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Uncertainty in Academia: A Mixed Methods Study Identifying How Value Statements on Plagiarism Correlate with Plagiarism Reporting Behaviors of Undergraduate Faculty in a Distance Education Program

Laurie Kay Larson
laurie.larson@go.mnstate.edu

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Uncertainty in Academia: A Mixed Methods Study Identifying How Value Statements on Plagiarism Correlate with Plagiarism Reporting Behaviors of Undergraduate Faculty in a Distance Education Program

A Dissertation Presented to
the Graduate Faculty of
Minnesota State University Moorhead

By

Laurie Kay Larson

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UNCERTAINTY IN ACADEMIA: A MIXED METHODS STUDY IDENTIFYING

HOW VALUE STATEMENTS ON PLAGIARISM CORRELATE WITH

PLAGIARISM REPORTING BEHAVIORS OF UNDERGRADUATE FACULTY IN A

DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAM

By

Laurie K. Larson

has been approved

March 16, 2020

APPROVED:

      Boyd L. Bradbury, Ph.D., Chair

      Ximena P. Suarez-Sousa, Ph.D., Committee Member

      Joy Henrich, Ed.D., Committee Member

      Andrew S. Burklund, Ed.D., Committee Member

ACCEPTED AND SIGNED:

      _____

      Boyd L. Bradbury, Ph.D.

      _____

      Ok-Hee Lee, Ph.D.
      Dean, College of Education and Human Services

DEDICATION

For my mom and dad…

Consider this a promise kept. Thank you for wanting more for me than I ever wanted for myself.

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NOMENCLATURE

APA	American Psychological Association
SPSS 26	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences – Version 26
SME(s)	Subject Matter Expert(s)
LMS	Learning Management System
CVR	Content Validity Ration
Pearson *r*	Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient
IV	Independent Variable
DV	Dependent Variable
IRB	Institutional Review Board

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It has been said that it takes a village to raise a child, so it should be no surprise that it takes a similar village to support a doctoral candidate through the dissertation process.

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ABSTRACT

Plagiarism is a growing concern for colleges and universities around the globe. Research has shown that an overwhelming majority of college students today have admitted to cheating at some point during their academic career; however, some studies have demonstrated that faculty reporting rates are not mirroring this trend. While many studies detail faculty perceptions on plagiarism, this study focused specifically on faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors at a predominantly online institution. Additionally, this study identified five predetermined value statement factors derived from the available literature and further explored how those factors influenced and/or impeded faculty decisions to report a plagiarism violation. For this study, a pragmatic mixed methods approach was chosen to better define both the 'what' and the 'why' within this project. The study consisted of 101 faculty participants and nine Academic Deans from a predominantly online private college who were recruited to participate in a questionnaire (faculty) and virtual focus group (deans) that provided feedback and perspective into faculty reporting behavior. This perspective also created valuable insight into the institutional reporting tools and processes that existed at the institution under study and how they could be streamlined for a more effective and efficient faculty experience.

CHAPTER 1.   PLAGIARISM IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

To report or not to report, that is the question. Plagiarism is a growing concern on college campuses and universities around the globe. Auer and Krupar (2001) noted that "the proliferation of paper mills, full-text databases, and World Wide Web pages has made plagiarism a rapidly growing problem in academia (as cited in Ison, 2014, p. 274). Robinson & Glanzer (2017) explained that while more than two-thirds of college students today have participated in some form of cheating during their academic career, studies showed that faculty reporting rates were not aligned to those statistics.

There are those in academia who believe that "faculty members have a responsibility to prevent cheating and faculty who 'allow' dishonesty are morally responsible for it" (Burrus, Jones, Sackley, & Walker, 2015, p. 90). If this is true, one might need to consider how this impacts student success. Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006) stated that "Reducing misconduct requires understanding the factors influencing the behaviors of each of the two parties most closely involved: the students, whose behavior determines whether and how often misconduct occurs, and the faculty, whose behavior can potentially deter misconduct" (p. 1058). Students develop their perceptions of academic integrity based on the behaviors and attitudes of the instructors in their classrooms (Robinson & Glanzer, 2017). Additionally, when faculty do not address plagiarism in their courses and fail to report the violations that they have witnessed, students are left to assume that plagiarism is not a concern (Robinson & Glanzer, 2017). This failure to respond leads many to question whether a faculty's inability to enforce student accountability may impact student assumptions and behaviors. Whitley and Keith-Spiegel (2002) prefaced that this inability for faculty to pull the proverbial trigger may be inadvertently creating a "pro-cheating"

 environment.

Plagiarism quickly presented itself as not only a widespread concern, but as an impetus for change. Additionally, there was a level of hesitation on the part of faculty to report a plagiarism violation that the researcher did not understand. Perhaps faculty were acutely aware of how the said violation impacted the student's academic future. Others might be more hesitant because they simply were not sure what instances to cite, or what level of punitive consequence might be appropriate to apply. While the variables fluctuated as this project took shape, the primary research focus remained constant; to determine how the perceived performance roles and expectations of faculty impacted the plagiarism reporting process within a distance education program. Plagiarism is not a new phenomenon; however, the nontraditional approach of studying the behavior of faculty reporting at a predominately online institution fulfilled a niche not only in distance education but academia as a whole.

This study was incredibly important to the researcher on a professional level. In her role as an Academic Dean, and as a member of her institution's Academic Integrity Committee, she worked with plagiarism cases daily. All too often, she was faced with students in their final quarter before graduation being cited for plagiarism violations. The challenge that the researcher faced related directly to the faculty who taught for the institution. While in most instances, the student was indeed in violation of the institution's Academic Integrity Policy, rarely had a previous instructor made note of the student's inability to utilize proper citation methods and student voice. It was important to understand why students were getting to this point of no return with no previous coaching or mentoring on plagiarism from a faculty member. Conversations with faculty and experience derived

from the researcher's role on the Academic Integrity Committee helped to fill in the blanks.

Time was of the essence. Faculty are asked to do more with less – heavy workloads, large class sizes, and research and committee expectations. Faculty members employed at the institution under study were no different. These were individuals teaching non-traditional students who often required a high level of remediation in English and Math. A large portion of these students had English as a second language. Faculty often mentioned to the researcher how cumbersome and time consuming the plagiarism reporting process was on top of their other responsibilities. While faculty understood that the burden of proof fell on their shoulders, plagiarism investigations took time; time they didn't have.

Additionally, there were challenges with the tools available for them to identify plagiarism. While the college did provide complementary access to Grammarly for all faculty and students, this merely provided the source citation for the work, not access to the citation itself. In many instances, faculty required membership access to view the complete citation. While faculty were aware of these websites that specialized in plagiarism detection, many came at a personal financial cost; one that most faculty members were not willing to subsidize.

Another discrepancy the researcher found through her role on the Academic Integrity Committee was the implementation and overuse of 'teachable moments' in the classroom. This tactic was described as an opportunity for faculty to pull a student aside to inform them of the violation, discuss why it was not appropriate, and then follow up with suitable resources to move the student forward. While teachable moments were a common best practice in any modality, faculty were utilizing seven to nine of these moments before they chose to document a violation. What complicated the matter even further, were those who

were not utilizing these moments as they were intended. In some cases, faculty were not

providing students with the rationale behind the plagiarism violation, nor were they

providing the student with the appropriate resources to aid the student in their understanding

of the process. In others, the student was provided grading feedback that noted an instance of

plagiarism but issued a favorable grade. As several of the researcher's students had

explained, the higher the grade, the less likely they were to read the feedback. In this case,

faculty were not following up with students outside of class or via phone/text to fully discuss

the inappropriate behavior.

There was an acute sense of awareness on behalf of the researcher relating to the

varying levels of faculty reporting within her institution. Numerous faculty members had

explained that content was more important than appropriate citation techniques, while others

disagreed, necessitating the need to follow citation expectations explicitly as outlined in the

American Psychological Association (APA) Formatting Standards to ensure successful and

rigorous academic writing. The challenge with these two viewpoints became glaringly

apparent when put into practice. As an example, five online sections of English Composition

are offered in any given term, and the sections are taught by different instructors, each with

varying levels of APA expectations. Student expectations were never the same from course

to course. What was fine for one instructor was not considered enough for another. This

scenario created an uneven playing field for the students taking the course; one that became

more apparent with each course they took and each faculty member they encountered. As

administrators, it was important to find a means of ensuring consistent plagiarism reporting

throughout the courses, regardless of modality. However, the degree of consistency sought

was not possible without faculty advocacy.

This study satisfied a substantial gap in the existing literature on plagiarism. While numerous articles described studies about faculty perceptions relating to plagiarism, a vast majority of them were based on research garnered from brick and mortar institutions. Additionally, there were several studies that addressed plagiarism concerns in distance education; however, the findings stemmed from residential based institutions that casually offered courses in the online modality. From the researcher's perspective, a certain amount of interest stemmed from the potential outcomes that a study focused on a predominantly online institution could offer in terms of which faculty were more likely to report a plagiarism violation. These outcomes would be based on demographic data related to gender, ethnicity, academic credential, teaching experience, programmatic expertise, faculty status, and age. The researcher was also interested in how five predetermined value statement factors derived from the available literature on plagiarism could potentially impact those reporting decisions. These factors included: *Defining Plagiarism, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*.

Josien, Seeley, Csipak, and Rampal (2015) noted that plagiarism violations were continuing to rise exponentially at academic institutions around the world. The argument provided in this introduction provided fodder for the authors' concerns in the form of not only inconsistent tools and reporting procedures provided to faculty, but also detailing the role that faculty played in the decision to report an instance of plagiarism. What resulted from this educational dilemma was a dissertation that encompassed a correlational study that defined the level of relationships between plagiarism reporting behaviors of faculty teaching at a primarily online institution and five predetermined value statement factors derived from

the available literature on plagiarism that were believed to influence plagiarism reporting behaviors in previous research studies.

The desired outcome of this research was to gain a broader comprehension of faculty reporting habits; to better understand what motivated them to report a plagiarism violation. Furthermore, it was important to ensure that these results were analyzed and incorporated into future training opportunities to better educate faculty as to the importance of fair and equitable reporting for their students. These results also provided valuable insight into the institutional reporting tools and processes that currently existed and how these items could be streamlined within the institution for a more effective and efficient faculty experience.

Conceptual Framework

Grant and Osanloo (2014) explained that conceptual frameworks differed from theoretical frameworks in that the focus became "the researcher's understanding of how the research problem will be best explored, the specific direction the research will take, and the relationship between the variables of the study" (pp. 16-17). They furthered their point by detailing how a conceptual framework laid the groundwork for the study in that it identified key components and variables presuming a certain degree of relationship among them (Grant & Osanloo, 2014).

The purpose of this research assisted in selecting the most appropriate framework. The researcher was interested in solving a problem at her institution. As such, practitioner enquiry made the most sense. As Lofthouse, Hall, and Wall (2012) noted, practitioner enquiry was a common term used to describe "the process of people looking in a systematic way at what is going on in their practice" (p. 172). The researcher wanted to produce research that was meaningful to her institution. They went on to explain that this type of enquiry usually began with a hunch or an assumption and often led to one of many research

starting points which might include: "I would like to improve…, I want to change because…, I'm really curious about…" (Lofthouse et al., 2012, p. 173).

From an ontological perspective, Lofthouse et al. (2012) asserted that "Practitioner research rests on the belief that we can know about our own work through our participation" (p. 172). They went on to state that from an epistemological perspective "practitioner enquiry assumes our own questions are explored through a systematic investigation of practice" (Lofthouse et al., 2012, p. 172). The researcher looked within her own institution to find a problem in need of resolution; one that she was faced with all too often.

