go to graduate school without being physically present in a show of strength.” It almost seems in this scenario that, Mike would be the aggressor from the beginning, that he will hold the power instead of giving it to a professor. He described how he is preparing for a battle.

It seems as if Mike is still trying to figure why he had to experience these awful events when he said, “I think that I was supposed to learn these lessons for some reason.” Yet it seems as if he had made some sense of the abuse when he shared that his family was in a good place now. He attributed his faith as the source of his sense of purposefulness and gratitude in life.

Shane

Events Prior to the Incident. Yet another participant, Shane, described himself as a highly driven, “top of the class” kind of student who loved to do research. Shortly

after completing his undergraduate degree, he studied abroad in Spain, a highly valued experience in his major of social sciences. He loved academia, so his goal was to pursue graduate education. While living in Spain, he completed his graduate school applications and sent them to universities in the United States. Because he was a top student, faculty from across the country contacted him, trying to recruit him to their schools. He spoke various foreign languages, had great grades, and studied abroad—all desired characteristics for students who wished to be admitted to graduate programs in his field of study.

Shane sought out assistance to determine which program to pursue. As a young college graduate with many offers, he asked the advice of a mentor, one of his undergraduate professors. His professor helped guide Shane to select the best-fitting program for his unique concentration. If he went to one particular university, he could study under an esteemed scholar. But if he attended another university, he would work with a famous researcher. Among many good options, one professor in particular who had reached out to him when he was in Spain captivated his interest and was instrumental in his decision of which university to choose. Shane appreciated the personal telephone call from the professor.

Shane aspired to become a professor in the social sciences and looked forward to the intellectual life of a graduate student. When Shane entered his doctoral program with his cohort, he described his experience as rigorous. The professors primarily engaged in very formal interactions with the students. His cohort worked in groups infrequently

because of their independent projects. However, he described times when they would gather in seminar rooms, such as,

You would really get your ideas challenged, and somebody would be assigned to pick apart your paper and ... it was nurturing in a way but ... there was very little handholding and ... it was encouraged to kind of be very tough and analytical ... don't spare people's feelings if you have something critical to say about them.

Shane thrived in the intellectual stimulation and appreciated the high standards.

The Incident and the Aftermath. Shane did not describe having either a close or a negative relationship with the professor who misattributed his work, but expressed extreme surprise to learn that his professor had plagiarized his term paper. Shane found his work at the library when he saw a journal that his professor published in. He flipped through the pages of the journal to read his professor's articles. Shane recounted,

I started reading them, and it was exactly, it was MY paper! ... He'd just taken it and like just plopped it down there in his journal as his writing ... the first paragraph was slightly changed but it was basically ... my stuff without even any editing.

After Shane discovered that his professor had plagiarized his work, he looked for an opportunity to gain authorship credit. Shane feared retaliation because of the professor's power over him.

In the reporting process, Shane experienced unprofessional interactions with university administrators. Shane reported to a university administrator who he thought was a dean and who was also the coeditor of the journal in which Shane's work had been

plagiarized. It began with Shane's meeting that dean in "this little secret hideaway office in the library" where Shane shared with him how his advisor had published his work in a journal. The dean listened to him and then dismissed him by responding, "Okay, I'll go talk to the [professor who took his work] about it." It felt to Shane as if he had really said, "I don't really believe you. I'm going to talk to my colleague about this and we'll figure it out." The dean never asked Shane to prove his allegation; rather, he came up with a "quiet little solution to this problem," which was for Shane to be listed as a coauthor on the publication. No one ever shared with him that the university had a formal procedure for him to make an allegation. Shane said the university treated the whole process as very "hush-hush," and it felt like the "grownups made the decision."

Because Shane only received partial credit for his work, years later, he wrote a letter to the president of the university explaining what had happened, and Shane recalled an additional fact he included in the letter, "I think I literally said, 'I just wanted you to know about this. I wanted to get it off my chest.'" Then, he got a call from a member of his dissertation committee who held a "big administration position." Shane thought he was a provost. This man called Shane asking Shane to meet with him about the letter he had sent to the president of the university. When they met, the administrator asked him, "What's going on? What do you want out of this?" and "Why did you do this?" From his questioning, Shane assessed that "he thought I was going to sue the university or something." Shane replied to the administrator, "Look, I've been so mad about this, I just had to get it off my chest." Consequently, the administrator "and the president and the top administration got together and said, 'Okay, what's the procedure for reviewing a

claim...of plagiarism?’ And so, [the administrator] basically started the actual, the proper hearing that should have happened two years before.”

The university administration finally brought some closure to Shane’s receiving credit for his work. Shane went to a hearing at the university. The professor, whom Shane described as “very senior tenured,” his lawyer, three faculty members, and a university lawyer also attended. Shane recalled the hearing, “Basically we spent the whole day with people cross-examining me.... [The professor] was afraid of losing his job.... I think his lawyer was an employment lawyer, and the university was worried about being sued...so it was pretty tense.” The professor argued that everything Shane knew about social sciences, “was basically because he taught it to me. So anything I was writing...it was his voice...I was writing his thoughts.” Shane shared all the notes that he had taken in writing the article. Shane understood that, “In academic writing...the person who really writes this stuff, is the person who...gets the authorship.” Shane repeatedly stated at the hearing, “I wrote this. This is my work. I did all the work. I wrote this. These are my words...I was the author of this.” Shane stated, “[the professor] got sanctioned some way. So they did punish him, but he didn’t get fired.”

Through an arduous journey, Shane was given the credit he deserved. Overall, other than the plagiarism incident, Shane greatly enjoyed his doctoral program. Shane shared, “Nothing else about my graduate school experience was really bad...overall it was a really...positive, formative experience for me.” To this day, Shane continues to have “very fond memories” of his doctoral program.

Themes

Set-up

The findings presented as Theme 1, set-up, indirectly respond to the research question: *How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?*

The participants in this study all experienced a series of events that a participant described as a set-up, derived from the participant's description, "setting me up." In the initial phase of the participants' academic socialization process, as part of their doctoral studies, they encountered a series of welcoming gestures that generated positive emotive reactions about the professors. This initial phase is explored further in the first subtheme and is entitled academic euphoria.

At some point during the initial socialization experience, the participants noticed a transition into an awkward and unwelcoming situation with their professors. This phase is described in the second subtheme, state of dysphoria, which reflects how the mentor relationship transitioned away from adulation to concerns and frustration regarding academic interactions.

In the final subtheme, betrayal of trust, plagiarism occurred. Participants expressed feelings of shock and denial because their relationship with a faculty member they trusted at one time was shattered. The betrayal of trust phase occurred when participants realized that they were victims of deception and manipulation. The initial pleasant academic socialization experiences flipped into negative socialization

experiences when participants learned that the relationship with their mentor was based on dishonesty and self-serving motivations.

Academic Euphoria. During this initial phase of the socialization process, the graduate students entered a state of academic euphoria resulting from interest in the subject matter, high level of engagement in learning, as well as extensive affirmation from their professors. The academic euphoria phase lasted from one to two semesters. Not surprising, the state of academic euphoria produced strong emotions in the students. Participants expressed delight that their professors were fascinated with their academic work, and they greatly valued their professors' investment of time and attention. Holding esteem for one or more faculty members, each participant explained why they venerated their faculty members. Below are data to support this finding.

Students enjoyed a positive learning environment. Noteworthy is that two of the participants termed their relationships a "happy family." Happy family meant that students and faculty got along extremely well with each other. Candace, for example, couldn't say anything negative about that first year: "it all appeared to be happy family in the beginning." For Elizabeth, individuals in the lab worked collegially. They'd "have sessions where everybody'd be laughing...it was a rapport in the lab like we were one big happy family." Shane, described thriving on interactions with faculty and staff at a high level of educational rigor. Working in the "amazing" research library, Shane delighted in seeing colleagues and faculty studying in carrels around him. "Incredibly stimulating" "very formative," and "very good" is how Shane described his first year.

The participants depicted the professors as highly engaging and likeable in this academic euphoric state. For example, Candace described her professor as a “cool woman” who felt like a friend. “She was very personal, she was very informal, and she was like that with all her doctoral students.” She got along easily with her professor and found her readily available to students with an open door policy and cellular phone accessibility.

Similarly, Lisa thoroughly enjoyed the interest by one of her faculty members. She worked on an idea for 20 years, so she delighted in finding a like-minded individual: “It was really fun because you actually had somebody that was interested...it was like walking through a garden going, ‘Oh, look at the petunias, look at the roses’...”

Likewise, in the beginning, Elizabeth’s mentor “was warm, caring, a father figure. He couldn’t’ve been nicer....you couldn’t’ve wanted any other mentor after you met him because you felt like this was the person that, that’s really going to take care of you.” He interacted in very friendly and informal ways. Anytime of the day you could go to his office without an appointment. “[H]e made you feel like there were no barriers; that he was always available.” Elizabeth was flattered by her mentor’s complimentary words and thought highly of him. He expressed to her, “he was fortunate that someone with my talent and my background would join his lab and I was going to be a fantastic addition to the lab. And that boosted me up in a way that I felt, wow, this guy really respects me...”

Mike described his admiration of his faculty members because they talked fast, interacted fast, and they were “kind of mesmerizing.” Mike expressed excitement to work with these dynamic, productive individuals. One professor in particular made Mike

“star struck” for the following reasons. Mike was “amazed at how his class was designed.” Mike described the professor as “brilliant,” “had a phenomenal outline for how to teach a class,” and “spoke with eloquence.” Mike was “very impressed” and “somewhat enamored with him.”

Overall, one or more faculty members stood out to the graduate students as a professor(s) who contributed to what they wanted to learn. I have, again, identified this phase as academic euphoria. But, faculty members portrayed in a positive light with complimentary words such as “mesmerizing,” “cool,” or “caring” later plagiarize their student’s work. For four out of the five participants, their esteemed faculty members later plagiarized their work. For clarification, a faculty member plagiarized the work of all students; however, Shane, did not view the faculty member as esteemed. As discussed in the introduction to Shane earlier, the faculty member, who misattributed his work, recruited Shane to the university he attended. Shane expressed excitement to study with him because of their mutual research interests. However, when Shane met the faculty member and got to know him, he did not meet Shane’s expectations. Shane described him as “...a slightly dour kind of person...serious,” Shane further explained:

...as it turned out, there were other people in the department I ended up liking better and... having a better relationship with and actually learning more from...it’s just a little bit of a disappointment that...he wasn’t that great of a teacher...I wouldn’t’ve been able to tell you this at the time but...it was a little bit of a bummer that I didn’t feel more excited about working with him.

Shane is unique from the other participants in that Shane did not view the faculty member who plagiarized his work with the high regard that other participants viewed their faculty members.

State of Dysphoria. In this second phase of the academic socialization process, the graduate students moved to a state of dysphoria because their relationship with their professor resulted in more negative encounters and interactions. Their perceptions of their professors transitioned away from adulation to concerns and frustration regarding academic interactions. In this phase, the participants did not face the actual incident of plagiarism. In the state of dysphoria, they began to create a scholarly commodity, their academic work.

The graduate students describe a turn in the relationship. For instance, one student described it as unusual when her professor told her not to share all her ideas with other dissertation committee members. Another participant articulated how a professor, turned from pleasant interactions to now staring at him from a distance with “very stern looks,” and treating him “weird.” The students no longer viewed their professors as the ideal role models they described in the earlier phase of academic euphoria. As a result, their state of academic euphoria turned into a state of dysphoria.

For four participants, the overt or passive mistreatment caused the state of dysphoria. For example, Candace described her mistreatment when her mentor falsely accused her of plagiarism catching her off guard. Despite Candace denying these charges, the professor imposed informal consequences on her. This involved requiring that Candace work for the professor free of charge over break. Candace explained, “...what I

had to do is come to her office and stamp her books...they have those rubber stamps that you can put in your books...I literally pulled every book off of her shelf and stamped "Property of [professor]..." Candace identified that their relationship changed and she "was scared of her from that moment on.... she was setting me up way back then."

Mike, on the other hand, felt passive mistreatment. His professor suddenly turned from friendly to very cold:

One professor told me that he was completely enamored with what I had developed with my dissertation...he was so excited that he couldn't contain himself and he walked around telling people, 'Did you see what Mike came up with?' But after he thought about it for three or four weeks...that started to change and no more were there smiles directed my way once I got back on the campus and got into my schoolwork...