This problem (i.e., plagiarism reporting) guided the questions that ultimately led to a systematic correlation of faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors and the factors that drove those behaviors. Lofthouse et al. (2012) explained that "We 'own' the question because it has been generated by what is currently going on in our practice which is causing some sort of disturbance: something is not working" (p. 172). However, Dewey (2008) alluded to the notion that as investigators and researchers, the goal was not to solve the world's problems, but rather to seek data that was meaningful to the institutions that were being served and the work that was being done (as cited in Lofthouse et al., 2012). This research became a lesson in practical application as the results were delivered to the senior leaders of this institution to better inform policy and process changes regarding plagiarism expectations for their faculty. Consequently, this research may not directly solve the problem at hand; nevertheless, it allowed for an opportunity to make changes to current plagiarism reporting policies to better align faculty and student expectations.

Research Paradigm

The researcher entertained various research paradigms, or a set of beliefs that would help to guide her research (Morrison, 2012). Originally, she had utilized a separate paradigm

for each portion of her study. For the quantitative component, the researcher felt that positivism was the best fit. Morrison (2012) discussed in detail the application of the scientific method/investigation and its close connection to quantitative research. Patel (2015) noted that within the positivist paradigm there was one single truth that could be measured. The researcher believed that this truth could be the answer to her study.

The qualitative portion appeared to align better with interpretivism. As Patel (2015) explained, reality needed to be interpreted to truly define and discover the underlying meaning of an event. There could be multiple reasons why certain plagiarism reporting behaviors were presenting, and interpretivism would allow an exploration of this notion through a focus group process. (i.e., more about the words than the numbers).

Also found in Patel (2015) was the notion of pragmatism. In this paradigm, "reality is constantly renegotiated, debated, and interpreted in light of its usefulness in new unpredictable situations" (Patel, 2015, p. 3). Fraenkel et al. (2105) noted that a pragmatic study was one that utilized whatever research methodology necessary to solve a problem, or as the authors stated, choosing a method that "most readily illuminates the research questions" (p. 557). Hibberts and Burke Johnson (2012) echoed this point in that "you should mix research components in ways that you believe will work for your research problem, question and circumstances" (p. 124). The decision was made to utilize pragmatism as this choice not only provided the researcher the best of both worlds (positivism and interpretivism) within one paradigm, it also allowed her a substantial amount of flexibility as she selected the proposed methodology for the research.

Research Method

In terms of research methodology, a pragmatic mixed methods approach was the best choice for this study. As was previously mentioned, there was a need to define both the

'what' and the 'why' in this research study. A mixed methods approach to this research allowed the researcher to better characterize which faculty demographic characteristics denoted a higher likelihood of faculty to report an instance of plagiarism via a quantitative focused survey tool (see Appendix A and B). The results of the survey also provided important statistical data necessary to establish correlations between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. Additionally, a focus group composed of Academic Deans that were (at the time of the study) managing faculty in the online modality, aided in gathering the qualitative data needed to substantiate the questionnaire results and to obtain a deeper understanding of why these behaviors existed.

A pragmatic approach was applied to this study based on sheer definition; a practical approach to research that was often utilized to solve a problem. As Hibberts and Burke Johnson (2012) explained, "we are using combinations of available research tools to gather strong evidence to support or warrant our claims and produce provisional truths and perspectival truths in order to improve understandings and to guide future practice" (p. 125). As an Academic Dean, the researcher had observed a noticeable differential in faculty reporting behaviors than what was apparent in the available plagiarism literature. The intention was to use this study to better understand who was more likely to report a plagiarism violation and why, so that academic administrators were better equipped to address the factors that impeded this process.

The research for this study was conducted at an associate's, bachelor's and master's degree-granting institution with 22 campuses spanning the Midwest and Florida whose primary student population was serviced through the online modality. To better clarify this statement, while some students elected to take residential courses (e.g., Health Sciences and

Nursing programs), approximately 85% of student seats were serviced in the online modality. While each campus operated independently, they were governed by a central leadership team and a board of directors who made the financial and programmatic decisions for the good of the institution.

This private college was chosen due to logistical availability to the researcher as well as the standardized curriculum utilized within each program. All faculty were provided access to an online course that housed the applicable content, assignments, and gradebook for each specific course they were teaching, regardless of modality. The online course environment created a more neutral starting point as both online and residential faculty were teaching the same content, utilizing the same assignments, and providing the same quizzes and exams. The standardized course curriculum greatly decreased the potential for faculty to report a plagiarism violation based on how the content might have been worded, arranged, and/or developed within their course.   It is important to note that all courses were developed by instructional designers with the help of internal subject matter experts (SMEs). Faculty members were not tasked with the creation of the course, rather there was an expectation that faculty would provide course guidance, academic support, and supplemental content to aid in bridging the gap between the theoretical book learning and its practical application in the workplace. Each course contained the same embedded syllabus that housed the Academic Integrity Policy for the institution under study.

In terms of process, the research study was created as a two-tiered progression. It was important to identify the likelihood of behavior; more specifically the likelihood of faculty teaching in the online modality reporting a plagiarism violation. For the purposes of this study, plagiarism was defined by the researcher as relating specifically to a student not

appropriately providing credit to an author for the utilization of his or her work or ideas. To better understand the potential relationships at play, 101 voluntary participants completed an anonymous Plagiarism Questionnaire that housed three specific components. These aforementioned components included: Likert Scale based value statements on plagiarism focused on how the participants perceived the potential impact that five value statement factors could have on faculty plagiarism reporting, questions directly correlated to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, and a series of demographic questions.

Once the participants completed the questionnaire, it was necessary to explore the rationale for the behaviors identified by participants in the initial phase of the study. For this exploration to occur, a group of nine Academic Deans were selected to participate in a virtual focus group discussion. The goal of this process was to corroborate the questionnaire results with the attitudes and beliefs of the focus group participants and the faculty reporting behaviors that they experienced on their individual campuses and in their online classrooms. These deans were chosen by means of volunteer sampling from the 22 campuses of the same private college. The focus group was facilitated though WebEx, a virtual meeting space. All participants utilized their webcams and the session was recorded for transcription and coding purposes. Through this focus group, a deeper exploration of how an inability to clearly define plagiarism, perceptions of student rationale and justification, faculty bias, faculty fear of retaliation, and ineffective processes and reporting tools impacted the behavioral outcomes of the participants was possible.

Finally, results were distributed to the academic leadership team at this institution for a potential renovation of their current plagiarism reporting process. As a standing member of the Academic Integrity Committee for this institution, the researcher had access to a captive

audience interested in the outcomes of this study along with proposed measures for improvement.

Research Questions

In terms of research questions, the focus of this study related to the following questions:

RQ1: "How do the value statements on plagiarism correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2: "How do *value statement factors* (i.e., *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors?"

Research Question 2 was disaggregated by value statement factors. These factors were either internal or external to the faculty participant. Each value statement factor was defined in Chapter 2. For a more specific reference, individual value statements on plagiarism for each value statement factor can be found in the Plagiarism Questionnaire (Appendix A).

Internal Factors:

RQ2a: "How does the *plagiarism defined* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2b: "How does the *student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2c: "How does the *faculty bias* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2d: "How does the *faculty fear of retaliation* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

External Factor:

RQ2e: "How does the *inconsistent plagiarism reporting processes* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3: "Which faculty demographic variables (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status*, and *Programmatic Area of Expertise*) show higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Research Question 3 was disaggregated by Plagiarism Questionnaire demographics:

RQ3a: "How does *gender* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3b: "How does *highest academic credential earned* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3c: "How does *ethnicity* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3d: "How does *age* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3e: "How does *years of teaching experience* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3f: "How does *academic status* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3g: "How does *programmatic area of expertise* impact the likelihood of

plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Table 1.1.

Definition of terms.

Term	Operational Definition
Faculty	Those who teach at the post-secondary level of the academic institution under study.
Online Modality	Instruction provided from instructor to student in the virtual environment.
Reporting Behavior	The process of a faculty member alerting his/her institutional administration of a plagiarism violation.
Plagiarism Violation	Relating specifically to a student not appropriately providing credit to an author for utilization of his/her work.
Intentional Plagiarism	Knowingly utilizing the work of others without providing the appropriate citation.
Non-Intentional Plagiarism	Poor writing, or technological challenges as opposed to cheating.
Predetermined External Factors	1- Definition of Plagiarism 2- Student Rationale & Justification 3- Faculty Bias 4- Faculty Fear of Retaliation 5- Inconsistent Reporting Tools & Procedures.

Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015) defined a feasible question as "one that can be investigated with available resources" (p. 29). Based on these criteria, the questions listed above would classify as feasible. The answers would be provided and further explored in a questionnaire of the researcher's own design. Results accounted for demographic information and the likelihood of plagiarism reporting based on the five preselected independent variables.

The questions were ethically sound as the study was based on the likelihood of faculty reporting a plagiarism violation. Specifically, the researcher looked to identify future behavior versus past reporting behavior. Therefore, there was no "request" for self-disclosure (i.e., a request for faculty to disclose specific information pertaining to past plagiarism reporting decisions, why the decisions were made, and the results of those decisions). Approaching the research in this manner produced no physical or psychological harm to any participant.

In terms of overall significance, these questions provided valuable insight for both the institution being studied as well as academia as a whole. For the institution, the results provided the academic administration with a better understanding of the importance of fair and equitable plagiarism reporting for their students. This understanding could easily translate to additional training opportunities for faculty. These results also provided critical feedback regarding the institutional reporting tools and processes that existed and how they could be streamlined to produce a more effective and efficient faculty experience. For academia, the results satisfied a noticeable gap in the available literature pertaining to plagiarism reporting behaviors of faculty in distance education.

Assumptions and Limitations

Many of the part-time faculty who taught for this institution also taught for a host of

other colleges and universities throughout the country. While one might assume that faculty would be consistent in terms of their plagiarism reporting beliefs regardless of institution, the researcher needed to control the potential threat. As such, it was important to note in the questionnaire that the participants should be focused only on their experience at the current institution.

Course size and number of courses was not an integral part of the research design. One could also assume that those faculty (regardless of status) with fewer courses containing fewer students had more time to investigate potential plagiarism violations than those faculty with a full course load at maximum student seat capacity. Faculty bandwidth was an area that would need additional investigation at another time as it would likely further complicate the results of the study.

There were some limitations to the study. From a curriculum perspective, grading rubrics were a substantial limitation of this research study. Most courses taught at this institution were developed with the inclusion of standardized grading rubrics to be utilized for each assignment. These rubrics specifically detailed APA citation expectations and point deduction values. These expectations had the potential to significantly influence how intently faculty scrutinized student work. To the contrary, there were several courses where standardized grading rubrics were not implemented within the course. While utilizing grading rubrics was an expectation of all faculty teaching for this institution, many faculty members were left to their own devices to create grading rubrics for their courses. These rubrics may or may not have included references to APA citation expectations. Additionally, for those teaching Competency Based Education (CBE) courses it was even more of a gray area as APA expectations were not included in any of the grading rubrics for these courses.

Overall, CBE courses were a tremendous limitation to the study. The instructional component of these courses was divided into two faculty areas: instructional faculty who hosted live lectures, answered student questions, and posted weekly announcements detailing supplemental content and industry perspective, and assessment faculty who were responsible for grading assignments. This instructional disconnect provided the researcher with a faculty member who would never submit a plagiarism violation, and a faculty member who did not have the opportunity to directly work with students to help them better understand academic integrity standards. These limitations ultimately led to the elimination of potential participants who solely taught CBE courses.

The next chapter in this dissertation provides a more in-depth exploration of the value statement factors influencing faculty plagiarism reporting behavior while utilizing resources available in the current plagiarism literature. Chapter 3 focuses on methodology and the overall process and procedures that were followed to not only collect the data, but also the statistical analysis that would ensue once the data was available. Chapter 4 discusses the results of the pilot study, the main study, and their respective results. Finally, Chapter 5 provides a thorough interpretation of the aforementioned data along with a discussion focused on future study opportunities related to plagiarism reporting in distance education.

CHAPTER 2.   A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There has been little research done in relation to faculty perceptions of the plagiarism reporting process (Burrus et al., 2015). The literature suggested that faculty were relatively hesitant to report plagiarism violations. At best, faculty were inconsistent in how and when policies and punitive consequences were applied. While instances of plagiarism continued to rise in both online and residential courses, faculty and administrators were desperately attempting to understand the phenomenon and how to address the challenges that plagiarism presented.

One might devise from the literature presented here, a noticeable trend in the outcomes of several of these studies. While the researchers provided many suggestions regarding faculty responsibility in the plagiarism reporting process, there was very little accountability in terms of student ownership. McCabe (2005) confirmed that appropriating blame was a cyclical process; students and faculty continually pointing fingers, but never reaching any notable resolution. Students continued to plagiarize, and faculty were, at best, consistently inconsistent when choosing whether to report a violation or not. As Roberts and Rabinowitz (1992) pointed out "Our ability to alter the environment in which cheating takes place will be determined by our understanding of how people (both faculty and students) perceive cheating and its seriousness (as cited in Pincus & Schmelkin, 2003, p. 196). As a result of this literature review, five resounding themes evolved that may help to further explain this behavioral phenomenon: *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*.

Plagiarism Defined

A consistent theme across all of the research was the lack of a clear definition as to what constituted plagiarism. In the articles presented in this literature review, there were a minimum of 20 varying definitions of plagiarism that ranged from theft of property (Holbeck et al., 2015) and unintentional plagiarism, or poor writing versus actual cheating (Jocoy & DiBiase, 2006) to more historical concepts of ethical errors, deceitful behavior, and student dishonesty (Bennett, Behrendt, & Boothby, 2011). While each of these pieces aided in creating a basic understanding of plagiarism, academia was no closer to identifying a definition that helped both faculty and students understand what specific instances constituted plagiarism and to what degree they were punishable.

> We need to have common professional agreement about what constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism should be viewed on a continuum, ranging from blatant and unacceptable to incidental and trivial. It is important that the profession clarifies what constitutes unacceptable actions and what sanctions are appropriate. (Evering & Moorman, 2012, p. 35)

When faculty were not clear in their expectations of what constituted plagiarism, student accountability was compromised, and plagiarism violations were often overlooked.

The research proposed that plagiarism did not exist in a vacuum. There was a vast continuum regarding specific offenses and where they fell on the egregiousness scale. Faculty tended to view most types of plagiarism as substantially more severe than the students they taught (Kwong, Ng, Mark, & Wong, 2010). Because of this viewpoint discrepancy, challenges in defining plagiarism left practitioners to contend with varying perceptions between faculty and students regarding which offenses were worthy of being documented. In a study done by Josien, Seeley, Csipak, and Rampal (2015), students were

presented with 16 scenarios in which there was evidence of plagiarism and/or cheating occurring. Students varied greatly in what they believed constituted cheating. For example, Baker, Thornton, and Adams (2008) noted that most students did not recognize the copying and pasting of sourced material as plagiarism (as cited in Ison, 2014). When the question was posed regarding a scenario that included a student copying and pasting sections of a text from another source but not including all of their citations, while both students (83%) and faculty (92.59%) overwhelmingly decided that this was plagiarism, there was still a large enough variance to cause concern (Josien et al., 2015). Perhaps even more disturbing was the fact that of the 16 scenarios presented, faculty only overwhelmingly agreed on five out of the 16 scenarios that the behavior being presented was unacceptable (Josien et al., 2015). Mathematically, that would imply that faculty only agreed on perceived unacceptable behavior 31% of the time. Sixty-nine percent was a substantial disconnect. One would assume that faculty would be more intrinsically aligned with what was acceptable and what was not in terms of academic integrity.

Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom

For the researcher to discover where the line was drawn for faculty in determining whether a plagiarism violation had occurred, it was necessary to identify the varying perceptions of student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom (e.g., why do students cheat, and when should it be addressed) that often complicated the reporting process. To begin, what constituted a credible source, or one worth citing? Senders (2008) explained that Millennials, or those born between the years 1982 and 2004 (Howe and Straus, 1991) viewed plagiarism very differently based on the resources utilized. Students in this generation did not equate online and printed resources with the same reverence as previous generations had. Robinson-Zanartu and colleagues (2005) mentioned that for millennial

students, copying and pasting from an online resource was much more acceptable than from

a printed one. The further one was removed from the resource, the easier it was to justify the

behavior (Robinson-Zanartu et al., 2005). Fish and Hura (2013) continued this thought in

that several studies noted that many students believed that information online did not belong

to any particular author, could be utilized *carte blanche*, and did not need to be cited.

This information opened the door to a correlation between acts of plagiarism and

generational characteristics of students. In other words, it is believed that the era in which

one was born had the potential to predispose one to plagiarism. Robinson-Zanartu et al.

(2005) explained that defining ownership of thoughts and ideas for millennial students were

much different than that of their faculty counterparts. As information on the Internet was

free, ownership oftentimes became questionable for millennial students. In this case, copy

and pasting of sentences or paragraphs became almost second nature (Robinson-Zanartu et

al., 2005). This led to the idea that millennial students plagiarized more out of a need to get

things done rather than an intentional act of dishonesty. Senders (2008) continued this

explanation in that "assignments that have little relevance and interest for students may force

them to 'steal' things, usually words, that they frequently don't want or care about…just for

the sake of completing the assignment" (pp. 196-197).

Moreover, this same mentality was beginning to manifest in the high school arena as

student perceptions tended to lean toward the idea that if the information was on the Internet,

it was public domain and therefore need not be cited – even a direct quote (McCabe, 2005).

In a study of 2,294 high school juniors, McCabe (2005) found that "…16% of the

students reported turning in a paper secured from the Internet, and 52% admitted to copying a

few sentences without citing the source" (p. 239). In the eyes of many, this could imply

intentional cheating. The students were aware of what they were doing and the means they were utilizing to do it. As Townley and Parsell (2004) explained, "the [inter]net may allow those already attracted to plagiarism to steal another's work more efficiently and, more critically, that the breath of the content available online may make disguising such dishonesty far easier (as cited in Ison, 2014, p. 274). However, perhaps this was not quite what it seemed. Rather than just another 'dog ate my homework excuse,' could this be more readily defined as nonintentional/unintentional plagiarism? Jocoy and DiBiase (2006) noted,

> Writers' uses of the works of others are not always deliberate. Infractions may result from mismatches between the ethical norms of the academy and the workplace or simply from hasty and incomplete adaptation of passages copied and pasted from digital sources for reference purposes. (p. 2)

Jocoy and DiBiase (2006) discussed the notion of "unintentional cheating." In this scenario, a citation error was not considered so much plagiarism as it was incompetent writing ability. Keep in mind that the authors confirmed that intent did not negate the fact that plagiarism had occurred. Many addressed the idea of whether it was fair to penalize a student for plagiarism when the student was not aware that he or she had done so. Pincus and Schmelkin (2003) explained that "plagiarism may not be universally understood, and teachers cannot assume that every student comes into the classroom with the same belief system (p. 197). Fish and Hura (2013) added that it was important to note the academic level of the student; were they learning to write, or were they an experienced writer? One might also question what the expectations for understanding plagiarism were for students at varying levels of degree completion.

To complicate things even further, 21st Century learning was more focused than ever

before on collaboration, creativity, and innovation (Senders, 2008). Senders (2008) argued

that as students were continuously being asked to utilize blogs, wikis, web 2.0 tools and other

social media platforms to collaborate on assignments, citation became more of a gray area.

Howard and Davies (2009) declared that "in an age when students gravitate to online sources

for research – and when tremendous amounts of both reputable and questionable information

are available online – many have come to regard the Internet itself as a culprit in students'

plagiarism" (as cited in Ison, 2014, p. 274). As documents continued to evolve in a

continuous state of flux, the determination of authorship became increasingly problematic,

not only at the collegiate level, but at the high school level as well. High school juniors were

already predisposed to the mindset that online plagiarism was not a large concern. This

disconnect had the potential to substantially impact higher education in terms of how

academic administrators might resolve this differential in perspective.

     Yet another theme that presented in the research surrounding varying perceptions in

student justification and rationale in the classroom was what drove the intention to plagiarize.

In Selwyn's 2008 study involving online plagiarism amongst undergraduate students, he

reported that "for many students, therefore, the lack of risk associated with internet-based

plagiarism made it a relatively benign activity; in the words of another student, 'not

necessarily a bad thing unless I got caught'" (p. 475). So, aside from a lack of consequence,

why might students choose to plagiarize?

     A wide variety of characteristics and probabilities factored into why some people

were more likely to plagiarize than others. Choong and Brown (2007) found that younger,

immature students tended to plagiarize more than older, more mature students. Crown and

Spiller (1998) contended that those with higher GPAs tended to cheat less than those students

with lower GPAs as they had more to lose. One may also consider a lack of maturity, a lack

of interest in the assignment and a lack of writing experience as additional rationales for

research fodder (McCabe, 2005). Finally, intentions to cheat were driven by age, gender, and

peer association (McCabe & Trevino, 1997). McCabe and Trevino (1997) noted that when

respondents had the perception that their peers disapproved of plagiarism, infractions were

substantially lower.

Subsequently, Fish and Hura (2013) offered Social Norms Theory as another

potential rationale as to why students plagiarized. The basis of Social Norms Theory was

that people learned appropriate behaviors by watching the generally accepted behaviors of

others (Fish & Hura, 2013). If a student perceived plagiarism as being common in their

social/academic circle, and assuming that the consequences for the offense (if caught) would

be minor, they would be more likely to partake in an act of dishonesty as it would be an

acceptable behavior within his/her group (Fish & Hura, 2013).

Practitioners were also left to question whether course modality tied into why

students plagiarized. Postle (2009) indicated that "there is clear evidence that plagiarism is

increasing among students in higher education, greatly facilitated by access to Internet

sources (as cited in Ison, 2014, p. 274). Kennedy, Nowak, Thomas, and Davis (2000) stated

"that distance learning environments provide and promote opportunities for academic

dishonesty to a degree greater then found in traditional learning environments" (p. 309).