For Lisa, the turning point in her relationship occurred after her dissertation committee accepted her proposal. Lisa experienced a positive relationship with a committee member outside her department, unique from other participants. Lisa came into her doctoral program with one research class. By the time she made it to writing her dissertation proposal, she had not taken a research methods course at the doctoral level nor had received any training in research ethics or practices at the doctoral level. She completed research courses in her master's program. No research manual or dissertation manual existed at her university that she knew of, and Lisa needed a lot of the assistance in writing her dissertation because she "simply didn't have the background [in research]." As a result, she looked to this committee member for support and assistance,

instead of her Chair. After the committee proposal accepted her proposal, Lisa also experienced passive mistreatment when this committee member told her that she should not share all of the information for her dissertation with the remainder of the committee, including her Chair, which is described below in the dialogue between Lisa and the committee member:

[The committee member] was saying, 'You don't want to tell these people all this research that you're telling me' and I thought, 'Huh?' I mean it never really entered my mind that anybody would be absconding with my information and she instructed, 'Well, you want to keep this out, take this out, don't put this in, don't put that in'...and she was starting to really manage the process more and more.

Lisa began to distrust this faculty member.

For Elizabeth, she experienced multiple victimizations of plagiarism by her professor overseeing her doctoral work. Two occurred in graduate school, and an additional one occurred after she completed graduate school. The first incident involved her professor stealing her idea and that began her state of dysphoria.

All but one participant, Shane, felt a state of dysphoria as a result of a peculiar event or mistreatment, whether the mistreatment was overt or covert. It also represented an erosion in the once positive interactions.

Betrayal of Trust. In this phase, the academic socialization process transformed into hurtful and unkind academic encounters. As a result of the plagiarism, a betrayal of trust occurred. What was believed to be solid trust now fell apart. The participants felt their sense of academic reality undermined. The participants were blindsided and

suffered great pain when their work was plagiarized. None of the participants imagined that a mentor or esteemed professor would ever take their work as their own.

The participants entered their doctoral programs as highly educated individuals. They had previous academic socialization experience at the undergraduate level and at the master's level. Lisa said, "And who would've ever dreamed that anything like that would occur? I sure wouldn't. I mean, I went to some really good schools and never in my wildest imagination imagined that I was involved with the mafia and a whole lotta thugs." Candace felt like a target of the mafia. In addition, Candace expressed, "I didn't know anything about research, and I trusted her to guide me the correct way." Candace shared that she did not feel like she received correct information about research guidelines. Candace further explained:

"...that was part of the job of [professor], who was my mentor to explain that to me...we did learn about IRB information in a later class, but for that early project, [Candace's mentor] was the one that was supposed to teach me...because we needed IRB approval to do my study. So, I learned about through her, and I was misinformed by her..."

Her mentor informed Candace that for her dissertation work to list her mentor as the Principal Investigator, not Candace.

Elizabeth articulated, "I was only starting my research for the first time. I didn't know, I didn't even imagine that a mentor would...or could do this." She confronted her mentor:

How could you do that? That's duplicity. You know this is my project. You know I came into the lab and you know I created this...now you're telling me it's not my project?" He said, "That's right. It's not your project.

Elizabeth knew of no formal research policies at her university regarding faculty-student work. She commented she assumed that work she created was hers.

In a different way, Shane explained that what professors taught him in graduate school contradicted the plagiarism incident:

[T]hese people are supposed to be my role models...are kind of betraying these values...for an institution that holds itself to such a high level, a high standard, this was just so far below its standard...this seems totally contrary to...what I've been taught for the last two and a half years about research and writing...

Mike expressed satisfaction when a professor shared in a class early in Graduate School that his ideas would be safe, and he believed her:

And very soon into the first couple of weeks of my arrival in [name of university] that, that uh promise that...people are here to support you and this was a place where ideas are safe. That was explicated over and over again in a class called ... Doctoral Seminar, where the director of the Doctoral program at the [name of university], who ended up being my major advisor she was the tenured professor...she articulated that over and over again that we were in a safe place and I thought great!

Despite the participants trusting their professors, the professors betrayed their trust when they took their work.

Theme 1, the set-up, with the subthemes are illustrated below in a process approach. As shown, Theme 1 occurred as a process with academic euphoria leading to state of dysphoria and culminating with a betrayal of trust. This theme occurred before the participants reported the plagiarism incident. I will build on themes in the below figure to completion at the end of this Chapter.

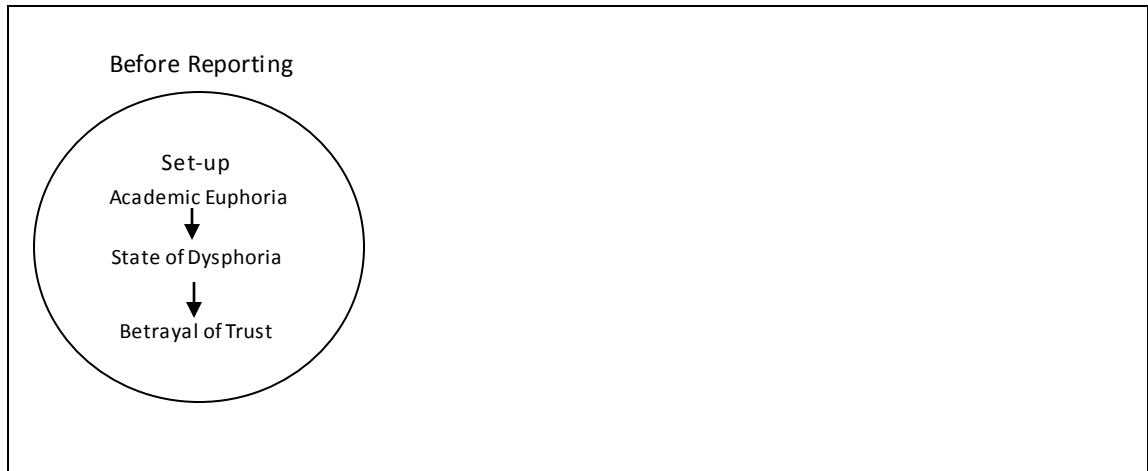


Figure 2. Theme 1 With Subthemes in a Process Approach.

Making the Decision

The findings in Theme 2, making the decision, address the second research question: “How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor?”

As the participants assessed the risks and benefits in reporting, they contemplated the cost of reporting. They devoted years of study and financial costs to secure this degree. So, the participants’ reporting took great risk, but the benefit could involve the university issuing credit for their work. Four out of the five participants talked about the potential damage if they decided to report the plagiarism. *Making the decision* includes

the participants sorting out if they wished to risk reporting the plagiarism. Making the decision includes two subthemes: supports and threats. Supports addresses the positive supports that impacted the decision making of the participants in deciding to report. Supports included: faith in God and counsel of trusted individuals. Ultimately, the graduate students determined that the benefits outweighed the costs in reporting after they conversed with trusted individuals including a therapist, a friend, and other professors. These people played a key role in helping participants to come forward. Threats represent the risks raised in reporting: 1) not securing a recommendation letter for a scholarship, 2) removal from school; 3) not receiving their PhD's, and 4) even a death threat that occurred when a participant stated he would report the plagiarism.

Supports. Through the encouragement of one of Candace's dissertation sponsors, she came forward, and he supported her through the whole long process. In 2013 after many years of engagement in this concern, the process ended. Shane sought out advice from a friend who had an academic career to assess if maybe he experienced normalcy:

[A] couple friends I had at Ivory University and there's actually a young professor there who, I asked, 'Is this normal? Like, does this happen?' and she said, 'No way!' and she, she actually is the daughter of another very, very prominent person in the field so, I respected her opinion because she had lived her whole life in academia.

When Shane reported the second time, he did not consult a trusted person for advice; rather, he did not want to feel angry anymore for not receiving credit for his work:

I just was like I'm sitting here, I'm spending way too much time being mad about this and feeling ...wronged that I need to, I need to do something about this. And so...I wrote a letter to the president of the university...that kinda described the whole incident and I said...I'm so disappointed that this place handled this matter this way...it's below the standard I hold for myself, and I hold for this place. And I just want, really, I think I literally said, 'I just wanted you to know about this. I wanted to get it off my chest...' I was the author, and I also remember feeling like I've actually participated in this academic fraud by agreeing to this thing saying, 'I'm the co-author.'

One might think getting the proper attribution would bring peace, but rather reporting without even knowing what's going to happen brought Shane a "sense of peace." Shane felt like he had done the right thing.

For Elizabeth, at first she impulsively responded to the acts of plagiarism. She voiced that she had "no thinking process in reporting, "I was just impulsively outraged..." Later, she sought out a therapist to help her navigate through the long process. As shared earlier, she had her PhD on the line. Elizabeth described the therapist as "brilliant." She stated, "God blessed me with this therapist because he really did walk me through all the steps....and gave me the courage and support to go through with what

I needed to do.” Her therapist helped her strategize. She describes that her work with the therapist was like working in a war room:

...like World War II and Eisenhower has the maps out and he'd say to his generals we're going to move here and...that's how it was with me and this therapist. It was like we had a map. Now we go step by step...Here's what you got to do next. Here's what you got to do after that, and here's what you got to do after that. Because every single maneuver was so delicate that any one wrong maneuver I could've blown myself up. So, this guy was brilliant, and he gave me a lot of support to work my way through it as a real strategist instead of just becoming emotional. Because becoming emotional gets you nowhere. You have to be a strategist...

Mike explained how his spiritual relationship guided him in his reaction to acts of plagiarism. As Mike described, "...so I knew that I was supposed to fight for the truth and stand up and that God had given me a heart of courage and therefore there was no question that I was doing the right thing." Ultimately, Mike's relationship with God helped him decide to report the plagiarism.

The participants secured input from a friend, a therapist, or professors. Two of the participants reported the plagiarism more than once. Those two participants asserted that their impulsivity or anger drove them to report. In those instances, they did not consult anyone.

Participants' worries of not receiving their degree became a reality for two of the five participants. One of those participants, Lisa, completed her academic work at

another university, receiving her doctoral degree. Mike never received a doctoral degree. The other three participants, Candace, Elizabeth, and Shane received their doctoral degrees. Additionally, for those participants who received their degrees, reporting did not have a harmful impact on their professional career. In Figure 3, Theme 2, is added to the process. The next theme addresses what occurred after they reported.

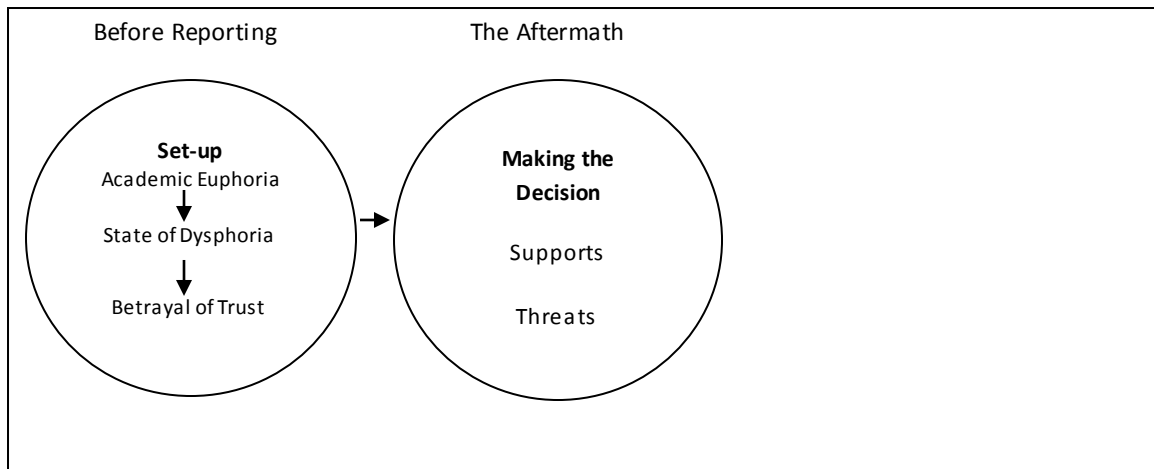


Figure 3. Themes 1 and 2 With Subthemes in a Process Approach.

Threats. An example of threats came from Shane, who strategized to receive credit for his work, but he knew he was extremely vulnerable. “I was just thinking... [the professor’s] really going to screw me. He totally has the power to screw me ten different ways.” Shane waited until after he received a recommendation letter before he confronted his professor. Shane explained, “I was in my third year, applying for an [esteemed] scholarship, and needed the professor for recommendations, so I had to keep a good relationship with him...” Even afterwards, this participant worried that the professor who plagiarized his work would contact the esteemed scholarship committee to talk badly about him and damage his chances of getting the scholarship. Beyond having a recommendation letter at stake, he had a career on the line. He explained, “It’s very

positional...it has a lot to do with your position versus the other person's position and, your dependence on that person for...career advancement and everything else.”

Years later in graduate school, Shane reported the plagiarism again because he didn't secure justice the first time it was reported. Additionally, by that time, he changed his mind from wanting to work in academia to working outside of academia, so he didn't feel like he had as much on the line, “I didn't need them [the university] as much. And the other thing...I also felt like I didn't have that much to lose...I'm not trying to get the academic job anyways, so I don't have to worry about him being out there trashing me.” Shane's experiences led him to the conclusion that the benefits outweighed the costs in reporting.