Selwyn (2008) supported this statement in defining online plagiarism as a form of "electronic

opportunism" when it came to today's technologically savvy student. Online resources and

social media platforms were providing new avenues for potential plagiarism to fester; and

students were finding innovative ways to leverage those platforms to their benefit. In a 2012

study of 639 students taking both online and residential courses, 57.2% agreed that it was easier to cheat in an online course versus a residential or face-to-face course (Miller & Young-Jones, 2012). To the contrary, Black, Greaser, & Dawson (2008) found in their study of 1,068 undergraduates enrolled in completely online psychology courses that 81% of those surveyed felt that there was no more cheating/plagiarism occurring online as compared to residential courses that they had taken. To be fair, the students who were surveyed in the Black et al. (2008) study were at the end of their academic career at a Level I Research Institution. Many researchers would expect to find those results in such a scenario. Black et al. (2008) may ultimately have understood the limitations of their study as they commented that "there may be the need to consider whether students engaged in online education have a fundamentally different perception of what does and does not constitute cheating compared to those in traditional educational environments" (p. 28). This additional research may help faculty and administrators to better understand the expectations and behaviors of primarily online students and the academic institutions they inhabit.

Finally, technology was changing at a faster rate than could have ever been anticipated. Students today are under tremendous pressure to succeed by their families, employers, and themselves. Perhaps this mentality has also created some external factors that are enticing students to plagiarize. Josien et al. (2015) explained "…that academic dishonesty is increasing; with the increase in tuition, the advance of technology, and the increase in online class offerings, new ways to engage in academic dishonesty are available for potential cheaters" (p. 21). Students want to complete their coursework as quickly as possible. Employers want their employees focused on their jobs and their teams without the interruption of college courses. A case can be made that with college tuition at an all-time

high, students can no longer afford to drag out their education, and thus are more prone to taking shortcuts. Based on these examples, it is easy to see how students could be lured into committing dishonest academic acts.

Faculty Bias

When asked about their classroom bias, many faculty members said that they were fair to all students and that bias was not a concern. As Conaway and Bethune (2015) noted "we do not live in a perfect world and racism as well as stereotyping does exist even at the collegiate level" (p. 162). Psychologist Beverly Daniel Tatum noted that "we absorb bias in the same way we breathe in smog – involuntarily and usually without any awareness of it" (as cited in Fiarman, 2016, p. 10). If what Daniel Tatum said is to be believed, faculty may not be remotely conscious of the implicit bias that they possess. Conaway and Bethune (2015) continued, "In online education the absence of [verbal/nonverbal] signals remove the barriers used to self-monitor attitudes and allows subconscious, internal attitudes to drive behavior" (p. 162). This notion played into the decisions that faculty members made on a routine basis.

In an average day, faculty make numerous decisions that could be influenced by bias. Who an instructor called on or did not call on, which student did or did not receive feedback, which plagiarism violations were or were not addressed were just a few considerations when discussing potential bias. While most individuals were not aware of these biases, decisions were often made subconsciously based on one's personal experiences and internalized thoughts or via social cognition, which is the tendency to develop bias not by means of previous experience, but rather by means of a family history of experience (Conaway & Bethune, 2015). Either way, Conaway and Bethune (2015) cited experience [personal or family] as a contributing factor in formulating a negative perception of others.

When discussing perceived bias, the notion of stereotypes is a common example (i.e., how we perceive people often dictates how we treat them). Oftentimes, it was the student name that became the stereotype. Conaway and Bethune (2015) explained that "it is possible that stereotypical student names often triggered implicit bias in instructors leading to group expectations that could often manifest in a variety of ways including lack of attention or negative evaluations" (p. 162). In their 2015 study, Conaway and Bethune included 147 online instructors in an exploration of bias towards student first names that traditionally could be associated with a specific race or ethnic group. With the help of a specifically created Implicit Attitudes Test and a sampling of Hispanic (Maria, Javier, Julio), African American (Jamal, Tyrell, Shamika) and Caucasian (Diana, Susan, Hunter) names, the results reflected a stronger implicit bias towards African American names versus their Hispanic and Caucasian counterparts (Conaway & Bethune, 2015). In other words, there was a higher association of traditional African American names with negative terminology and consequence.

Fiarman (2016) referenced a similar study at Stanford University where instructors were provided student discipline records that contained randomly assigned names. Fifty percent of the records were labeled with names insinuating that the students were African American, and the other half of the files were labeled with names that led one to believe that the students were Caucasian (Fiarman, 2016). The study showed that the instructors were more inclined to apply a more severe punishment for consistent misbehavior towards students they believed to be African American (Fiarman, 2016).

In many ways, faculty bias had the potential to substantially impact plagiarism reporting in terms of grading. Van Dam and Wheeler (2009) noted,

Educators tended to make assumptions about students that can have a

detrimental effect on their learning experience, and personal names may well

induce instructors to relegate a student to a particular racial or ethnic category

which can be unfairly used to make further assumptions about students based

on stereotype rather than ability. (as cited in Conaway & Bethune, p. 165)

In addition to racial stereotypes, there are numerous implicit biases that may be influencing

faculty reporting behavior. For example, Malouff (2008) created a list of items that could

potentially sway grading in the online environment. This list included assuming the student's

gender based on their first name, established grade history, (e.g., how well has the student

performed in the course thus far) and the depth of the instructor/student relationship

(Malouff, 2008). Again, as was mentioned earlier, bias was based on experience, both

personal and family affiliation. If this was indeed the case, it would be important to ensure

that biases were recognized as quickly as possible to ensure that students were being assessed

fairly and consistently. While research on this topic was a bit scarce, the available implicit

bias literature did aid in a better understanding of the inconsistent reporting behaviors of

faculty.

Faculty Fear of Retaliation

The next piece of this puzzle involved fear of retaliation, both from the student and

more importantly, the administration. Flint, Clegg, and MacDonald (2006) noted that faculty

did not always feel protected by university policies and procedures, especially in cases where

the student's academic future was in question. For example, a student was cited for a serious

plagiarism violation weeks before graduation. The consequences for this violation would

potentially eliminate the student's opportunity to graduate on time. How should the faculty

member proceed? A statement by Shapira (1993) further complicated the situation in that

"whatever his decision, he would have to take account of his strong feelings about cheating, the effects on [the student's] career, and the effect on other students' morale" (as cited in Flint et al., 2006, p. 147). Faculty members were torn between doing what was right (reporting) and what was expected from their administration (retaining students).

At times, faculty felt threatened by potential physical, psychological, and/or legal action based on the decisions that they made. In their 2006 study, Flint, Clegg, and MacDonald explained that "staff were concerned about the personal repercussions of confrontations with students" (p. 147). To stand their ground, faculty needed ample support from their administration. Unfortunately, faculty oftentimes felt that their administration would not support their decisions and that they would be asked to retract the violation they reported for what the institution deemed to be the 'best interest' of the student and the institution at large. Flint and her colleagues (2006) stated that faculty "did not always feel protected by university procedures" (p. 147). It was no longer just about the offense; it was about the consequences and potential fall out of the said offense.

In a study completed by Mathur and Offenbach in 2002, of 272 faculty members at Purdue University, it was found that 10% of faculty felt that they would not be able to submit a case of plagiarism without expecting some form of retaliation (Robinson-Zanartu et al., 2005). Robinson-Zanartu et al. (2005) mentioned that many faculty members were not interested in the evidence gathering process when plagiarism was suspected. Decoo (2002) stated that they feared "retaliation by the student, losing students…being accused of harassment or discrimination, and even…being sued for these offenses and/or defamation of character" (as cited in Robinson-Zanartu et al., 2005, p. 321).

While faculty/student conflict is never easy, one would assume that the academic

administration would be supportive of faculty as these cases were being reported. Research

told us that this was not always the case. Decoo (2002) reported that institutions tended to

keep integrity reporting quiet as the consequences of these violations could lead to an

undermining of credibility and increased public visibility for the academic institution. This

ideology often discouraged potential "whistle blowers" from coming forward. Again, faculty

were torn in their decision-making process. It was important to consider how this conflict

impacted the academic integrity culture, the relationships between faculty and administration,

and the messaging sent to our students; those who cheated and those who did not?

Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes

This notion of faculty engagement or a lack thereof offered the researcher a logistical

conduit to the final theme of her research, inconsistent plagiarism reporting tools and

processes. This theme brought the challenges of plagiarism reporting full circle, as the

researcher now returned to the dilemma of not having a common definition as to what

constituted plagiarism. Student accountability was compromised when faculty were not clear

on institutional expectations regarding plagiarism. Kiviniemi (2015) explained that "as many

as 40% of respondents in some surveys reported having ignored suspected academic

dishonesty" (p. 37). In a 2015 study, Holbeck et al. noted that faculty expressed multiple

reasons for their hesitancy to report plagiarism violations. Faculty felt that the reporting

process was cumbersome and time-consuming, not all paperwork was easily accessible, and

that additional training and norming sessions would be helpful to bridge the plagiarism

reporting gap (Holbeck et al., 2015). Behrendt et al. (2010) explained that "the most

common reasons faculty members ignored cheating were insufficient evidence, the stress

associated with confronting a student and following through, and the tediousness of a formal

hearing" (p. 15). Gallant (2008) stated that the "burden of large classes, committee work,

research demands, and fear of retribution or harassment by students" led to a reduction in plagiarism reporting (as cited in Behrendt et al., 2010, p. 15). To further this point, faculty were blatantly uncertain as to how to respond to instances of plagiarism, both in process and in consequence (Robinson-Zanartu et al., 2005).

Gallant (2008) opened the door to the notion of faculty responsibility. In his aforementioned quote, Gallant discussed the notion of faculty being overworked and lacking the time and effort necessary to address the plagiarism violations appropriately. Kiviniemi (2015) expanded on this point in that if faculty were not addressing these instances of plagiarism, they were doing their students a disservice. Faculty imposing lighter sentences for egregious errors, implied a substantial disconnect in terms of the significance of the offense and the proposed consequence. In their work, Miller and Young-Jones (2012) echoed Kiviniemi's faculty call to action in that "deterrence of cheating in online classes requires attention to new strategies that may be different from conventional classes" (p. 144). While many students continued to find new ways to cheat the system, faculty were challenged with finding new ways to elucidate the problem and establish resolution.

Perhaps there was more to the story. Kiviniemi (2015) believed that "faculty may be reluctant to admit responsibility to any larger entity, but in our teaching roles we act as agents of our institutions" (p 38). Therefore, it was important that faculty felt a sense of responsibility to act on behalf of their institution (Kiviniemi, 2015). To further his point, Kiviniemi discussed the notion of "alma mater." Alma mater referred to "bounteous mother" or "fostering mother" (Merriam-Webster, 1988). The mothering ideal fit into Kiviniemi's rationale for the importance of reporting plagiarism. He (2015) related the faculty and the educational institution to "intellectual parents" who were responsible for the ethical and

moral development of each student. Therefore, if faculty were not reporting plagiarism, they were doing a great injustice to their students.

It should come as no surprise that faculty are often asked to do more with less. Larger class sizes, increased pressure to publish, and additional duties as assigned often loomed in the background. McCabe (2005) mentioned that for many faculty, plagiarism prevention and reporting was simply "not their job" (as cited in Hudd, Apgar, Bronson, & Lee, 2009, p. 166). In their study, Walker and White (2014) explained that faculty felt incredibly pressured by their administration to appropriately balance their teaching load and research requirements. In the world of academia there was often the expectation "to publish or perish" (Walker & White, 2014, p. 680). Plagiarism detection, and dare it be said, prevention, was not a priority as financial compensation continued to be tied to research outputs (Walker & White, 2015). Time was of the essence and a lack thereof appeared to be a driving factor in terms of faculty perceived responsibility.

This internal struggle being experienced by faculty led the researcher to the institution itself. The literature revealed that overall, faculty felt unsupported by their own academic administration. Slow and cumbersome academic integrity reporting processes did not allow faculty the opportunity to balance their job responsibilities and address misconduct in their courses. Furthermore, Volpe, Davidson, and Bell (2008) determined that in certain instances faculty felt that the administration was not consistent in punishing students who violated academic integrity policies. Oftentimes, faculty decisions were overturned by administration creating a lack of confidence in the overall process which led to faculty perceptions that students were "getting away with it" and that their rationale and decisions were not trusted nor valued by the administration (Volpe et al., 2008, p. 681). To the contrary, Volpe et al.

(2008) also found that faculty tended to turn a blind eye to plagiarism committed by upper classmen when it was perceived that a formal committee inquiry would negatively impact student progress. While it was not uncommon for faculty to make decisions regarding plagiarism and its consequences, those decisions did not always align with institutional policies and procedures (Behrendt et al., 2010). This challenging differential could, and often did lead to inconsistent application of punitive consequences, ultimately leading to students being treated unfairly.

Practical Application to Higher Education

It was imperative to determine why this research was important and how it stood to impact higher education. On a most basic level, it was the students that made this research important. While there were always going to be those who found new ways to cheat the system, there were also those who sought to understand the integrity policies and procedures that would guide their academic work. Flint et al. (2006) explained that varying definitions of plagiarism and academic integrity in general could greatly affect the overall student experience. "Students noticed and were affected by inconsistent staff approaches to plagiarism, and in some cases did not feel they clearly understood the definitions or guidelines provided by the university" (Flint et al., 2006, p. 153). If there was no faculty present to assist in plagiarism navigation, students were often left in the dark in terms of what was appropriate behavior and what was not.

A student's choice to commit an act of plagiarism was more directly linked to faculty behavior than the researcher had originally assumed. Hard, Conway, and Moran (2006) explained that if faculty were not reporting instances of academic misconduct, students veered towards the belief that they had to cheat to keep up with their cheating counterparts. In a study by Love and Simmons (1998) students reported that their decisions to participate

in academic dishonesty were directly correlated to faculty leniency and perceived probability

of plagiarism reporting. Students continuously blamed the teachers for inappropriate

behavior as they "allowed students opportunities to be dishonest and thus were culpable for

the students' actions" (Nadelson, 2007, p. 68).

Additionally, students were greatly influenced by the perceived behavior of their

peers. Broeckelman-Post (2008) discussed Festinger's Social Comparison Theory in terms

of how students looked to their peers to validate their own attitudes and behaviors. This also

tied back to the notion of faculty responsibility. In this circumstance, faculty had the

opportunity to create or enforce a perception that plagiarism was not an issue and that other

students were not cheating (Broeckelman-Post, 2008). To create this enforcement, they

needed to communicate with students about the academic integrity culture, the definition of

plagiarism in terms of specific assignments rather than broad generalizations, and the

punitive consequences that ensued when plagiarism was detected.

Plagiarism violations were continuing to rise at an alarming rate at institutions of

higher learning all over the world (Josien et al., 2015). A thorough review of the literature

presented numerous rationales as to why faculty should assume responsibility in the

plagiarism reporting process were found. Their ownership resided in not only determining

what constituted plagiarism, but also when to report a case, and the punitive level of

consequence to be applied.

Little research has been completed in terms of faculty perceptions and behaviors

related to the plagiarism reporting process, even less so in the online modality. However, it

was this sense of hesitation or a failure to commit to taking action to address the violation

that baffled the researcher. Faculty continued to provide conflicting information in terms of

plagiarism expectations, when to report a violation, and the appropriate consequence to apply (Flint et al., 2008).

Consistency, responsibility, bias, retaliation, and administration all play a monumental role in faculty decision making. A solution must be found to eliminate this incessant hesitation and uncertainty regarding plagiarism reporting. If not, we are faced with a significant disconnect amongst academic administrators, faculty, and students regarding plagiarism expectations and consequence application.

CHAPTER 3.   METHODOLOGY

Plagiarism has become a growing concern in academia. In their study, Robinson and Glanzer (2017) noted that more than two-thirds of college students today have cheated during their academic career; however, studies showed that faculty reporting was not increasing at an equivalent rate. The literature provided the researcher with a better understanding of how plagiarism impacted faculty reporting behaviors. This understanding provided the base necessary to create a research study that centered on faculty plagiarism reporting behavior in a predominantly online environment. The study focused on five predetermined value statement factors derived from the literature available on plagiarism that had been shown to impact faculty reporting behaviors in previous studies. These factors included: Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation, and Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes. Through a pragmatic mixed methods study, the researcher was able to show a correlation between the value statement factors and faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors by addressing the following research questions:

RQ1: "How do the value statements on plagiarism correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2: "How do *value statement factors* (i.e., *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors?"

Research Question 2 was disaggregated by value statement factors. These factors were either internal or external to the faculty participant. Each value statement factor was defined in

Chapter 2. For a more specific reference, individual value statements on plagiarism for each value statement factor can be found in the Plagiarism Questionnaire (Appendix A).

Internal Factors:

    RQ2a: "How does the *plagiarism defined* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2b: "How does the *student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2c: "How does the *faculty bias* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2d: "How does the *faculty fear of retaliation* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

External Factor:

    RQ2e: "How does the *inconsistent plagiarism reporting processes* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3: "Which faculty demographic variables (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status*, and *Programmatic Area of Expertise*) show higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Research Question 3 was disaggregated by Plagiarism Questionnaire demographics:

    RQ3a: "How does *gender* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3b: "How does *highest academic credential earned* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3c: "How does *ethnicity* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3d: "How does *age* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3e: "How does *years of teaching experience* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3f: "How does *academic status* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3g: "How does *programmatic area of expertise* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

In its simplest form, the purpose of this study was to solve a problem at the researcher's academic institution. Student plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional, was on the rise and yet faculty were waiting longer and longer to report these violations. It was imperative for the researcher to determine why these behaviors were occurring in order to provide recommendations and establish a plan of action for this institution. The results of this study were eagerly awaited by policy makers for the purpose of creating change within the plagiarism reporting expectations of the institution, as well as to the reporting tools and procedures currently available to faculty.

In their text, Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015) noted that a pragmatic study was one that utilized whatever research methodology necessary to solve a problem, or as the authors stated, choosing a research method that "most readily illuminates the research questions" (p. 557). For this purpose, a mixed methods study was selected that not only addressed how the

value statement factors from the available literature on plagiarism potentially impacted faculty reporting behaviors (quantitative data), but also to how these reporting behaviors were being perceived in real time by the Academic Deans who supervised these faculty (qualitative data).

The researcher provided direction to this study by employing a sequential (QUAN → qual), explanatory design to its organizational structure (Hibberts & Burke Johnson, 2012). As Fraenkel et al. (2015) explained, this design was prioritized with a primary focus on quantitative data that identified the important variables and established the correlational relationships between those variables. The secondary focus of this design was the qualitative data which was meant to substantiate the quantitative findings (Fraenkel et al., 2015). After the integration took place, the data sets were combined and interpreted to determine the results of the study.

<div align="center">**Sampling and Recruitment**</div>

Quantitative Process

The target population for this study included approximately 1,700 online faculty spanning 22 campuses of a private college. However, when participant evaluation criteria noted on the next page were applied to determine the final pool, the accessible population was significantly reduced to 867. This reduction in available participants was still large enough to produce both the ideal samples size of 100 participants as well as a sample that would be highly representative of the institution being studied.

Participants meeting the evaluation criteria were scheduled to teach during the study (July 1 – September 30, 2019) and had taught in the online modality during the past three years. The three-year time frame for teaching online courses requirement included in the participant evaluation criteria was put in place to account for those continuing faculty who

traditionally taught in the online modality but had been scheduled in a residential capacity during the term of the study.

It was imperative to ensure that the sample was as representative of the institution as possible. For this to occur, a variety of evaluation criteria were employed to create a more balanced playing field across programs. Nursing clinical instructors and law enforcement skills instructors were eliminated due to the predominantly residential nature of their courses. CBE instructors were eliminated due to the dual instructional nature of their courses and grading rubric challenges. Those participants meeting the evaluation criteria were invited to volunteer their time, effort, and expertise in answering a variety of questions defining their beliefs and plagiarism reporting practices in the online classroom.

Fraenkel et al. (2015) cautioned that a volunteer sample could become biased quickly due to the nature of the participants. Topic zealots and participants with too much time on their hands had the potential to send a research study down the wrong path very quickly. To combat this plausible bias, the researcher opted for a standardized participant evaluation criterion to eliminate potential outliers in addition to a virtual focus group that was used to substantiate the quantitative data.

As previously mentioned, the researcher would not have access to any faculty that she currently or had ever supervised during her employment. The numbers listed at the beginning of this segment reflect this population adjustment. It is also worthy of note that all participants in this study met the evaluation criteria listed below:

- Participants were scheduled to teach during the study (i.e., July 1 to September 30, 2019) and had taught an online course during the past three years.

- Participants taught within the following disciplines: Business, Education, Technology, Design, Justice Studies, Health Sciences, and/or Nursing.

- Participants consisted of full-time and part-time faculty who held a minimum of an Associate degree in field.

- Participants were provided with an online course shell populated with the applicable curriculum, assignments, and gradebook for their course. (Predetermined Curriculum)

- Faculty who taught only competency-based education courses, nursing clinical courses, or law enforcement skills courses, would not be eligible for this study.

As recruitment began, faculty included in the accessible population received an email on July 1, 2019, relaying the details of the study (see Appendix C). The email included a Letter of Informed Consent (see Appendix D) that needed to be completed prior to accessing the hyperlink to the online questionnaire. The Plagiarism Questionnaire was available to the participants from July 1, 2019 to September 30, 2019. During this time, participants were emailed weekly reminders requesting that they complete the Plagiarism Questionnaire at their earliest convenience.

Qualitative Process

In terms of the virtual focus group, convenience sampling was necessary. To organize the nine-member face-to-face focus group in a central location became challenging when the deans to whom the researcher needed access worked at campuses in Minnesota, North Dakota, Kansas, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Florida. To further complicate the circumstance, there were also several deans not affiliated with a specific campus but were

rather classified as online deans that were responsible for our fully online students. These deans could be working from anywhere in the country. To mitigate this pending challenge, the decision was made to host a virtual focus group via WebEx Virtual Meeting Space. WebEx provided the flexibility and archiving ability necessary to conduct this meeting virtually. It is worth noting that the meeting audio was connected through a landline phone. As such, the meeting was also recorded by a handheld digital recording device placed near the phone's speaker as a failsafe on the odd chance that the virtual archive failed. All participants were required to attend the full duration of the meeting while maintaining webcam presence throughout the session. This expectation allowed the researcher to key in on specific facial cues and body language that would have not been possible within the confines of a standard conference call.

Deans who participated in the virtual focus group were selected based on a variety of criteria that included: availability, campus size, campus location, and the types of programs offered at their respective campuses. Additionally, it was necessary to consider the length of employment of each dean. Most deans within this collegiate system had been employed with the institution for over eight years. This extended length of employment raised concerns of the participants viewing the data from a 'what has always been done' mentality rather than the 'what can be done' mindset that was necessary to ensure a successful outcome for this study. As such, a fresh perspective was critical to this analytical evaluation. This meant ensuring an appropriate mix of both newly hired and experienced deans to perpetuate a balance in perspective.