Elizabeth shared her experience, “[I]f a student had a grievance, they never spoke up about it 'cause they knew that if they did, they could possibly risk losing the ability to finish their PhD's.” Elizabeth expressed how much she risked in reporting the plagiarism, “...to stand up to this guy and go to the dean and go to the chairman...I was putting myself in jeopardy because they could've easily come up with some reason to throw me out of there. Which they do.”

Before she decided to work with the professor who plagiarized her work, she interviewed five or six students who “all had raving, glowing reports about him.” Elizabeth went back to those people in disbelief:

You told me he was this and that and the other thing and look, he's a lunatic! And they said, ‘Well...we were terrified to say it because we didn't want it getting back to him’ (scoffs). People run around scared of their shadows for good reasons

because the repercussions are huge...one wrong move and your career's destroyed.

Despite others' fears, Elizabeth determined the benefits outweighed the risks in reporting

A third example of threats comes from Candace, who graduated the following year and expressed her vulnerability in reporting plagiarism by stating, "I felt extremely vulnerable because I was in the process of working on my dissertation." She went on to explain, "I was afraid because I knew the professor had power... I'm scared. I don't want to be part of this lawsuit because I want to graduate." Her intentions in reporting were altruistic. "...I feel like I gave myself for future generations really so somebody, so other people don't have to deal with her..." Candace resolved to protect future students from plagiarism, which led her to report.

Mike visited with the Graduate Program Director to ascertain if he should report the plagiarism. She made it very clear that there would be strong consequences—even to the point of threatening to kill his future children. As Mike explained:

[T]here were people and she couldn't say who and she didn't know who...who would make sure if I reported this that not only would my life be continually disrupted, I would regret it forever. Even if I were to have a family someday, that my children, I would find that my children were unable to keep their lives...

As described, the participants came forward at great risk to themselves and all were aware of the cost to report prior to reporting. None of the participants perceived that they had power, so reporting was a risk. The stress of this situation is clear in the many

quotes provided above. Clearly, the power imbalance in relationships played a factor in reporting acts of plagiarism.

Jumping Hurdles

The findings from Theme 3, jumping hurdles, are responsive to the research question: *How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?*

The graduate students jumped inside and outside of university hurdles to attempt to get credit for their scholarly work. The individuals in positions of authority, to whom the participants reported to, did not respond in assuring academic sanctions occurred. The first subtheme, inside university captures the hardships participants experienced within the university. First, for two of the participants, university faculty and administrators, turned the graduate students away when they attempted to report. Second, after formally reporting, all of the participants experienced not receiving support. Below is specific information regarding outcomes of reporting plagiarism (see Table 4). When participants did not receive credit for work within the university, they jumped hurdles outside the university, which is addressed in the second subtheme, outside university.

Table 4. Outcomes of Reporting Plagiarism.

Participant	Received credit	Notes
Candace	Yes	
Lisa	No	

Table 4. cont.

Participant	Received credit	Notes
Elizabeth	No	Despite not receiving credit, university dismissed the professor but not for plagiarism.
Mike	No	
Shane	Yes	At first report, Shane received partial credit but upon additional reporting, he received full credit.

Inside University. Lisa reported the plagiarism to university officials and was “put on a three year merry go round to try and get it [dissertation] back from a post defense state where edits were completed.” Lisa described, “So she [the professor] took all my research, and I complained to the school and my death sentence was complete at the University. There was NO way I was getting out of there alive (pause) with my research.” It is important to note that one professor at the university attempted to help her. Lisa explained, “there was one professor who stood by me and lost his job in the process for really nothing other than to be a decent human being and an ethical player that was punished as such.” Lisa stated that not all universities have corrupt practices to address plagiarism. But she pointed out that schools often do not play by the rules, “So, everybody can say ‘Well, it isn’t me that’s being affected right now’...but that’s like

Nazi Germany saying ‘...they’re only killing the Belgians, so we’re not going to worry about it.’ Same diff.”

Similarly, Elizabeth attempted to report her first incident of plagiarism to various individuals including the Chair of the department, other departmental faculty, “the Head of Academic Affairs for the President,” as well as her university’s legal counsel, but all of them declined to get involved. First, she went to the Chair. She specified that he was “kind of a quiet little guy and he, he was kind of not somebody that would be involved, wanted to be involved in anything controversial.” Next, she sought help from other departmental faculty, but they declined to get involved. She eventually reported the plagiarism to the university attorney who advised, “Well, why don’t you write up what it is that you created and I’ll see what I can do.” The participant followed her direction, but the university lawyer did not do anything with the information to her knowledge.

Later in her doctoral education program and after she defended her dissertation, this participant attended a symposium, only to meet her thesis advisor with his name attached to her dissertation work on a poster. Once again, she asked university officials for help, but the university did not view plagiarism in a poster as something worthy to report. Elizabeth explained:

[T]hey didn’t do anything because they, they didn’t think a poster at a meeting was a big deal. They didn’t see it as a major theft....the way they looked at it was, hey, we were there. We got you a committee. You got your PhD. Kind of like, now leave us alone....They didn’t care about the fact that I had a piece of academic work that deserved credit. They could care less about that.

Likewise, Shane reported the professor's plagiarism in his situation. Shane went to a university administrator, whom he thought was a Dean, and was also the co-editor of the journal in which Shane's work had been plagiarized. It began with Shane meeting that Dean in "this little secret hideaway office in the library" where Shane shared with him how his advisor had published his work in a journal. The Dean listened to him and then dismissed him by responding, "Okay, I'll go talk to the [professor who took his work] about it." It felt to Shane like he really said, "...I don't really believe you. I'm going to talk to my colleague about this and we'll figure it out..." The Dean never asked Shane to prove his allegation; rather, the Dean came up with a "quiet little solution to this problem" which was for Shane to be listed as a co-author on the publication. No one ever shared with him that the university had a formal procedure for him to make an allegation. Shane said the university treated the whole process as very "hush-hush," and it felt like the "grownups made the decision." Because Shane only received partial credit for his work, he shared feelings of anger:

I remember feeling just this deep sense of anger...this is just not fair....It's just not fair that they're in such a position of authority and power that they can kinda impose this kind of solution on me, and I kinda had to shut my mouth and take it.

Unlike Shane, Candace did not desire to report; instead, university administration sought her out to come forward. University administration advised Candace not to speak with anyone about the university investigation, and following orders, told no one. Not having an option to talk with anyone in her support systems about the investigation, resulted in feeling of isolation. "I just felt like I was carrying this secret that people knew

about but nobody did anything to help me with it, and I didn't feel like I could do anything either." Candace found problems in the entire reporting process.

Even though it appears that the university helped Candace by assuring issuance of credit for her work, Candace actually felt "used by the university." Candace wanted to take her plagiarized work as a loss and move on. However, despite Candace's desire not to get involved in any accusations against the professor, she helped build the case for the university's dismissal of the professor because of her compelling evidence. She explained, "...I don't feel like I was ever really acknowledged by the university to this day."

Despite Mike's reporting of the plagiarism to various entities, he felt extremely disappointed that no one helped him receive credit for his work and in the lack of ethics at his university. Going into doctoral education opened his eyes:

It was, (exhales) it was an eye opener...What things were supposed to be at a higher level [academia]. And, then our country, and the complacency people have about wickedness. I don't think anybody does care. You do. I don't think people care. I think that for the most part, Kim, people care about having a bigger garage than their neighbor.... They're not going to fight for that graduate student that has been treated rapaciously.

Not only did Mike feel disappointment with the university officials, because they did not help him, he described his loss of faith in the ability of university officials to care and realized that no one would advocate for him. After he reported, about eight weeks later,

he received no credit for his work, and the university no longer listed him as a student. As a result, Mike feels despondent that he never received credit for the hard work.

Outside University. Three of the five participants jumped hurdles outside of the university when they did not receive credit for their work. It is interesting to note that to this day these three participants have never received credit. One of the participants continues in efforts to obtain credit.

After Lisa did not receive help from university officials, she pursued many other venues including the courts, the Higher Learning Commission, and the Office of the Inspector General, but one office referred her to another office creating a bureaucratic nightmare. Her trust in administrative officials and entities doing the right thing diminished. She stated:

And then I have the Higher Learning Commission saying ‘Well, since you sued, we aren’t going to deal with that.’ And then I went to the Ombudsmen who said ‘Well, the school is saying this’ never mind the fact that...a good portion of it is incorrect ‘and so we’re done and we’re closing your file.’ And then you...go to the Office of the Inspector General and they say ‘Well, we’re not going to deal with this. We’re going to refer you here.’ And then you go there and they refer you somewhere else...

When university officials did not assist Elizabeth, she sought out opinions from numerous attorneys outside of the university, but she could not afford litigation as a graduate student. Attorneys warned Elizabeth “that the university coffers were so large that the university would litigate me into bankruptcy.” Since that time, even very

recently, she asked the university for assistance, but the university dismissed her. She keeps trying. Likewise, recently, she sought assistance from a federal agency associated with her work but gets nowhere. In the past, she lobbied Congress too.

Mike went to the court when he did not receive credit. While the court heard his case, he yet again did not receive credit. Years later, the court's secretary called his wife because Mike left documents in the court building. The secretary, who spent many years in the court system, and observed the entire trial process, "...confided in her that in all of her years, twenty-something years in [court system], she had seen some very negative things [but] that my court case was the saddest one that she had ever been part of." At the end of the day, Mike did not express regret in reporting because at least he fought for his dream, and at least he got to hear the professors state that the ideas they took were actually Mike's:

I always wanted to publish with other people and, and collaborate but that dream was definitely being destroyed and had I not fought it, in that case I would've been letting them steal my dreams and destroy it and some good came out of it because in the court case, at least on the stand they ended up having to admit, 'Yea, these were his ideas and we didn't have anything to do with them.'

If he could turn back the clock, Mike would accept the fellowship offer he received from another prominent university. By the time Mike received the offer, he had already agreed to go to the university he attended.

Despite the impact, whether they received their PhD degrees or not, if they could do it over again, all of the participants would report to this day. Even though the

university did not award Lisa her PhD, she explained that she got to keep her “personal integrity.” All of the participants experienced *jumping hurdles*, but the theme manifested in different forms. By simply washing their hands of taking a report, or not adequately supporting, or denying credit for the graduate students’ work, university officials and others did not help even to the point of one participant feeling “used by the university.” Figure 4 adds the theme, jumping hurdles, with the earlier themes and subthemes.

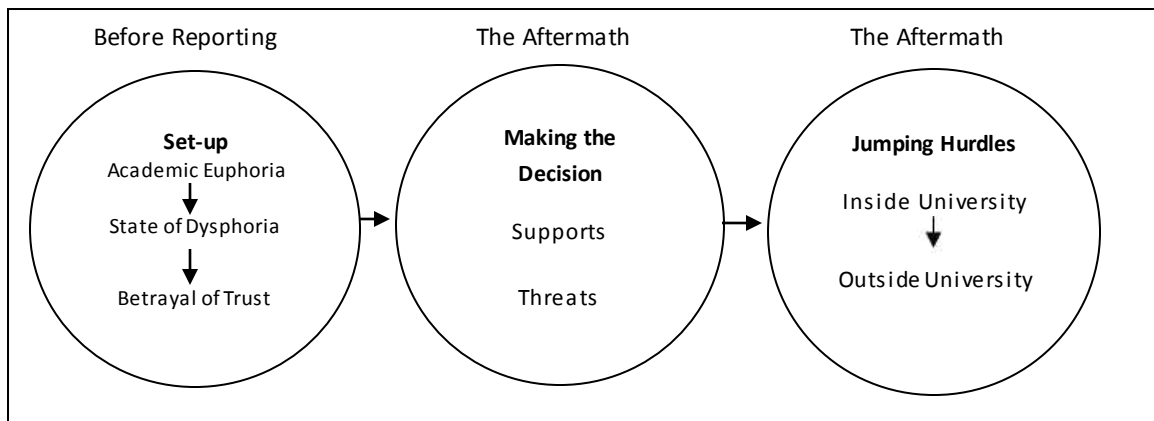


Figure 4. Themes 1 Through 3 With Subthemes in a Process Approach.

Identity Shift

The findings of Theme 4, identity shift, indirectly respond to the research question: *How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?*

The self-identity of the graduate students shifted as the events unfolded regarding the professor’s misattribution activity and the university’s response to reports of ethical breaches. Early in graduate school, the participants’ professional and personal identities were inextricably linked with their aspirations to secure a PhD. Their identities shifted

from enthusiasm and investment in higher education to students who experienced an academic socialization process with parallels that participants described as an abusive relationship that resulted in lasting negative feelings. This theme explores how participants' identities shifted and how the participants compared their experiences to an abusive relationship. It contains two subthemes: 1) "*Survivor*" which is what a participant called herself for what she endured and 2) *guarded behaviors* to accommodate past experiences. These subthemes describe the effects on the participants as a result of someone in a position of power plagiarizing their academic work. In this theme, it appears almost as if the professors recruited others into the mistreatment of the students. Whether purposively or not, students, faculty, and administrators also mistreated the students, which will become clear in the following excerpts.