Once selected, the members of the focus group met on Friday, October 11, 2019 for approximately two hours to discuss the data analysis from Phase 1 of the study. Participants

were provided a file of data that housed both response reporting for each question, mean

score comparison data from participant demographics and plagiarism reporting behavior data

as related to faculty beliefs and reporting tendencies, and a variety of statistical data that

represented specific demographic characteristics (e.g., faculty status, credential, years of

teaching experience) a week prior to the session to ensure that they had the time to review the

data points before the focus group convened. The goal of this virtual session was to further

evaluate and substantiate the data points by means of pragmatic application. Focus group

participants provided insight and additional perspective to the results of the questionnaire that

in turn, further defined them. They shared with the group how the data points from the

Plagiarism Questionnaire aligned specifically to faculty reporting behaviors that they

observed on their campuses and in their online courses.

Recruitment for participation in this portion of the study was very similar to faculty

recruitment in Phase 1. Specific Academic Deans across the college received an email

invitation that described the study and their potential participation commitment (see

Appendix E). Interested participants were asked to complete a Letter of Informed Consent

(see Appendix F) that confirmed their commitment to participate in the Focus Group

Discussion. Upon receiving the Letter of Informed Consent, the researcher sent out a Survey

Monkey link to detail their availability within a two-week window of time in October 2019.

Participants were conveniently sampled from the Survey Monkey results and selection

criteria.

Ethical Considerations

When sampling was considered for both phases of this study, ethical responsibility

was a critical component to incorporate. While it was important to represent a large cross-

section of the 22 campuses and deans involved in the study for purposes of institutional

generalizability, validity also needed to be considered. It was important to the researcher that this study produced the desired outcomes while also maintaining the trustworthiness required by the scientific and educational communities.

As the evaluation criteria were applied to the target population, what emerged was a smaller group of potential participants than the researcher had anticipated. Eliminating faculty who taught solely CBE, nursing clinical, and law enforcement skills courses, or those who were not teaching during the study, excluded hundreds of potential participants. However, these exclusions also created a pool of participants that would be not only logistically more available to participate in the study but who were also in a position to submit a plagiarism violation (i.e., instructional faculty teaching CBE courses were not involved in the grading process and did not submit any type of academic misconduct/plagiarism violation). Moreover, the remaining 867-member participant pool provided an exciting mix of faculty with varying credentials, teaching experience, and physical locations.

As with any practitioner-based research, there was the challenge of participants being hesitant to involve themselves in an internal study for fear of retaliation. While the researcher had no direct reporting lines to any of the faculty participating in the study, plagiarism tended to be a sensitive subject when retention rates, course pass rates, end of term student evaluations, and quarter/semester-based metrics were factored into the equation. Consequently, it was important to maintain complete anonymity when working with faculty participants in the first phase of the study which referenced the likelihood of faculty reporting an academic integrity violation. The only potential harm to participants anticipated at this time would be an increased anxiety as to who may have access to the data. To circumvent

this prospective psychological aggressor, it would be essential to inform participants via the Letter of Informed Consent (see Appendix D) as to how the data would be managed and stored to ensure complete confidentiality.

While the questionnaire was completely anonymous, the focus group was a virtual discussion with the researcher's peers. There were minor concerns relating to potential personal bias impacting the study in terms of the personal relationships that the researcher had with some of the focus group participants. An interview script was created specifically for this purpose (see Appendix H); however, as this was a virtual meeting where all participants would be required to utilize a webcam, the facial expressions and body language of the researcher could potentially impact the conversation. This notion gave the researcher reason to pause. It was quite possible for her to inadvertently lead the conversation in a direction based on her own personal reactions to participant commentary that may be contrary or even aligned to her preconceived notions of what the data may represent upon initial analysis. To combat this potential bait and switch, it was necessary for the researcher to minimize the use of her webcam during the discussion while also maintaining as neutral a tone as possible when relaying questions to the participants

The information provided through the survey tool and focus group discussion was considered highly sensitive. This information included: completed questionnaires, notes and transcription work, coding analysis, and audio/video files. As such, it was housed, analyzed, and interpreted on a password-protected private computer for the duration of the study. Original audio/video recordings remained on their respective recording devices and were housed in the researcher's personal home office until they were no longer needed.

Variable Associations

The basis for this study focused on five predetermined value statement factors derived

from the available literature that could potentially deter faculty from reporting instances of plagiarism.

- A consistent and universal definition of plagiarism did not exist. If faculty did not have a clear understanding of how to define plagiarism, how could they be expected to hold their students accountable?

- Student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom created challenges for consistency. The notion of what constituted a credible resource, how Millennials viewed citation, intentional versus nonintentional plagiarism, technology challenges, and why students plagiarized raised a red flag for faculty when determining whether a violation had taken place and if/when it should be reported.

- Faculty bias did occur in the college classroom, both online and residentially. Who an instructor called on and who they did not, and behaviors that an instructor opted to report were prime examples of faculty bias in practice. These seemingly inconsequential decisions played a substantial role in course outcomes. Stereotypes, perceived time to graduation, and socioeconomic background were implicit biases that further complicated the decision-making process.

- Retaliation was a very real fear for many faculty members. This could be student or administration driven. In the days of helicopter parenting, litigious students, and capricious academic administrations, instructors had cause for concern.

- Inconsistent plagiarism reporting processes was the final factor. Not having the necessary tools to proactively approach student course work and cumbersome reporting processes did nothing to convince faculty that reporting plagiarism violations was a vital part of their job. In this case, faculty became satisfied as a

reactive participant, shirking their academic responsibilities and reporting plagiarism

violations only when necessary.

For the purposes of this study, these value statement factors were broken down into

subsets of value statements on plagiarism, which ultimately served as the independent

variables for the study. The goal was to establish a correlation between these value

statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. In terms of association,

the relationship between the independent variable (value statements on plagiarism) and the

dependent variable (faculty plagiarism reporting behavior) had already been established

through a variety of studies included in the accompanying literature review. What was not

certain was the level of association that each variable could potentially produce. To better

define this association, the researcher turned to the plagiarism questionnaire that she had

designed for this study (see Appendix A and B). Section 1 addressed specific value

statements for each value statement factor. Section 2 addressed specific questions related to

plagiarism reporting behavior that a faculty could potentially experience in their online

classrooms. These questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior specifically

asked how likely faculty would be in submitting these situational plagiarism violations to

their academic administration.

The researcher established both the Null Hypothesis (i.e., there is no relationship

between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior) and

the Alternative Hypothesis (i.e., there is a relationship between the value statements on

plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors). Based on Leon Festinger's (1957)

theory on cognitive dissonance, the researcher was led to believe that humans have a desire

to keep their belief systems and behaviors aligned in harmony; a cognitive consistency if you

will. If Festinger's theory proved true, the relationship described in the alternative

hypothesis should be positive. For example, a faculty member selecting "strongly agree"

when answering the question, *I have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism*

earned the highest score of 6. In turn, that same faculty member should therefore respond

with a higher degree of likelihood of reporting (e.g., a score of 9-10) when answering the

corresponding question linked to reporting behavior, *Student X turned in a paper that is 85%*

copied from a student submission turned in two quarters ago. How likely would you be to

report this as a plagiarism violation? In this example, faculty beliefs and behavior directly

aligned.

As the statistical data emerged from the study, the results would either accept or

reject the Null Hypothesis. If the Null Hypothesis was accepted, no relationship was found

between the independent and dependent variables. However, if a relationship between the

independent and dependent variables were found, the Alternative Hypothesis would be

accepted and the Null Hypothesis rejected.

It is important to note that the questionnaire was structured in such a way that the

value statements on plagiarism were strategically aligned to the accompanying questions

related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. There were five value statement factors

represented in the questionnaire, each containing five to six value statements on plagiarism.

There were also 10 questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. Each value

statement factor and its value statements on plagiarism were represented in two of the

questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior to better define the degree of

correlation between personal belief and plagiarism reporting tendency. For example,

- Fear of Retaliation Value Statement from Section 1 of the Plagiarism

Questionnaire: *I fear physical and/or psychological retaliation from students when reporting plagiarism.*

directly correlated to:

- Scenario Question from Section 2 of the Plagiarism Questionnaire: *You discovered that Student X submitted a purchased paper for their final project. You provided feedback to the student to let them know that a plagiarism violation would be issued. Student X was extremely angry about this citation. He/She denied purchasing the paper. Student X then threatened you with physical harm unless the violation was retracted. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?*

If the proposed alternative hypothesis were true, the researcher would expect to see a higher degree of positive correlation between the two questions. Therefore, if a participant selected a higher level of agreement within the value statements on plagiarism, the more likely they were to score higher on the questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. The reverse would be true as well in that if a participant selected a lower level of agreement within the value statements, the less likely they would be to report a plagiarism violation.

Internal Validity

The words of Fraenkel et al. (2015) were of great importance when considering the internal validity of this research project. For a study to achieve high levels of internal validity, the relationships between variables should be based on the influence of those variables rather than something else (Fraenkel et al., 2015). That 'something else' often generated multiple explanations for the relationships found in the data. Higher levels of internal validity assumed limited levels of explanation (e.g., there are fewer possible interpretations of the data). They went on to state that "a researcher who conducts a

correlational study should always be alert to alternative explanations for relationships found in data" (Fraenkel et al., 2015, p. 341). For this study to have good internal validity, the 'alternative explanations' needed be ruled out to ensure that they were not responsible for manipulating the results (Fraenkel et al., 2015). For this reason, it was important to address the largest threats to the internal validity of this research project to ensure a legitimate and reliable outcome (see Table 3.1).

To better address the external threats of this study, it was important to isolate, or control as many of the extraneous variables as possible. Specific to this study, course modality (online rather than residential), experience level of students (i.e., credential sought by student), the learning management system, student time to completion (i.e., first quarter/semester student vs. an eighth quarter/semester student), instructor experience and programmatic expectations were controlled within participation selection criteria in order to provide fewer opportunities for outlying responses. However, there were a few items that were substantially more difficult to control.

Participant commitment to the study was critical. With a volunteer-based sampling method, there were no guarantees regarding participation. As a 100-member participant pool was desired for the purposes of this study, the researcher realized that she may have to extend the timeline of the study from one academic quarter to two. This extension would not only provide additional time for completion, but it would also give the researcher access to additional faculty who may not have been teaching during the summer term.

Table 3.1

Extraneous variables and the minimization of potential effects.

Extraneous Variables	How to Potentially Eliminate/Minimize Their Effect
Experience level of the students (First quarter students versus fourth quarter and beyond)	When establishing the accessible population, it would be important to create a potential participant pool that teaches to a variety of student experience levels (e.g., an instructor who teaches only first quarter students might have a very different perspective in terms of academic integrity versus an instructor whose primary role is educating students in their final quarter).
Learning Management System	The institution being studied hosts a variety of Learning Management Systems for distance education delivery. For the purpose of this study, faculty selected as participants would only teach faculty-led online courses in the Blackboard Learn 2.0 Learning Management System. This study would not include Competency Based Education instructors teaching in the Moodle platform.
Time to Course Completion	The institution being studied maintains three timelines for course completion: 5.5-week courses, 6 week courses, and 12 week courses. It would important to ensure faculty representation from all three timelines to ensure reliability/validity for the study.
Participant discrepancies in reporting expectations based on the policies of other academic institutions they may be teaching for.	The questionnaire provided to all participants specifically stated that all information included in their responses should be correlated to their personal experience at the academic institution currently under study.
Programmatic discipline of participants	Some programs might be considered more rigorous in terms of content and ethical responsibility than others (e.g., nursing versus graphic design). It would be important to elaborate on the programmatic areas represented in the study and their probable impact on the results.

The time commitment for the participants was minor. For the questionnaire, each

participant was asked to complete the survey only once (roughly 10-15 minutes), in effect

minimizing the time and effort required for participation in the study. This also eliminated any potential threat to instrument decay. When considering the qualitative portion of the research, actual participation time for the participants was less than two hours which allowed the group to remain engaged and focused on the task at hand. This minimal time commitment helped to ensure a healthy participation rate.

Additionally, location was difficult to account for, especially as each faculty member participated from a different location. This variance in locality produced fluctuating levels of agreement in terms of how the external factors impacted faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors. How participants in one geographic area responded to plagiarism could be completely different from another. While faculty location was not a critical component to this study, it was important to create a sample that was representative of the institutional population. For the sake of transparency, the decision was made to include a demographic question related to the participant's current state of residence. This adjustment would address the variances that might ensue.

Finally, the questionnaire could potentially suffer from data collector bias. It was essential to ensure that each question was properly evaluated to align to the context variable rather than a question that directly related to research outcomes (e.g., leading questions). As such, it was important to establish an acceptable content validity index score prior to beginning the study.

Plagiarism Questionnaire Design Process

To initiate the process, it was important to strategically align the questionnaire structure as much as possible. The first section of the 37-item survey included questions related to the value statement factors. These questions addressed personal beliefs relevant to each value statement factor via a Likert Scale ranking that included the following response

options: "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Somewhat Agree," "Somewhat Disagree," "Disagree,"

and "Strongly Disagree." The second section of the questionnaire contained a series of

strategically created questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior (dependent

variable) that directly aligned to the value statements on plagiarism in Section 1 of the

questionnaire. Two scenario-based questions were directly aligned to their respective value

statement factors. The purpose of this alignment was to further explore faculty plagiarism

reporting behaviors based on the personal beliefs of each participant. Participants were asked

to determine whether they would be likely to report the instance as a plagiarism violation by

responding yes or no. Additional space was left for supporting commentary. However, this

format was changed in the Plagiarism Questionnaire presented to the full-scale study

participants from the yes/no responses to a sliding scale that ranged from 0 – "Extremely

Unlikely" to 10 – "Extremely Likely" in attempt to align the overall point totals. The final

questions of the survey focused on participant demographics.

Once the questionnaire construction was completed, a group of subject matter experts

(SMEs) were compiled to vet the questionnaire for the purposes of obtaining a content

validity index score. This group consisted of nine Academic Deans representing the

institution being studied and an academic integrity expert from London, England. The deans

were chosen based on their familiarity with online faculty and their knowledge and expertise

in navigating the current plagiarism reporting process for the institution, whereas the

academic integrity expert was included to provide insight into the plagiarism reporting

challenges experienced by faculty throughout the world. These SMEs reviewed the

questionnaire and responded to each question in terms of it being "essential to measure the

construct," "useful but not necessary to measure the construct," or "not necessary to measure

the construct." Based on the work of Lawshe (1975), for the researcher to include a question

in the final survey, a 62% agreement between the SMEs was necessary (see Figure 3.1).

Number of SMEs	Content Validity Ratio (CVR) Required to Retain an Item
5	Minimum of .99
6	0.99
7	0.99
8	0.78
9	0.75
10	0.62
15	0.49

Figure 3.1. Content validity index – requirements of agreement for subject matter experts when making decisions relating to retaining an item. Adapted from "A Quantitative Approach to Content Validity," by C. H. Lawshe, 1975, Personnel Psychology, 28, p. 568. Copyright 1975 by Personnel Psychology, Inc.

A full account of the SME analysis can be found in Appendix G. All questions

housed within the final questionnaire met the 62% threshold for agreement. The plagiarism

questionnaire achieved a Content Validity Index score of 82.8%. Once the final agreement

was achieved, the questionnaire was then reconstructed in Qualtrics, an online survey

software that created virtual accessibility to the questionnaire for its participants via an online

hyperlink.

Data Collection

The data collection strategy was a two-tiered progression that included both

individual and group statistical gathering. Phase 1 consisted of 101 voluntary faculty

participants that completed a 37-item anonymous questionnaire that explored the

correlational relationships between five value statement factors derived from the available

literature and faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors. Phase 2 included the collection of

focus group data provided by nine Academic Deans. Participants were asked to examine the

Phase 1 questionnaire data. Each participant was asked to first discuss their initial reactions

to the survey data in terms of what may have surprised them, or what may have confirmed what they already knew. They were then asked a series of questions that prompted a discussion that delivered a broader context to the survey results. The data collected from this focus group provided a deeper understanding of the relationships that existed between faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors and the predetermined external factors. Additionally, the data also created a starting point to determine how one might navigate the changes necessary to alleviate the impact of these factors.

Prior to implementing this strategy into the research study, it was essential to ensure an appropriate Cronbach's alpha score for the survey tool. Fraenkel et al. (2015) explained that the purpose of the Cronbach's alpha score was to calculate the reliability of the proposed instrument. To do this, a pilot study of the questionnaire was necessary. The goal of the pilot study was to determine internal consistency of the questionnaire via Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability. As Goforth (2015) explained,

> Cronbach's alpha is a measure used to assess the reliability, or internal consistency, of a set of scale or test items. In other words, the reliability of any given measurement refers to the extent to which it is a consistent measure of a concept, and Cronbach's alpha is one way of measuring the strength of that consistency. (para. 2)

The resulting reliability score ranges from 0-1. The closer the score to 1, the more the survey items and variables have shared covariance which leads one to the assumption that they are all more than likely measuring the same overall concept (Goforth, 2015). Goforth noted that in educational settings, a Cronbach's alpha score of between a .65-.80 are recommended, while a score of a .50 or less is usually unacceptable in the world of academic research.

To establish the questionnaire's coefficient of reliability, the researcher employed a pilot study involving faculty currently or previously managed by her, or 91 potential participants. It was important to note that the pilot study data were only utilized for establishing the instrument's coefficient of reliability. Additionally, the question related to 'current state of residence' in the revised questionnaire was left out of the main study as all faculty were managed by the researcher and an assumption could be made that they would have similar plagiarism reporting expectations. The question of residence as it appeared in the Revised Plagiarism Questionnaire (see Appendix A) met the 62% agreement threshold necessary to establish construct validity.

These 91 potential participants were sent an email on April 1, 2019 requesting their participation in the main study. This email did not include a Letter of Informed Consent as the data would not be utilized in the final results of the research study. Participants were immediately provided access to the hyperlink for the online questionnaire housed in Qualtrics. Additionally, these potential participants were provided weekly reminders to complete the questionnaire at their earliest convenience. These reminders included a hard close of the questionnaire on April 30, 2019.

As participants completed the Plagiarism Questionnaire, the researcher built her database within the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Version 26 (SPSS 26), that accounted for each question housed within the Plagiarism Questionnaire. This step allowed the researcher to upload participant raw data from Qualtrics directly into the SPSS 26 database to complete further statistical analysis and more important, to establish the Plagiarism Questionnaire's coefficient of reliability through Cronbach's alpha analysis. It was important to note that 33 faculty completed the Plagiarism Questionnaire for a return rate

of 36%. The Cronbach's alpha score and the changes made to the Plagiarism Questionnaire based on the outcomes of this pilot study are discussed at length in Chapter 4.

Statistical Analysis

The Plagiarism Questionnaire was developed to provide a mix of both quantitative and categorical data for this study. In terms of quantitative data, there were a range of scores that could potentially provide insight into the belief system of each participant based on the "I believe," "I feel," "I fear," and "I know/understand" statements. Each value statement on plagiarism (independent variable) was scored via a six-point Likert Scale that included the following responses: (6pts) "Strongly Agree," (5pts) "Agree," (4pts), "Somewhat Agree," (3pts) "Somewhat Disagree," (2pts) "Disagree," and (1pt) "Strongly Disagree." The questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior (dependent variable) were scored on a sliding scale from 0-10 (extremely unlikely to extremely likely) denoting the likelihood of a participant reporting a plagiarism violation. As such, the questionnaire was constructed to detail a level of correlation between the independent and dependent variables.

The point allotment discrepancy was based on a total number of points. Participants would receive a total score for the 20 value statements on plagiarism, and a total score for the 10 questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. For the value statements on plagiarism, participants could receive a score as high as 120 or as low as 20 (i.e., participant selected "Strongly Agree" or "Strongly Disagree" for all responses). However, utilizing the same scoring ideology for the questions related to faculty reporting plagiarism behavior could provide a participant with a score as high as 60 and as low as 0. The goal was to close the gap of these two numbers for the sake of plotting the data (i.e., frequency polygons). The decision to include a sliding scale of 0-10 would move the high score from 60-100 and the low score remaining at zero, which created a more balanced set of data.

The supposed relationship detailed earlier in this section noted that those participants selecting a higher level of agreement in the value statements on plagiarism would have a higher level of reporting tendency in the questions related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. To move this potential relationship notion forward, the researcher opted to include a correlational component to her study. Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2015) explained that "the most meaningful research is that which seeks to find, or verify, relationships among variables" (pp. 204-205). The goal was to find a correlation between the independent variable (the five value statement factors) and the dependent variable (faculty plagiarism reporting behavior).

For Research Questions 1 and 2, this potential relationship would be further tested utilizing the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient, or Pearson r. In Research Question 1, the Pearson r test would be run to explore the potential correlation between the value statement factors (independent variable) and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior (dependent variable). In Research Question 2, the Pearson r would be run to explore the potential correlation between the value statements on plagiarism (independent variable) and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior (dependent variable). Fraenkel et al. (2015) explained that "when the data for both variables are expressed in terms of quantitative scores, the Pearson r is the appropriate correlation coefficient to use" as it insinuates a relationship that is often described by a straight line (p. 208). Excluding the demographic information, all data was quantitative in nature and could be compared in terms of relationship.

These scores resulted in either a positive correlation (high scores on both variables or low scores on both variables) or a negative correlation (high score on one variable and a low score on the other). The closer the score is to +/-1, the greater the likelihood of correlation.

When considering how large a correlation coefficient must be to suggest a substantial

relationship, Fraenkel et al. (2015) explained that a Pearson *r* equal to .41-.60 was acceptable

and quite common in educational research. This range defined a substantial enough

relationship to be of both theoretical and practical use. Questions were raised pertaining to

why these differentials existed and how they could be addressed within the institution.

Research Question 3 was specifically tied to demographic characteristics and their

impact on faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. Effective organization of data that allowed

the researcher to summarize or interpret the results to better serve our research purpose(s)

was critical. Questionnaire participants were asked to disclose academic rank, highest

academic credential earned, ethnicity, gender, programmatic expertise, and location as well

as total combined years of teaching experience and age. These items were key to

determining geographic and institutional trends specific to which faculty were more likely to

report instances of plagiarism and why.

When considering the descriptive statistics necessary to answer Research Question 3,

mean scores and standard deviation became significant in the statistical analysis of this data.

The researcher found value in comparing the mean scores of the demographic data to the

mean scores of the faculty plagiarism reporting behavior data. Faculty plagiarism reporting

data was established through 10 scenario-based questions in the researcher's Plagiarism

Questionnaire that indicated likelihood of reporting the scenario as a plagiarism violation.

When the resulting data were cut by overall demographics, a larger picture of how each

specific demographic variable could potentially impact the likelihood of a faculty member

submitting a plagiarism violation evolved.