Candace painfully described feeling, "like an abused child," as if she was in something "like an abusive relationship." Similarly, Elizabeth compared her encounter with the professor to a "bad relationship:"

...it's kind of like the same thing when friends of mine have been in bad relationships and they've broken up. When they first met the guy, they thought he was great, and he was so sweet and so nice and kind and generous and all that, and then a year or two later, they find out he's like a monster. So, sometimes there's a smoking gun and until a certain situation happens, the true colors don't present themselves...

Lisa described her situation as "traumatic." Lisa emphasized that a student enrolled in a for-profit university creates a greater risk for plagiarism than a campus-

based university because the online environment creates “isolation which helps an instructor abuse the student and play both sides of the fence with administration and other faculty.” The incident made her “ill.” She worried that people would not believe what happened to her. She even had legislators who responded, “Well, what did you give her your research for?” and I thought, Are you really that ridiculously insensitive and ignorant?” As Lisa feared, many did not believe her.

Likewise, Mike also described his experiences traumatic. He shared, “my dad used the expression that I, that I’d been mentally raped and I, I can’t, I, there aren’t words to describe it.” Consequently, he states he feels like he “can definitely relate, or at least sympathize with people that have to deal with the history of assault or something that’s happened to them, just the loneliness of really not being able to share the experience with somebody it is, (exhales) substantial.”

For Candace, “three weeks before graduation she received a threatening letter from [her professor] denying that she did anything.” Candace described being afraid to attend commencement to receive her PhD. One of Candace’s dissertation sponsors supported her and attended commencement to support her. The professor that sent the letter, thankfully, did not attend.

For Elizabeth, an example of how the professor who plagiarized her work showed an abuse of power occurred at Elizabeth’s orals close to the completion of her PhD. He ranted to the committee members:

‘I’m not gonna let you do this! I’m not letting her get her PhD! You’re not taking my power away! She’s not allowed to get her PhD! I control it! You don’t control

it! And I don't know about this data and I'm not approving this data and I'm not, I'm, I want this meeting now to end!' Screaming and ranting and raving at them that the committee members were terrified.Ranting, cursing, screaming, pounding on the table, threatening them..

Her professor abused his power towards her in other ways as well. He would leave notes on her desk "using four letter words...nasty, nasty letters, nasty notes." Additionally, he completely caught her off guard when he called her into his office and asked Elizabeth:

Why are you coming in at 10 a.m.? Everyone else is here at 9." And I said, "Well, that's because I'm here 'til midnight and I need to sleep and unwind a little bit."

And he said, "Well, I know why you're coming in at 10 a.m. That's 'cause you're busy staying home all night, all morning fucking all your boyfriends.

The professor showed violent behaviors towards Elizabeth. After, Elizabeth talked with the Dean about problems she experienced, the professor became very upset that she had gone to the Dean, so when he saw her next, he threw a power supply at her head. Elizabeth describes what happened:

And I ducked so [the power supply] didn't hit me, but I called security in and they were so intimidated by him. He screamed at the security guards to get out. It's none of their business and the security guard left me alone in the lab with this guy after he was acting violent. I mean, the university just had no administrative policies, or whatever you want to call it, in place to protect students from this kind of craziness.

Elizabeth endured a lot of abuse. Finally, Elizabeth describes feeling like:

a prisoner in a terrorist situation and you wanted to get your degree so you had to (short pause) you had to basically accept what the uh, prison guard was deal-dishin' out to you if you wanted to finish. And then, you wonder where's the limit?

Likewise, power and control evidenced itself with Mike's professor. The professor had a close relationship with a couple of graduate students who at the professor's direction harassed Mike. Mike experienced their harassment in a variety of ways. He described, "kind of an abusive culture where the one student would be on the phone to the [professor]...and they'd be talking about me in the third person and what ideas I'd come up with and where my dissertation was..." In another way, one student, "would walk by and knock my papers off on the floor and uh, keep going. And another student would walk by and say, 'What're you gonna do about it?'" For Mike, the entire experience was a "nightmare":

I couldn't believe it. It was, it was a nightmare...I cannot describe that hysterical nightmare. I don't know if it's possible for a human to have a nightmare with the depth of despair that I felt driving out of.. I couldn't process and function.

To date, occasionally, Candace sees a job at the university that she would like to apply for, but it "doesn't go beyond that" because she never wants to go back into that academic work culture. Many times, Candace will pass by her alma mater but doesn't care to go in. Candace stumbled over her words as she explained her ongoing unhappiness with the situation:

But, there's something in me that won't allow me to go back in again. Really, yea. Because, uhh, I, it's, it's still, it's, I, still don't feel happy about the whole situation. Like, okay, yea we won! But I don't feel happy about it. I, I don't. I don't feel happy about any, any of it. Really. I just want it to be washed from my existence, but it really is not.

The participants endured an academic socialization process that was or was similar to an abusive relationship as they felt the abuse of the professor's power and control over them while existing in the vulnerable position of a graduate student.

Survivors. As just discussed, four out of the five participants expressed feeling like they endured abuse or trauma, and as a result of going through abuse or trauma in the words of a participants, they are described as *Survivors*. For all four of the participants who stated that they felt abuse or trauma, they suggest the effects have been long-term.

Candace reiterated that she endured "a form of abuse. It really is and so you always have those feelings. I mean, you move on. You live on. But it reminds me of that and it reminds me of being abused." A "survivor" is how Candace referred to herself because of what she experienced in graduate school. Candace reflected, "I may have sacrificed a little bit too much of myself trying to get the dream. But as I said, in the end it turned out to be okay and I'm fine."

Lisa described the effects as "long standing." She's gone through a process of making sense of her situation, and the plagiarism incident has become a part of her:

It has become who I am. Took a while to embrace it though (laugh). It really did.

'Cause ...you go through a lot of feelings. I mean you go through the 'Oh, I'm a

failure!’ and ‘Oh, the shame of it!’ and the ‘Oh, what will people think?’ and ‘Oh my gosh! I’m stupid!’...You have to go through all that process until you finally go, ‘...I’m no, I’m, I’m no less than anybody else’s attempt at this process.’

As Lisa is about to send one of her children to college, she does not view college in the same light. She worries about them being “indoctrinated” and “taken advantage of.” As a result of what Lisa experienced, her perspectives have changed.

Elizabeth changed as a person forever in her ability to trust others, “no, you can’t trust anybody (scoffs). You can’t.” Because Elizabeth reported to an outside entity, Elizabeth experienced retaliation after she graduated, as the university threatened to retract her PhD. Elizabeth used to describe herself as a “very friendly, open, trusting person.” After this occurred, she described herself as:

I became much more...distrustful and if someone presented themselves to me as a caring, open, kind person, I started looking at them and saying “Is there a dark side?” because look what happened to me with this. So, so in other words, my ability to trust for the rest of my life was completely compromised because I, no matter how someone came across in their initial presentation, I always said to myself, ‘You can’t trust anybody’ because look what happened.

Many years later, Elizabeth feels harm as she exclaimed, “I’m sick of it! I mean, I can’t tell you how harmed I am by this.” Elizabeth was unable to obtain letters of reference for postdocs. She explained:

...he knew I had reported him to higher authorities within the university, and I knew he would take revenge upon me if I gave him the power to write letters of

reference. At first job interviews for postdocs after my PhD. I was also put in an awkward position of having to describe why I had not published my dissertation research in a peer-reviewed journal. Very humiliating and embarrassing as I had to explain that it was plagiarized by my mentor.

To this day, she is not receiving credit for work she completed. The paper she wrote went viral, and reputable labs today cite the work she created. Elizabeth explained, “I’m still fighting. I’m not letting this one go...”

Mike also described the plagiarism incident as affecting his family forever. “This has hurt us forever.” Mike articulated, “The heaviness is having to live with everything that happened.” For years after, the university that Mike attended sent alumni request mail to his parents, “harassing” them. His mother “would call in tears and tell them to stop and they would keep sending it.” Mike has changed as a person as well, “...I’ve lost all faith in anything that we could be proud of as Americans...And the only thing that, the only entity that’s ever been there for help, now or in ages past, is God. Everything else is an idol.”

When it’s time for Mike to send one of his children to graduate school, Mike explained that he would ensure that his family looked “capable and ready to finance the fight if it was necessary, and I would have an attorney friend with us to also make the rounds and meet the faculty...” He describes how he is preparing for a battle. “There’s no way I’d let them go to graduate school without being physically present in a show of strength...” It almost seems as if this time around, Mike is going to be the aggressor from the beginning, that he will hold the power instead of giving it to the professor.

It seems like Mike is still trying to figure why he had to experience the awful events when he said, “I think that I was supposed to learn these lessons for some reason.” Yet, it seems like he made some sense of the abuse(s) by sharing that his family is in a good place now:

[W]e have a beautiful house. It’s way more than I would’ve expected and...we’re strong in the Lord and our priorities and we love to help people in any way that we can and uh, we have some protections and uh, I, I think we have a lot of truths that a lot of people don’t have...

The participants survived a negative academic socialization process almost like or as an abusive relationship and are forever changed.

Guarded behaviors. The participants demonstrate guarded behaviors. Very specifically, three of the five participants shared a solution regarding how to prevent plagiarism of student work. This includes not being collaborative with ideas until they are no longer a student but rather are in a position of power. Their words of caution are to follow. Lisa advises graduate students, “So don’t do anything good. That’s...the rule! That’s what we learn here in the United States of America. Do not excel! You will be punished.” Elizabeth similarly warned, “If you have some absolutely brilliant idea or discovery that you’ve made in the lab that could end up being grant money and publications...(pause then responds in smaller tone) don’t share it with anybody until you get your own lab.” Lastly, Mike cautioned:

If there is a really, really big groundbreaking theory, a graduate student needs to keep it to themselves and whether or not they can complete their dissertation, they

can at least keep that in their back pocket to go to a different school sometime and, and try again but NEVER should they EVER reveal any discoveries that, that do occur while they're working on their Doctorate. They need to find something small, kinda fly under the radar and hide in the crowd a little bit...

This advice would have obvious impacts on academic culture, if it becomes more far reaching.

As the “negative case” in this theme, Shane did not use any strong words or descriptors of abuse or trauma as the other participants communicated. In fact, overall, other than the plagiarism incident, he greatly enjoyed his doctoral program. Shane shared:

...nothing else about my graduate school experience was really bad...it was a great privilege to work around and with so many smart people and to be in such a place, that's just such a generally intellectually stimulating place. And I got to go spend...time abroad doing research which was really fun...overall it was a really...positive, formative experience for me.

To this day, Shane continues to have “very fond memories” of his doctoral program.

Within the identity shift theme, four out of the five participants described feeling abuse or trauma. As a result of going through what they felt as abuse or trauma, the subtheme is called *Survivors* as one participant characterized herself. All four of the participants who described having experienced abuse or trauma have enduring effects. The subtheme *guarded behaviors* contained participants' admonitions regarding on how

to avoid having work plagiarized by professors. Figure 5 adds on to the earlier display of themes in a process approach.

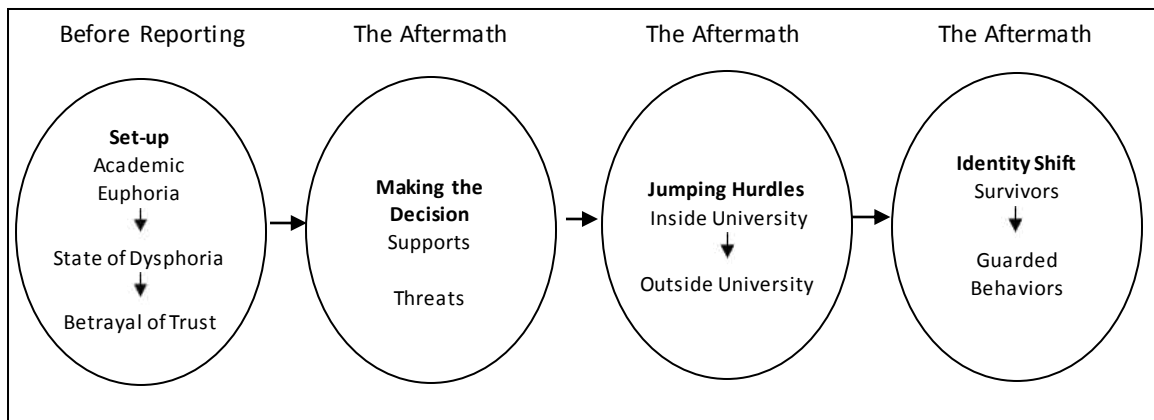


Figure 5. Themes 1 Through 4 With Subthemes in a Process Approach.

Findings to the Research Questions

I will now review the findings for each research question. To begin, I will address the first research question, “How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?” To answer this question, I break down this question into two parts: 1) academic socialization process, and 2) power dynamics. First, the experiences of graduate students with the academic socialization process is noted in Theme 1, set-up, and Theme 4, identity shift. There is an intermingling among themes, and that appears to occur in the socialization process. Initially, the graduate students experienced socialization in a positive way. The participants encountered a series of welcoming gestures that generated positive emotive reactions about the professors, who served as mentors. From the perspective of the participants, the outward

expressions of the professors built an academic community showing a clear investment in the students.

After some point during the initial socialization experience, the participants noticed a transition into an awkward and unwelcoming circumstance. The mentor relationship from the perspective of the participants transitioned from adulation to concerns and frustration regarding academic interactions. Participants felt shock and denial as their relationships with faculty members shattered. These encounters revealed perceived deception and manipulation. The participants turned from pleasant socialization to loathsome socialization encounters.

Research Proposition I: Initial positive socialization experiences masked the reported dishonesty, which led to the graduate students' lack of trust in their professors.

Power dynamics are evident in the jumping hurdles theme. At this point, the graduate students sought help from individuals in positions of authority as they formally reported. Unfortunately, yet again, the participants suffered from those in positions of authority failing to use power. For two of the participants, they were literally turned away by university officials as they attempted to report initially. Likewise, another participant experienced a university administrator not following university policy as the university attempted to sweep the situation under the rug instead of informing people of the formal procedures to bring concerns forward. In another way, some of the participants experienced university administrators not using their position of power to help them receive credit for their work or support them through the formal reporting

proceedings. As Candace described, she felt “used by the university.” It appears that university officials re-victimized the students as they went through the reporting process.

Research Proposition II: Individuals in position of authority to whom the graduate students formally reported the misattribution of their work failed to act in manner that satisfactorily resolved the matter for the graduate student.

In the identity shift theme, a deeper look is provided into how the professors treated the participants in the socialization process and how the socialization process changed from the beginning to the end. Here the themes of set-up and identity shift intermingle. Within identity shift, the participants compared their experiences with the professor to an abusive relationship. Like an abusive relationship, the professor expressed kindness in the beginning and then switched. The participants experienced power dynamics in the Identify Shift theme. The participants reported feeling abuse from the exercise of the professor’s power and control over them while in the vulnerable position of graduate students. As a result of participants reporting experiencing abuse or trauma, the participants are *Survivors*. For all four of the participants who described abuse or trauma, they suggested the effects are long-term.

Research Proposition III: The self-identity of the graduate students shifted as the events unfolded regarding the professor’s misattribution activity and the university’s response to reports of ethical breaches.

The common denominator in the set-up theme and the identity shift theme is the theft of the graduate students’ work, the academic commodity. Without the academic commodity, the set-up and identity shift likely would not have occurred.

Next, I will address the second research question, “How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor?” In the second theme (making the decision), all of the participants assessed the risks in determining if they should report, and while doing so, they contemplated if reporting was worth the risk. Years of study were poured into securing this degree. Four out of the five participants described how much was on the line for them if they decided to report the plagiarism including not receiving a recommendation letter for a scholarship or even worse, getting kicked out of school or not receiving their PhD’s. Even harsher, a Graduate Program Director relayed a death threat made against one of the participant’s future children. A variety of influences impacted the decision making of the participants in deciding to report and came in the form of supports and threats. Ultimately, the graduate students who participated in this study determined that it was worth the risk to report with the support of trusted individuals.

Research Proposition IV: Advisement from trusted individuals can play a key role in assisting graduate students navigate power dynamics with professors and process the decision-making efforts of whether it is worth the risk to report the academic violation.

Figure 6 builds on the previous figure with the addition of the research propositions.

Summary

The preceding sections present a total of four themes and nine subthemes that describe the nature of experiences of graduate students who reported that their professor plagiarized their work. Reading all of the participants’ experiences, one might infer

changes that could be made in higher education to prevent and address plagiarism.

Recommendations for changes to higher education will be discussed in Chapter V. The

next chapter explores a discussion of the study's findings and implications.

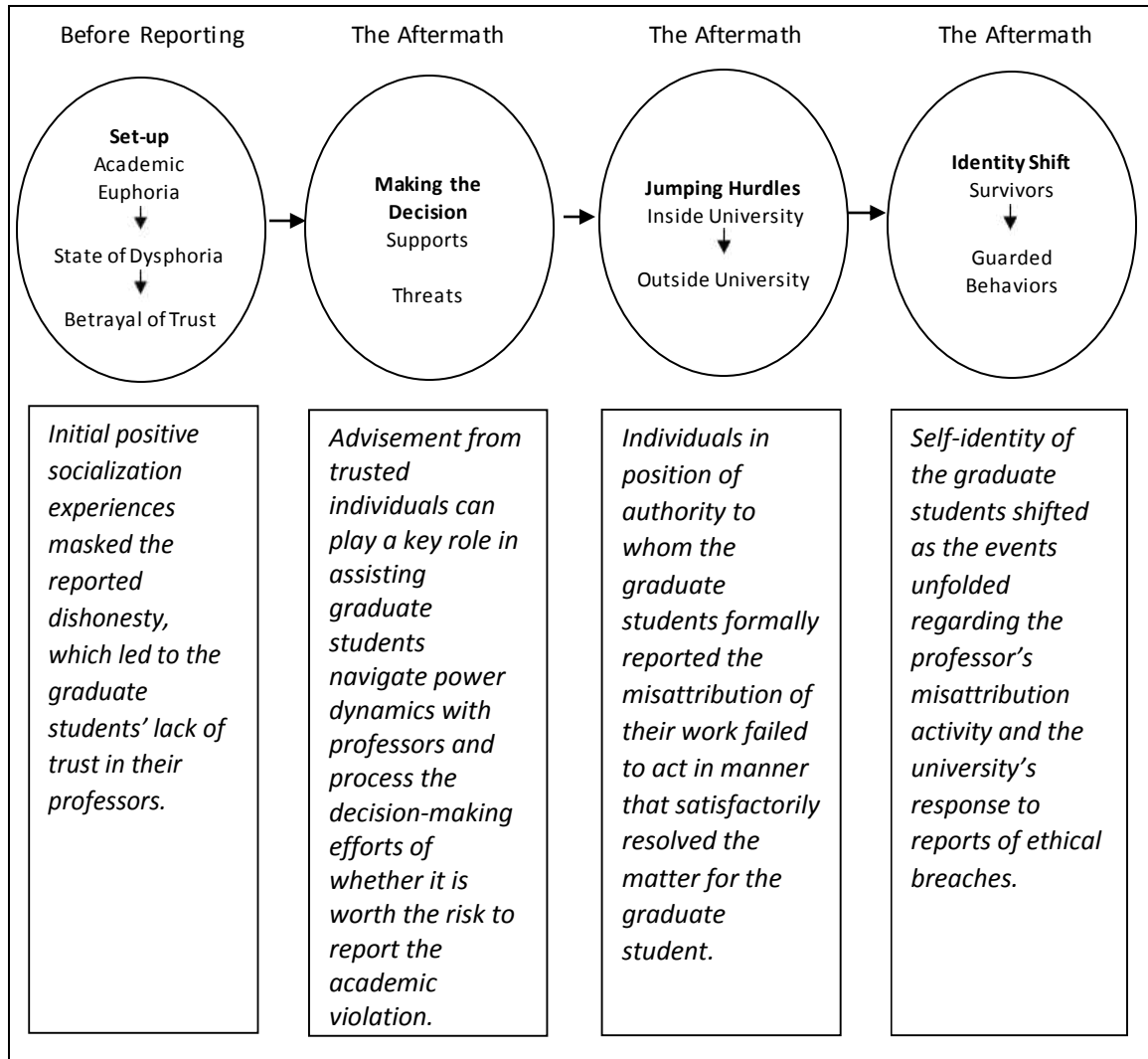


Figure 6. Themes 1 Through 4 in a Process Approach with Research Propositions.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I interpret my research findings, identify implications based on my interpretations, offer reflections, consider this study's limitations, recommend areas for future study, and present conclusions. To begin, recall the study's purpose is to expand the inquiry on academic misconduct by investigating the experiences of graduate students who have reported that a professor misattributed their work. Phenomenology captures the lived experiences of individuals who encounter and move through a journey representing the phenomenon of interest. For this study, the phenomenon of interest is graduate students whose professors have misattributed their work. For this study, I employed a specific approach to phenomenology: interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA offers rich data because it gives authority to the participants to craft their interpretive understanding of events, incidents, messages, and other encountered symbols. IPA constructs understandings of phenomenological experiences by focusing on the individual participants and their perceptions of events. IPA emphasizes sense-making by both the participants and the researcher. In this chapter, I connect my interpretations and the participants' interpretations of the phenomenon to the literature on the subject of academic misconduct, which I presented in Chapter II.

The conceptual framework, as described in Chapter I, focused on the process of socialization using a critical lens of power analysis. In this study, I illuminated how graduate students experience those concepts in relation to the phenomenon of professors misattributing student works. When examining the findings against the conceptual framework used in this study, this study highlights four conceptual contributions that were not presented in the literature particularly through Weidman's framework. To recap, Weidman showed that students progress through the socialization process with preconceived ideas of what graduate school will be like, then become an "apprentice" of professors where they learn course material and accept normative expectations. Next, the students come to understand informal, flexible roles and ultimately form a professional identity. However, Weidman's model did not address faculty misuse of power and how that impacts the student in the socialization process, which my study identified.

First, I identified a missing concept from the existing literature about the academic socialization process, which is the experience of graduate students who have had faculty members' use their power in a deceptive way. This use of power was different from our current understanding of the ethical research mentor role that a faculty member plays in the academic research socialization process. The participants in this study experienced a deceptive academic socialization process. The participants initially experienced a positive relationship with their faculty members; however, after this initial period, the faculty members took their work and passed it off as their own. Consequently, the students were deceived by their faculty members.

My second conceptual contribution was in noting a rare outcome of the academic-socialization process. Specifically, the participants provided additional insight into how self-identity transformed during the academic socialization process. They felt like they were “survivors” who had endured an abusive relationship with their professors. This revised view is important because it unravels a unique characteristic of the academic socialization process from the perspective of the graduate student.

My third conceptual contribution sheds light on the relationship between graduate students and university officials in the context of reporting. This study pointed to numerous abuses of power that graduate students experienced. These abuses were perpetrated by their professors and by individuals in other positions of authority—thus this study relates to the current literature regarding students’ experiences with authorship and power dynamics.

My final conceptual contribution focused on what causes an individual to come forward to report plagiarism—specifically when that individual was in a relationship in which the faculty member held more power than the reporting student. This added to current literature about fears of retaliations that graduate students feel about reporting when they witness misconduct by a faculty member. A discussion will follow about the research findings, the implications of the research, and the limitations of the research. This discussion will also include my own reflections and suggestions for further research on academic misconduct.

Interpretation of Research Findings

Research Question One

My first research question was, “How do graduate students who have reported that their professor committed a violation of academic integrity experience the academic socialization process as well as power dynamics?” As reported in Chapter IV, academic euphoria, a state of dysphoria, and a betrayal of trust represent the subthemes of the theme set-up. This draws attention to a significant research observation: The initial positive socialization experiences masked the reported dishonesty, which led to the graduate students’ lack of trust in their professors (Finding 1).

Finding 1. Finding 1 points to a student experiencing a betrayal of trust by a faculty member related to an academic work during the socialization process. The existing literature supports trust as integral to the faculty–student relationship. According to Curzon-Hobson (2002),

trust is an integral part of higher learning, and that higher learning is characterised by a transforming, dialogical learning environment. Without this sense of trust—primarily between the student and teacher—neither is encouraged, and hence willing to question and overcome their understanding of their interrelationships in the world (p. 266).

Prior to the development of a relationship between individuals, trust depends on “deterrents or institutional structures” (p. 570). Additionally, some students may trust their teachers solely because of their upbringing (Curzon-Hobson, 2002). Thus, trust

literature is particularly relevant to better understanding faculty–student relationships. Research reveals trust as a key component in the faculty–student relationship.

While the literature on trust in faculty-student relationships is not extensive, other researchers in educational leadership have explored trust. Interestingly, trust has only been a topic of empirical study for social scientists since the 1950s. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) analyzed the theoretical and empirical literature on trust. They emphasized the difficulty of studying trust because of its multidimensional and dynamic nature. Although widespread definitions of trust exist, through their analysis, the authors came to define trust as “one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is (a) benevolent, (b) reliable, (c) competent, (d) honest, and (e) open (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998)” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 556). They found that trust changes over time and “takes on a different character” over the course of a relationship (p. 570). For example, as individuals work with one another, the trust of the other person is based on what each person has experienced. Trust is associated with vulnerability and changes over time.

Additionally, this research may enlighten how a student responds to faculty who misattribute their work. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) stated that a majority of “relationships of trust do not take place in a vacuum; they are embedded in social contexts that impose constraints, values, and sanctions that affect the trust relationship” (p. 570). More specifically, the vulnerability of the individual trusting can change over time as dependence increases or decreases. Furthermore, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) found that a person is “differentially vulnerable to an intimate friend, a teacher, a

supervisor, an investment broker, and a surgeon” (p. 558). Curzon-Hobson (2002) explained that when trust is violated, the relationship of trust undergoes changes because the person trusting and the “referent of trust (who is being trusted)” (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 558) determine whether they will repair the relationship or respond through different forms of revenge. Trust depends on social norms and role expectations. Society helps shape the expectations of trust in relationships. My study adds to the literature by providing an explanation of how graduate students experience a betrayal of trust.

Furthermore, Finding 1, specifically, adds to the literature on trust and power dynamics by showing the ways in which professors can gain advantage over their students by using power to mask reported dishonesty. Aguinis et al. (1996) found that the type of power that a professor holds is associated with the graduate students’ likelihood to trust the professor. The present study expands on Aguinis et al. by examining how students experience a power change within the relationship. The socialization of graduate students depends on a close working relationship with a supervising faculty member, and Aguinis et al. found that the power relationship between faculty and students “plays a critical role in student–faculty relationships and interactions” (p. 288). Additionally, when graduate students view their professors as having “expert power,” they perceive the following in their professors: (a) a quality relationship and (b) trustworthiness (Aguinis et al., 1996). Students intend to invite their faculty members to serve on their dissertation or thesis committee and engage in collaborative research. With “reward power,” students’ views of their professors are similar to those resulting from the use of expert power, with the exception of

trustworthiness. “Legitimate power” and “referent power” are associated with viewing faculty members as trustworthy. “Coercive power” stands out as the type of power in which students view their relationship with their professors as being one of poor quality—and also view their professors as untrustworthy and not credible. In these instances, students do not intend to ask their faculty members to serve on their dissertation or thesis committees. How professors use their power affects graduate students’ perspectives on the trustworthiness of the professor.

This study takes into account how the professor’s power-base changes. During the course of the professor–student relationship, the graduate students moved from a positive experience with power to a negative experience. In the beginning, the professors employed bases of power associated with graduate students’ perceptions of faculty trustworthiness; as power became coercive, the graduate students felt deceived by their professors. The graduate students in the study had positive perceptions of their professors’ power-base in their beginning relationships. Participants’ viewpoints of their professors’ power aligned with the French and Raven power taxonomy that Schrod, Witt, and Turman (2007) applied to the college classroom, in which students perceive their professors to have power (i.e., reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, or expert). The participants’ viewpoints of the professors’ power fit with the powers associated with trustworthiness in Aguinis et al.’s (1996) study (i.e., legitimate, referent, or expert). Additionally, some participants felt reward power. None of the participants felt coercive power in the initial stages of their relationships with their professors, but their viewpoints of their professors’ power changed over the course of the relationship.

In particular, the present study suggests that initial positive socialization experiences masked the reported dishonesty, which led to the graduate students' lack of trust in their professors. A portion of Finding 1 regarding "initial positive socialization experiences," aligns with Weidman et al.'s (2001) research. In this study, the participants' initial positive socialization experiences support the anticipatory stage and formal stage of Weidman et al.'s (2001) research. Like Weidman et al.'s anticipatory stage, participants spoke about their fears and what they looked forward to in graduate school. Additionally, participants learned new roles and procedures. Furthermore, in the next stage of Weidman et al., the formal stage, students determined their role in the program and communication was "informative through learning course material, regulative through embracing normative expectations, and integrative through faculty and student interaction" (2001, p. 13). In addition, similar to the research performed by Weidman et al., participants began taking on greater responsibilities such as increased research duties. The participants' experiences during the subtheme of academic euphoria appear to connect to the anticipatory stage and the formal stage of Weidman et al.'s model. The next stage, during which the students learn and take on informal roles and absorb the new culture, is linked to the stage of academic euphoria or the state of dysphoria. The next stage, the personal stage, appears inconsistent with the participants' experiences and will be discussed further in Finding 2.

In summary, Finding 1 was that initial positive socialization experiences masked the reported dishonesty, which led to the graduate students' lack of trust in their professors. This contributes to the literature on the process of academic socialization by

explaining the type of faculty power that occurs when graduate students experience a professor misattributing their work. The extant literature on the academic socialization process revealed that power and trust are associated factors. Adding to this, the findings indicated that professors could possibly use their power-base to deceive students into trusting them. This explains the presence of deception, which prior literature had not revealed. The presence of deception further suggests that faculty members could be using their power to gain students' trust then changing their power-base after they receive the scholarly commodity that is the student's academic work.

Finding 2. Next, another substantial research finding related to the first research question is individuals in positions of authority to whom the graduate students formally reported the misattribution of their work failed to act in a manner that satisfactorily resolved the issue brought forth by the graduate student (Finding 2). Inside university and outside university are the subthemes of jumping hurdles related to Finding 2. Interestingly, numerous participants recounted that those receiving the reports ignored them, which indicates a lack of training and understanding regarding authorship. My finding suggests that students question the ethics at the universities they attended. While this research is not well developed, particularly when a faculty member takes work from a student, Kelley and Change (2007) might provide an explanation regarding the universities' responses. Kelley and Chang (2007) found that "universities with limited ethics infrastructures more often ignore ethical lapses than those with well-developed ethics infrastructures" (p. 421). Based on Kelly and Chang's research, it is possible that the ethics infrastructures were limited where the plagiarism incidents occurred.

However, other explanations could exist as well, such as universities poorly applying their ethics infrastructures or applying them just short of what would resolve the issue raised by the student.

Additionally, Finding 2 corroborates with the literature, which points to students feeling that they have less power than faculty in authorship decisions and that they are unlikely to question their faculty members' decisions. Specifically, Welfare and Sackett (2011) found that approximately half of students would be uncomfortable in advocating for greater recognition in authorship with a faculty member. Moreover, Geelhoed, Phillips, Fischer, Shpungin, and Gong (2007) found that students felt that power differentials with faculty influenced the authorship decision-making process. Likewise, Street et al. (2010) revealed that students are reluctant to question their professors about authorship credit. This study expands on the literature by pointing out what occurs when students bring forward an authorship dispute.

Finding 2 was that individuals in positions of authority to whom the graduate students formally reported the misattribution of their work failed to act in a manner that satisfactorily resolved the matter for the graduate student. This finding expands the extant literature on students' experiences relating to attributed authorship by explaining the abuse of power that occurs when graduate students experience professors misattributing their work. The extant literature on students' experiences with authorship revealed that students are unlikely to question authorship decisions because of power differentials (Street et al., 2010). This study's findings focused on participants who actually reported an authorship dispute, which prior literature had not addressed. The

lack of redress from student reporting suggests that power was not held by one single person, but by multiple actors in the graduate student experience. In these instances, each power holder failed to exercise any power in a manner that supported the graduate student.

Finding 3. Next, survivors and guarded behaviors represent the subthemes of identity shift, placing emphasis on another significant research observation. In Finding 3, I noted that the self-identity of the graduate students shifted as the events unfolded regarding the professor's misattribution activity and the university's response to reports of ethical breaches. For the participants of this study, their self-identities changed from having enthusiasm and energy in pursuing graduate education to feeling like they were "survivors" who had endured an abusive relationship with their professors. This constructed self-identity is consistent with the extant literature on professional socialization.

Weidman et al. (2001) applied the framework of Thornton and Nardi (1975) to the socialization of graduate and professional students. Weidman et al. asserted that students form their own professional identity in the last stage of their framework, which is the personal stage. According to Weidman et al., "one of the most important outcomes of professional socialization is an evolving professional identity" (p. 16). In the personal stage, professional and personal role needs are generally congruent. The research conducted by Weidman et al. (2001) on academic socialization revealed that congruency in professional and personal roles is a product of the professional socialization process.

They showed that in the final stage of professional socialization the self-identity of an individual changes to that of a professional.

Building on the earlier discussion, the present study showed a change in self-identity, which occurred in the study conducted by Weidman et al. However, the change in this study took on a very different form. As mentioned, Finding 3 was that the self-identity of the graduate students shifted as events unfolded with the professor's misattribution activity and the university's response to their reports of ethical breaches. This finding expands the literature on the professional-socialization process by explaining the nature of identity changes that graduate students undergo when misattribution occurs. Adding to this, the findings indicate that students who have had their work misattributed by a professor feel that they have been in an abusive relationship, which helps explain the presence of misattribution in the professional socialization process, a scenario that prior literature had not examined. This study contributes to the literature by showing how the professional identity of graduate students changes when the students experience their professors misattributing their academic work.

Beyond this, Finding 3 relates to another body of literature, which is victimization literature. The students in this study had something taken away from them—their academic work. This begs the question of whether this makes them victims. Victims are associated with crimes, but plagiarism is most often treated as an ethical violation rather than a legal violation (Green, 2002). Green explained that there are three instances when the courts may hear cases of “unattributed copying.” These instances are (a) copyright infringement, (b) unfair competition, and (c) a violation of moral rights. Interestingly,

despite plagiarism's early definition of theft, plagiarism has never been prosecuted by the courts as theft (Green, 2002). The viewpoint that the participants in this study are nonetheless victims aligns with Barak, Leighton, and Flavin's (2007) broader view of victimology. Their definition includes more than just individuals who have experienced a crime by the legal definition. More specifically, Barak et al. described their broader view of victimology as "not only consistent with our socially constructed examination of class, race, gender, and crime, but it is also consistent with our concern about social justice rather than an exclusively narrow focus on legally defined protection" (p. 151).

The participants in this study appear to share similar characteristics as the victims identified in the victimology literature. According to Bazemore and Schiff (2001), the crisis of victimization focuses on a victim's identity. In the aftermath of a crime, victims may feel intense emotions such as anger, rage, fear, self-blame, shame, and grief. Victims are faced with three questions: (a) a crisis of self-image (who am I?), (b) a crisis of meaning (what do I believe?), and (c) a crisis of relationship (who can I trust?).

In another line of research in victimology, participants may share similarities to individuals who have experienced cycles of violence. This is "a widely accepted theoretical explanation and description of how interpersonal violence in a relationship, typically between two people does not just suddenly appear or disappear, but rather has a common identifiable repeating pattern or cycle" (Hume & Hume, 2014, p. 222). Hume and Hume (2014) further explained the stages of violence. During the first stage, the honeymoon stage, the "soon-to-be aggressor" is "very kind and affectionate toward the soon-to-be victim" (p. 222). Similarities exist to the academic euphoria stage for those

participants in this study who felt that they were abused or traumatized: All of their professors were very kind at the beginning of their relationship. The next stage that Hume and Hume described is the tension stage, in which the victim may try to take more control in the relationship, causing the “soon-to-be-aggressor” to become agitated and exert his or her control, for example, by taking the victim’s cell phone. The state of dysphoria stage may correspond to this stage; however, this is beyond the scope of this study. The stages continue to mount to an explosive event, and then the stages repeat. This study’s framework did not focus on victimology, so my intent was not to determine the participant’s fit with the cycles of violence; however, Finding 3 may add to the literature on victimology.

Research Question 2

For the second research question, I asked, “How do graduate students decide to report when their work has been misattributed by a professor?” Supports and threats are the subthemes of the theme making the decision, which suggests another important research observation. Specifically, advisement from trusted individuals can play a key role in assisting graduate students navigate power dynamics with professors and process the decision-making efforts of whether it is worth the risk to report the academic violation (Finding 4). This study illustrates the power dynamics that graduate students experience when faced with misconduct by a faculty member. For example, Anderson et al. (1994) stated that a majority of graduate students believe that they probably or definitely could not report cases of suspected misconduct by faculty members without expecting retaliation. Nonetheless, how students perceived the forms of retaliation were

unknown. All of the participants in this study were concerned about retaliation. This study expands on Anderson et al.'s study by delving into the participants' apprehensions related to reporting academic misconduct. Specifically, the concerns raised were (a) not securing a recommendation letter for a scholarship, (b) removal from school, (c) not being conferred a PhD, and (d) risk to safety (i.e., a death threat). Some participants, because of fears of retaliation, were strategic in how and when they reported. Through the counsel of a trusted individual, some of the graduate students navigated the power dynamics.

Finding 4 was thus advisement from trusted individuals can play a key role in helping graduate students navigate power dynamics with professors and determine that it is worth the risk to report. This finding supports the literature on graduate student socialization by explaining the types of fears of retaliation that occur when graduate students experience a professor misattributing their work. The extant literature on graduate student socialization revealed that most students do not report faculty misconduct out of fear of retaliation (Anderson et al., 1994). My findings add to the literature that advisement from trusted individuals can play a key role in assisting graduate students navigate power dynamics with professors and process the decision-making efforts of whether it is worth the risk to report an academic violation. This helps explain what makes students overcome fears of retaliation, a situation that prior literature had not revealed. The presence of counsel from a trusted individual helps students overcome fears of retaliation.

In summary, I expanded on the body of literature by Aguinis et al. (1996). They found that the type of power that professors hold is associated with the likelihood of whether their graduate students' trust them. Previously undescribed by the literature on the subject, I noted how professors' initial use of power falsely misled students to trust their professors. Secondly, I described how the present study aligns with Kelley and Chang's (2007) findings. They found that universities that lack a "unifying ethics codes" (p. 421) are more likely to ignore ethical lapses. Likewise, participants expressed disappointment with how the universities handled their authorship disputes. Third, I added to Weidman et al.'s (2001) research about self-identity during the personal stage of the socialization process. In my study, I highlighted how participants changed their descriptions of themselves as survivors of an abusive relationship as a result of the socialization process. My description significantly differs from Weidman et al.'s description of a student's expected transformation, however. Lastly, I expanded on Anderson et al.'s (1994) study regarding graduate students' fear of retaliation when reporting professors' misconduct by explaining graduate students' specific fears and how they maneuvered power dynamics if they decided to report the incident. Although studies have indicated students' concerns of faculty misattributing their work, little was known about the topic other than that it occurs on campuses (e.g., Clark, Harden, & Johnson, 2000).

Implications

We can reach a variety of conclusions regarding the experiences of the graduate students in this study. In particular, graduate schools, university administrators, program

directors, faculty members, accrediting bodies, and legislators could play a larger role in mitigating academic misconduct within the academy. A discussion of the implications of this study follows.

The first implication is that it is important to have clear, readily available policies in place regarding research misconduct. To illustrate how difficult it is to find research misconduct policies, Lind (2005) analyzed the top 25 National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation university websites. Lind's research was concerned with the ease of access on these websites to research misconduct policies. Many universities fell within four to five mouse clicks from their home pages to the policy. Lind found that policies were not easily accessible, and students did not always understand their authorship rights. Additionally, Lind's analysis indicated:

that institutions would be well-served by a re-examination of their research misconduct policies. If the message sent by a policy lacks clarity and precision, it should be revised to include an appropriate level of detail. The policy should be a useful document to the people it affects (p. 260).

Having readily available policies in place could reduce the occurrence of plagiarism—as could additional education about authorship.

The second implication of this study is that there should be more education about authorship. Graduate program directors and graduate schools should ensure orientation and ongoing education about authorship and plagiarism for faculty and students. Brown et al. (1997) found there was confusion among faculty and staff regarding what type of work constituted authorship. More specifically, there were differing beliefs among

faculty and students regarding authorship. Providing education could help alleviate confusion about plagiarism and authorship. In my study, one participant recommended that faculty and students have a signed document clarifying authorship before starting academic work. Faculty and students should have discussions early on about expectations surrounding authorship. For example, student orientations lacked information about ethical research practices. One student thought it was appropriate to list her professor as the principal investigator (PI) on the institutional review board paperwork for her project. She trusted her mentor's advisement, which was to list her mentor as the PI. If students were more aware of authorship guidelines, some of the incidents of plagiarism described in this study would never have occurred. Awareness of authorship guidelines could help prevent plagiarism.

A third implication is that students need to have a clear reporting procedure and more protective measures in place for when they report. If their concerns are not heard at one level, they should be able to go to a higher level without experiencing retaliation. In more than one instance, there was a culture of comradery and obstruction among faculty members. Though some students made it through the deliberative process of reporting, their concerns were not addressed because they only made it as far as faculty members and university officials whose allegiances were with one another. This is an important consideration for university ombudsmen to be aware of as they work with student concerns. It may be worthwhile for universities to go back and review cases where plagiarism was reported to see how it was handled and to remedy the situation if it was handled unethically.

Alarming, one participant referenced “corruption” when describing the higher education system. Because of the possible corruption at certain universities, it may be helpful in these cases of academic violations to have an unaffiliated faculty member(s) or administrator(s) participate in the review of cases of plagiarism (i.e., those who are not associated with the student’s or reported academic unit). Two of the participants called for greater oversight of higher education, asking for the U.S. Congress to step in and help develop a better system. One student shared:

Nobody has oversight of this and if you go to the Higher Education Commission or the Higher Education Department in your state, they say, “Well, we just license these institutions.” It’s like, well isn’t there some kind of criteria for licensure? And if you do license them, do you have the ability to shut them down and what does it take to do that? . . . where’s the threshold? Where’s the policy? Where’s the procedure? Where’s the guidelines? Where’s the oversight? Where’s the accountability?

Accrediting bodies could require greater oversight and protections for graduate students regarding plagiarism and perhaps implement an alert system under the Council of Graduate Schools when there are reports of plagiarism against a professor. This would make is so that all colleges and universities are aware of the allegations of plagiarism made against a faculty member. A system for greater oversight needs to be in place.

In summary, the following recommendations may decrease the likelihood of plagiarism by professors: (a) building awareness by educating professors regarding research integrity and by advising students about authorship early in their graduate work;

(b) developing clear authorship and intellectual property rights policies that train students and faculty; (c) disseminate research misconduct policies on authorship and intellectual property rights policies to faculty and staff at the start of every semester that are easily accessible; and (d) examining institutional reporting mechanisms for student access, anonymity, and protection of students, and ensuring that students will be protected for coming forward including indemnification.

Researcher's Reflections

Finding participants was a difficult undertaking, much more than I thought it would be. The criteria for participants were quite stringent. There were only a small number of known participants who fit the criteria. After finding the names of individuals who met the criteria, I had to locate their contact information, which was also challenging.

Describing the experiences of these participants is a task that I took very seriously. I felt their pain and was upset by their stories. Listening to their stories and then reading the transcripts at times infuriated me because their mistreatment became increasingly evident. Some students devoted their life to their doctoral education, only to have it taken away. One participant sadly stated how hard he worked to get the ideas that he was developing for his dissertation:

And when I harken back to those desperate days when I was poor and couldn't afford gas but I was still doing my . . . work alone . . . in the heat and in the rain and, and ah, just out there for weeks at a time, with really minimal contact with people, and, and how that idea hit me in the, in camp one day. . .

The participants' experiences were traumatic. As a researcher, I found it hard to ask them to relive what were very difficult times in their lives. One of the participants cried during parts of the interview. A few commented about how these events were not something that they liked to think about or talk about, so I found it difficult to ask the probing questions about their experiences. In the words of one participant:

Even talking about it right now, I could feel it in my body [the participant laughs] . . . I can feel it again, which is weird to me because, wow! I haven't even thought about this thing [the participant briefly pauses] years, really in years. But just in talking about it, I still feel that same fear, that same, yeah that, that loneliness, that fear, I still feel it and that bothers me.

Another participant was physically affected in his interview with me:

Our house is probably about 60 degrees and I'm sweating. I'm pacing back and forth . . . I had no idea this phone call was going to go the direction that I've taken it with half of what I've gone into with you [sic].

Sending the interview transcripts and asking for clarifying remarks after the interviews took place was hard for me. I felt as though I was "picking" at a wound that had not fully healed. In fact, one participant specifically requested that I not send the transcripts. However, by many of the participants' timely responses to my follow-up questions, I suspect the participants believed and hoped that this research would prevent future instances of plagiarism from occurring. In some respects, it seemed like they were pleased that their negative experiences could be used to help others. The participants were very helpful in this study and uttered kind words of encouragement.

There were a number of commonalities among the participants' stories, which was revealed in this study. However, what occurred in the years after the incidents were very different. For example, not every participant received a doctoral degree. It was sad to hear the hardships that all of the participants reported enduring. However, it was even more troubling to hear about potentially corrupt institutions not conferring well-deserved doctoral degrees. During the interviews, it was a point of suspense as to whether participants were awarded their degrees. Many of the participants also experienced harassment. I wonder whether one participant, who experienced harassment by her male advisor, would have had a better outcome if she had filed a claim under Title IX.

Lastly, I was surprised that, despite the fact that the participants had negative experiences, two of them talked about how they enjoyed their doctoral education. Lisa shared that "despite the . . . environment, the competitive, hostile environment, it was an excellent program. Excellent. Excellent. Excellent." Additionally, Shane reflected that "nothing other than the plagiarism incident at graduate school was really bad . . . And I still have . . . very fond memories of [graduate school]."

Limitations

We can only guess at the prevalence of professors who misattribute materials from their students. I interviewed only a small number of students. Certainly, this is not representative of all who have experienced plagiarism. Additionally, I only interviewed graduate students who reported academic misconduct. Because they were willing to come forward, they may not be representative of those who chose not to pursue a case against their professors.

This study focuses on the phenomenon at hand from the student perspective. The experiences shared in this study are one-sided because they are told from the student's perspective. Not hearing the perspectives of faculty is another limitation of this study. Determining whether a professor was found guilty of plagiarism is extremely difficult. Because of closed records, I could not factually verify whether a professor's termination was linked to plagiarism charges. Additionally, even in instances in which disposition occurred in a research misconduct case, findings of plagiarism remained unclear. This study only focused on the individuals' perceptions; therefore, we only know one side of the story. Again, the purpose of this study was not to determine the validity of participants' claims, but rather to better understand experiences relating to plagiarism.

Another limitation is the individual's memory. A number of years had elapsed between the experiences of participants and the interviews. Although many of the participants shared their experiences with clarity, one participant noted that the experiences were all very emotional, which is why she remembered them clearly years later. Many of the participants stated in the beginning of the interview, "I'm not sure how much I'm going to remember because it was so many years ago," but as the interview unfolded, their memory of the incidents returned to them.

It is important to note that the purpose of interpretative phenomenological analysis is to focus in-depth on a small number of participants. The purpose of this study was not to generalize results but rather to derive meaning from the unique experiences of a select number of individuals.

Suggestions for Further Research

I only addressed one side of the story—the experiences of the graduate students. Interviewing the professors who plagiarized the students' work would be useful because it would provide another perspective. Understanding their perspective may help improve institutional policies and education.

This study lays a framework for serious research on ethical issues that graduate students may experience. This study only focused on plagiarism by doctoral students who reported it to university officials. It is very possible that plagiarism of graduate student work occurs more often because students do not always report it. Graduate students could be surveyed to learn whether their work had been plagiarized by their professors or whether the work of someone they know had been plagiarized by their professors. Taking this study to a higher level by utilizing a quantitative study could provide a better understanding for how often graduate students experience plagiarism.

Participants noted that they risked much as they went forward with reporting. Perhaps these are the same reasons cited by students who do not report plagiarism. Understanding why students do not report plagiarism could be very helpful in modifying institutional policies regarding retaliation.

This study outlined serious concerns of former graduate students who reported academic misconduct by a professor. All of them were dissatisfied with how their institutions handled their cases. As discussed earlier, the graduate students provided suggestions as to how the system could be improved. Interviewing university

administrators regarding how they handle cases could be a valuable addition to the body of research.

It would be interesting to look at this study from a clinical psychologist's perspective. In doing so, a researcher could ask the following questions: did the participants experience diagnosable trauma? What makes this group of participants different from those students who do not report plagiarism? Does personality play a role? A clinical psychologist could shed light on some of those questions.

The concerns raised in this research relate to patent disputes and academic dishonesty between senior researchers and junior researchers. These areas would be beneficial to study in order to learn from their experiences.

Furthermore, this study only covered graduate students who reported academic misconduct before they graduated. There are instances in which students report plagiarism after they graduate, which could be studied in a manner similar to the one used for this study.

Summary and Conclusion

This qualitative interpretative phenomenological analysis study expanded the inquiry on academic misconduct. The conceptual framework focused on the process of socialization using a critical lens of power analysis. Those concepts were illustrated by the participants in this study because they showed how socialization and power played a part in their decision to report academic misconduct. The literature showed that power dynamics exist between faculty and students, which results in students' reluctance to challenge their professors. This study provided a wealth of data relating to why students

report and how they report. Like any other student, these participants struggled with reporting. However, these students eventually came forward. Through their experiences with reporting, I was able to determine and describe ways that universities could improve the reporting processes and reduce plagiarism by professors.

Chapter V concludes this research study. The findings revealed how graduate students experience a trusted professor plagiarizing their work and the agony that students endured as they determined whether to report, when to report, and how to report. Recommendations invite university administrators, program directors, research faculty members, accrediting bodies, policymakers, and legislators to help with education, awareness, and the creation of clear research policies and procedures. Additional research is needed at a quantitative level to determine the frequency of plagiarism by professors.

This study contributes to the literature on academic misconduct by informing researchers about the socialization process and the power dynamics that graduate students experience when their work has been misattributed by a professor and how they decided to report.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval



DIVISION OF RESEARCH & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

UND.edu

**Institutional Review Board
c/o Research Development
and Compliance**
Twamley Hall, Room 106
264 Centennial Drive Stop 7134
Grand Forks, ND 58202-7134
Phone: 701.777.4279
Fax: 701.777.6708

August 15, 2014

Principal Investigator:	Kimberly (Hanson) Becker
Project Title:	An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Graduate Students' Experiences of Plagiarism by Their Professors
IRB Project Number:	IRB-201408-043
Project Review Level:	Expedited 7
Date of IRB Approval:	08/14/14
Expiration Date of This Approval:	08/13/15
Consent Form Approval Date:	08/14/14

The application form and all included documentation for the above-referenced project have been reviewed and approved via the procedures of the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board.

Attached is your original consent form that has been stamped with the UND IRB approval and expiration dates. Please maintain this original on file. **You must use this original, stamped consent form to make copies for participant enrollment. No other consent form should be used.** It must be signed by each participant prior to initiation of any research procedures. In addition, each participant must be given a copy of the consent form.

Prior to implementation, submit any changes to or departures from the protocol or consent form to the IRB for approval. No changes to approved research may take place without prior IRB approval.

You have approval for this project through the above-listed expiration date. When this research is completed, please submit a termination form to the IRB. If the research will last longer than one year, an annual review and progress report must be submitted to the IRB prior to the submission deadline to ensure adequate time for IRB review.

The forms to assist you in filing your project termination, annual review and progress report, adverse event/unanticipated problem, protocol change, etc. may be accessed on the IRB website:
<http://und.edu/research/resources/human-subjects/>

Sincerely,

Michelle L. Bowles, M.P.A., CIP
IRB Coordinator

MLB/jle

Enclosures

Cc: Dr. Jeffrey Sun

Appendix B Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

TITLE: *An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Graduate Students' Experiences of Plagiarism by their Professors*

STUDENT RESEARCHER: *Kimberly D. (Hanson) Becker*

PHONE NUMBER: *(701) 330-3798*

DEPARTMENT: *Educational Leadership*

INVITATION

You are invited to participate in a research study about phenomenon of perceived violations of academic integrity. Study participants will include graduate students who reported a violation of academic integrity because they believe their work was plagiarized by a faculty member while they participated in an academic setting in one or more of the following types of relationships: committee chair/advisee; committee member/student; classroom professor/graduate student; supervisor/graduate assistant. Your name was identified because you were listed as experiencing this type of situation in research articles, articles in the media, and/or court records.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

The purpose of this study is to expand the inquiry on perceived violations of academic integrity. To do so, I intend to examine the conflict between the expected academic socialization process and the graduate students' actual experiences. Specifically, this study employs a qualitative approach to explore how power is articulated and realized among graduate students when they decide to report that their work has been misattributed by the very individuals who had or were supposed socialize them into academic conventions of proper attribution of scholarly works. In other words, I am delving into the "why" and "how" or the reasoning and actions associated to a graduate students' claims of their professors academic misconduct.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately five to seven individuals will take part in this study.

IS THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Your participation is voluntary. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of North Dakota.

Approval Date: <u> AUG 14 2014 </u>
Expiration Date: <u> AUG 13 2015 </u>
University of North Dakota IRB

1

Date: _____

Participant Initials: _____

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY AND WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

I will interview each participant twice. Interviews will start with an initial phone call. I will then follow-up with a second interview utilizing Skype or a telephone interview if you do not have access to Skype. The first interview will last approximately 90-120 minutes and the second interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes. Subsequent communication (e.g., telephone call or interview) may be requested in order to clarify comments that may arise during transcription. In addition, if available, I will request documents such as emails, student handbooks, the paper at issue, court records, etc. After the interviews, I will make a copy of the transcript available to you for your review. Additionally, I will share with you the data analysis report to receive your feedback and will make changes if I have misinterpreted data.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

There may be some risk from being in this study. Because of the magnitude of questions and the length of the interview, you could become distressed or relive your experience in a harmful manner. Additionally, there is risk that your identity may become known, but great precautions will be taken to prevent this from occurring. Please see the "Confidentiality" section on the next page for more information. However, such risks are not viewed as being in excess of "minimal risk." If, however, you become upset by questions, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question. If you would like to talk to someone about your feelings about this study, you are encouraged to contact a mental health professional in your community.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

You may not benefit personally from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, others will benefit from this study because the knowledge gained from you may: 1) lead to creation or modification of institutional policies, graduate education, and training of graduate students, graduate assistants, and professors surrounding ethical research conduct, 2) help graduate students to determine if and how they should report when their work has been plagiarized by a professor, 3) decrease the occurrence and risk of student victimization by professors, 4) increase the protection of student researchers who hold less power in the professor-student relationship, and 5) fortify the academy to be a venue where the highest research ethical standards are practiced.

WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY?

The University of North Dakota and the researcher is receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

Approval Date: <u> AUG 14 2014 </u>
Expiration Date: <u> AUG 13 2015 </u>
University of North Dakota IRB

Date: _____

Participant Initials: _____

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not incur any costs for being in this research study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The records of this study will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. In any report about this study that might be published, you will not be identified. Your study record may be reviewed by Government agencies, and the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board.

Any information that is obtained in this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Additionally, any information that is obtained from other participants including their names cannot be shared with you. Confidentiality will be maintained by not using actual names in any analysis or presentation of results. In order to do this, I will attempt to use broad classifications for departments and universities such as "physical sciences at a Midwestern University". I will use pseudonyms (e.g., biology to science or criminal justice to social science) and make generalized statements/categories of individual characteristics when they do not alter the findings. Additionally, I will describe a span of years for selected cases instead of identifying the specific year of each case. I may also change the gender of participants when gender is not an issue.

Names of participants will not be included on the transcriptions of electronic files, audio files or the interview form. Electronic files, audio files, and interview forms will be stored in a locked cabinet in the student researcher's office or on the researcher's password-protected computer. Kimberly Becker will have access to the data and may employ individuals to transcribe the interviews. The data will be erased/shredded three years past the conclusion of the study. The consent forms and personal data will be kept in a separate locked cabinet in the student researcher's office. The consent forms will be shredded three years past the conclusion of the study.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH

A person who is to participate in the research must give his or her informed consent to such participation. This consent must be based on an understanding of the nature and risks of the

Approval Date:	<u> AUG 14 2014 </u>
Expiration Date:	<u> AUG 13 2015 </u>
University of North Dakota IRB	

Date: _____

Participant Initials: _____

research. This document provides information that is important for this understanding. Research projects include only participants who choose to take part. Please take your time in making your decision as to whether to participate. If you have questions at any time, please ask.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS?

The doctoral student researcher conducting this study is Kimberly Becker, supervised by her faculty advisor, Dr. Jeffrey C. Sun. You may ask any questions you have now. If you later have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, please contact Kimberly Becker at (701) 330-3798 or Dr. Jeffrey C. Sun at (502) 852-0618.

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if you have any concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the University of North Dakota Institutional Review Board at (701) 777-4279. Please call this number if you cannot reach research staff, or you wish to talk with someone else.

Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Participant's Name: _____

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Person who Obtained Consent

Date

Approval Date: <u> AUG 14 2014 </u>
Expiration Date: <u> AUG 13 2015 </u>
University of North Dakota IRB

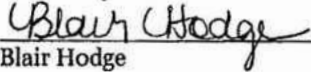
Date: _____
Participant Initials: _____

Appendix C
Transcriptionist Acknowledgment

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Acknowledgment, entered into this 3 day of September, 2014, by and between Kim Becker and Blair Hodge. Blair Hodge hereby acknowledges and agrees as follows:

1. "Confidential Information" herein means proprietary and/or confidential information owned, developed, or obtained by Kim Becker, including but not limited to proprietary and/or confidential information obtained from third parties pursuant to agreements that restrict the internal and/or external use or dissemination thereof. All interviews with participants are confidential.
2. I understand that I may be provided, exposed to, or otherwise come into possession of Confidential Information.
3. I hereby agree that I will protect all Confidential Information and that I will not disclose any Confidential Information under any circumstances.
4. This obligation shall survive the termination of my work with Kim Becker.


Blair Hodge

Appendix D

Interview Dates, Duration, and Length of Transcript as part of Audit Trail

First Round Interviews

Date	Participant Pseudonym	Length of Interview	Length of Transcript²
September 3, 2014	Lisa	2 hours, 9 minutes	26 pages
September 10, 2014	Candace	2 hours, 14 minutes	23 pages
September 22, 2014	Shane	1 hour, 26 minutes	19 pages
November 2, 2014	Elizabeth	2 hours, 24 minutes	26 pages
November 19, 2014	Mike	2 hours, 29 minutes	24 pages

Second Round Interviews

Date	Participant Pseudonym	Length of Interview	Length of Transcript
November 23, 2014	Elizabeth	1 hour, 6 minutes	13 pages
November 24, 2014	Candace	21 minutes	4 pages
November 26, 2014	Mike	47 minutes	9 pages
December 2, 2014	Lisa	38 minutes	7 pages
December 17, 2014	Shane	28 minutes	5 pages

² Single-space, Times New Roman, size 12 font.

Appendix E

Interview Protocol Questions

First Interview

Background Questions

- 1) What led you to graduate school? How did you meet the faculty in the department or program? What was graduate school orientation like including how you met the faculty, how you were introduced, and how you got to know about faculty's research interests?
- 2) What were you looking forward to in graduate school or what were some of your concerns? How did faculty address your concerns? How did your concerns change over time?
- 3) What were the dynamics between faculty and students? How did faculty interact with faculty/ students? Were the interactions between faculty and students informal or formal? How were they informal or formal? Did your cohort get together? Did the different cohorts gather? How did the cohort prepare you for your education?
- 4) Describe the physical environment in which you worked. How were students and faculty members recognized or penalized for what they did? Throughout your experience, was there anything that stood out as outstanding or really bad?
- 5) Now I'd like to move into questions about the actual incident of plagiarism. Tell me what led to the incident of the professor plagiarizing your work?
- 6) What were your first impressions when meeting the professor at issue?

- 7) What role(s) did the professor play in your graduate educational experience?
Teach any of your classes, which ones? Present during your orientation events, research prep ...?
- 8) Describe your relationship with the professor early on. How did your relationship change over time?
- 9) Tell me about any discussions you and the professor had about authorship credit and work distribution related to the piece? Did you feel like you could question their decision? How did they indicate that to you?
- 10) Tell me about how you found out that your work had been plagiarized. How did you feel? What questions did you ask yourself? Others ... and who were they?
- 11) Tell me about your thinking process in deciding to report the plagiarism?
- 12) Tell me about your interactions with the professor after you reported the plagiarism.
- 13) Who else was involved in the whole process? Who did you consult? Who did you visit with? How did they react?
- 14) What happened to the professor?
- 15) How satisfied are you with how the university community handled the incident?
- 16) How did the plagiarism incident affect your personal life?
- 17) How did the plagiarism incident affect your career?
- 18) Is there anything else that you would like to add?

- 19) Do you have any written documentation that I could look at [e.g., emails, your paper, written communication between you and the professor, court transcripts]?

Follow up questions for second interview

I'll draw them back to the first interview... Is there anything else that you'd like to add since our last interview...

- 1) If you had to do it all over again, would you report the professor? If yes, why? If no, why not? What would you do differently? Why? What signs or cues did you see that confirmed you made a good or bad choice?
- 2) What was your understanding of the institutional research guidelines, and how did you learn about them?
- 3) What may have decreased the likelihood of plagiarism occurring?

Additionally, throughout the interview, Smith et al. describe questions that may be used to dig deeper. The questions are: "Why?", "How?", "Can you tell me more about that?", "Tell me what you were thinking?", and "How did you feel?" (p. 68).

Appendix F
Final Codes for Sub-themes and Themes

Theme 1: Set-up

Academic Euphoria
Happy family Beginning relationship Luring Positive learning environment Likeable professor

Academic Dysphoria
Turning point Overt mistreatment Odd behavior Abuse Plagiarism victimization

Betrayal of Trust
Beliefs about socialization Trust Reaction to plagiarism

Theme 2: Making the Decision

Supports
Strategizing
Faith in God
Peace
Trusted individuals

Threats
Vulnerable
Power Dynamics
Reporting
Retaliation

Theme 3: Jumping Hurdles

Inside University
Personal integrity
University response
No one helps
Lack of belief
Disappointment

Outside University
Congress
Courts
State of Higher Education/Need for reform
Rat Race

Theme 4: Identify Shift

Survivors
Abuse
Heinous crimes
Reliving it
Healing process
Never forget

Guarded Behaviors
Distrustful
Effects
Sending their kids to college
How to prevent plagiarism

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