If mean scores were found to be similar with small degrees of variance, typical, low,

and high ranges for each variable were calculated. The researcher utilized the normal

distribution of plagiarism behavior scores to determine low plagiarism behavior (i.e., < -

1SD), typical plagiarism behavior (i.e., -1SD to +1SD), and high plagiarism reporting

behavior (i.e., > +1SD) to determine if there were any noticeable outliers that could

potentially denote an impact on the likelihood of a faculty member reporting an instance of

plagiarism

   As a follow up to the questionnaire, nine Academic Deans participated in a focus

group (two hours in length) to offer additional insight and perspective into the questionnaire

results. This conversation was driven by six purposefully constructed questions (based on

quantitative results) whose aim was to elicit an increased understanding of why the resulting

behaviors were occurring and if these behaviors were aligning to what these deans were

experiencing on their campuses and in their online classrooms. The session was recorded via

WebEx as well as a hand-held digital audio recorder on Friday, October 11, 2019. The audio

file was uploaded as an MP3 into a transcription program serviced by Trint.

   Once the transcription file was complete and final edits were made, the coding

process began. Throughout what would become the coding process, it was important to keep

the data analysis consistent and extremely explicit in terms of what was done and when to

ensure overall credibility. As such, data were appropriately coded utilizing the Data Analysis

Spiral method which involved approaching the data by means of analytical circles rather than

a linear approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

   With this type of coding, data was organized and managed, and the researcher read

the data and noted emerging ideas in the margins of the focus group transcript. The notes

consisted of thoughts, ideas, observations, and questions that stood out to the researcher as

being of interest to her research questions. Next, the commentary of the researcher along

with the participant narrative began to take shape in the form of codes. These primary codes

represented key items pulled from the focus group discussion. Once the primary codes were

established, it was important to categorize the codes into a broader context. As these

categories were created, the researcher aligned each individual code under these broader

secondary codes. As the categorization phase ended, the final codes were then analyzed and

interpreted even more broadly as themes. The resulting themes and codes were then put into

table format with their respective qualitative supporting data in the Virtual Focus Group

Code Book (see Appendix I). The spiraled analysis was concluded with a representation

and/or visualization of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This visual representation will be

presented in Chapter 4. Upon completion of the analysis, the data from this focus group were

combined with the quantitative results for a final analysis and interpretation that is discussed

in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4.   RESULTS OF THE STUDY

As the researcher considered the outcomes of this study, the words of Hal Elrod provided a lens for the researcher to consider: "be committed to the process without being emotionally attached to the results." While gathering data can be emotionally taxing for the researcher, it remains vital that passion does not cloud judgement and logic. In Chapter 4, the researcher offers an objective and detailed account of both the quantitative and qualitative data on what participating faculty believed about plagiarism and the likelihood of them reporting an instance of plagiarism.

Summary of the Study

Purpose

As noted in Chapter 3, plagiarism has become a growing concern in academia. Robinson and Glanzer (2017) noted that more than two-thirds of college students today have cheated during their academic career; however, the literature indicated that faculty reporting was not increasing at an equivalent rate. The available literature provided the researcher with a better understanding of how plagiarism impacted faculty reporting behaviors within her institution. This understanding supplied the base necessary to create a research study that centered on faculty plagiarism reporting behavior in a predominantly online college. This study focused on five predetermined value statement factors derived from the literature available on plagiarism that had been shown to impact faculty reporting behaviors in previous studies. These factors included: *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*. Through a pragmatic mixed methods study, the researcher was able to show a correlation between the value statements on plagiarism

(Independent Variables) and the faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors (Dependent Variable) by addressing the following research questions:

RQ1: "How do the value statements on plagiarism correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2: "How do value statement factors (i.e., *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation,* and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors?"

Research Question 2 was disaggregated by value statement factors. These factors were either internal or external to the faculty participant. Each value statement factor was defined in Chapter 2. For a more specific reference, individual value statements on plagiarism for each value statement factor can be found in the Plagiarism Questionnaire (Appendix A).

Internal Factors:

    RQ2a: "How does the *plagiarism defined* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2b: "How does the *student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2c: "How does the *faculty bias* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

    RQ2d: "How does the *faculty fear of retaliation* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

External Factor:

> **RQ2e:** "How does the *inconsistent plagiarism reporting processes* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3: "Which faculty demographic variables (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status*, and *Programmatic Area of Expertise*) show higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Research Question 3 was disaggregated by Plagiarism Questionnaire demographics:

> **RQ3a:** "How does *gender* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3b:** "How does *highest academic credential earned* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3c:** "How does *ethnicity* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3d:** "How does *age* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3e:** "How does *years of teaching experience* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3f:** "How does *academic status* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

> **RQ3g:** "How does *programmatic area of expertise* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Null Hypothesis: There is no correlation between plagiarism value statements and plagiarism reporting behavior.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is a correlation between plagiarism value statements and plagiarism reporting behavior.

Pilot Study

The results for this study on plagiarism reporting behaviors of online faculty were obtained via a 37-item questionnaire created by the researcher. The Plagiarism Questionnaire achieved an overall Content Validity Index score of 82.8% from the 10 Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) which was higher than the required 62% needed to adequately define construct validity (see Appendix G). Once the final agreement was achieved, the questionnaire was then reconstructed in Qualtrics, an online survey software that created virtual accessibility to the questionnaire for the pilot study participants via an online hyperlink.

The pilot study data were pulled with a resulting Cronbach's alpha score of .56, which informed the researcher that potentially there were some items in the questionnaire that were not aligning to the others. To explore the possibility of increasing the questionnaire's coefficient of reliability, individual questions were analyzed and removed based on their perceived impact to the questionnaire. In SPSS 26, when a Cronbach's alpha test is run, the researcher is presented with an overall score. If the Cronbach's alpha is not within the recommended range and additional changes need to be made to improve the score, researchers have access to a column of data entitled *Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted.* Thus SPSS 26 allowed the researcher to see how the Cronbach's alpha score would be impacted if a particular item was removed from the instrument. As such, the following six questions were eliminated from statistical consideration:

a.) I belive a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student purchases a paper from an online resource then submits the work as their own. ***Corresponding Factor: Plagiarism Defined***

b.) I believe that stereotypes as applied to students (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.) have the potential to impact my plagiarism reporting decisions. ***Corresponding Factor: Faculty Bias***

c.) I practice "blind" grading (i.e., grading without knowing which student's paper you have) to ensure fairness for my students. ***Corresponding Factor: Faculty Bias***

d.) I fear physical, psychological, and/or job performance related retaliation from my academic administration when reporting plagiarism violations. ***Corresponding Factor: Faculty Fear of Retaliation***

e.) I fear that the academic administration will not support my decision to report plagiarism violations. ***Corresponding Factor: Faculty Fear of Retaliation***

f.) I have been asked to retract or adjust a plagiarism violation by the college for a reason unrelated to the violation I submitted. ***Corresponding Factor: Faculty Fear of Retaliation***

While it was important to understand how the questions were chosen for elimination, it was also important to understand why:

a.) I belive a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student purchases a paper from an online resource then submits the work as their own. **(Redundancy)**

b.) I believe that stereotypes as applied to students (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexuality,

etc.) have the potential to impact my plagiarism reporting decisions.

(Elimination resulted in a much higher Cronbach's alpha score with fewer

questions eliminated.)

c.) I practice "blind" grading (i.e., grading without knowing which student's paper

you have) to ensure fairness for my students. **(Redundancy)**

d.) I fear physical, psychologyical, and/or job performance related retaliation from

my academic administration when reporting plagiarism violations. **(Elimination**

resulted in a much higher Cronbach's alpha score with fewer questions

eliminated.)

e.) I fear that the academic administration will not support my decision to report

plagiarism violations. **(Elimination resulted in a much higher Cronbach's**

alpha score with fewer questions eliminated.)

f.) I have been asked to retract or adjust a plagiarism violation by the college for a

reason unrelated to the violation I submitted. **(Elimination resulted in a much**

higher Cronbach's alpha score with fewer questions eliminated.)

The elimination of these questions produced a .699 Cronbach's alpha score which fell within

Goforth's (2015) recommended range of reliability (i.e., .65-.80). The researcher began with

a 43-item instrument, and the removal of these questions resulted in the statistical analysis of

37 remaining items (see Table 4.1).

Overall, one question was removed from *Plagiarism Defined*, two questions were

removed from *Faculty Bias*, and three questions were removed from *Faculty Fear of*

Retaliation. While these questions held no statistical relevance to the study and were not

included in the final version of the instrument, (see Appendix B) they were presented to the

members of the virtual focus group as fodder for additional discussion.

Table 4.1

Eliminated value statement of plagiarism questions and their impact on each value statement factor.

Value Statement Factors	Total Questions Main Study (43 items)	Total Questions Full-Scale Study (37 items)
(1) Plagiarism Defined	5	4
(2) Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom	6	6
(3) Faculty Bias	5	3
(4) Faculty Fear of Retaliation	4	1
(5) Inconsistencies in the Plagiarism Reporting Process	5	5

Methodology

The results for this study on plagiarism reporting behaviors of online faculty were

obtained via a pragmatic mixed-methods study. The data necessary to answer the research

questions in this study were collected via both quantitative and qualitative means. For

Research Question 1, a Pearson *r* test was run to explore whether a correlation existed

between the value statements on plagiarism (IV) and the faculty plagiarism reporting

behavior (DV). In Research Question 2 and its sub-questions, the same Pearson *r* test was

run to explore a correlation between each value statement factor and their corresponding

faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors. In terms of Research Question 3 and its sub-

questions, descriptive statistics (i.e., mean scores and standard deviation) were utilized to

compare plagiarism reporting behavior data across various demographic variables.

After analyzing quantitative data, qualitative data were collected through a focus group to substantiate the quantitative data. Nine Academic Deans participated in a virtual focus group on Friday, October 11, 2019 (two hours in length) to offer additional insight and perspective into the questionnaire results. The focus group interview script was driven, in large part, by the results of the quantitative analysis. A list of participant demographics can be found in Table 4.6. The conversation was driven by six purposefully constructed questions (based on quantitative results) whose aim was to elicit an increased understanding of why the resulting behaviors were occurring and if these behaviors were aligning to what these deans were experiencing on their campuses and in their online classrooms (see Appendix H).

Table 4.2

Virtual focus group participant demographics.

Participants	Gender	Age	Years of Service	Location
A	Female	42	7 years 4 months	IL
B	Female	41	1 year 1 month	MN
C	Male	45	10 years	MN
D	Female	44	10 years 1 month	MN
E	Female	66	16 years	MN
F	Female	48	8 years	IL
G	Male	37	6 years 6 months	MN
H	Female	56	7 years	FL
I	Female	49	7 years 6 months	WI

Main Study

On July 1, 2019, a recruitment email was sent to 867 potential participants. Each of these faculty met the following criteria for inclusion in the study:

- Participants were scheduled to teach during the study (i.e., July 1 to September 30, 2019) and had taught an online course during the past three years.

- Participants taught within the following disciplines: Business, Education, Technology, Design, Justice Studies, Health Sciences, and/or Nursing.

- Participants consisted of full-time and part-time faculty who held a minimum of an Associate degree in field.

- Participants were provided with an online course populated with the applicable curriculum, assignments, and gradebook for their course. (Predetermined Curriculum)

- Faculty who taught only competency-based education courses, nursing clinical courses, or law enforcement skills courses, would not be eligible for this study.

When the survey closed on September 30th, 2019, a total of 115 participants had completed the Plagiarism Questionnaire. Weekly email reminders were critical in obtaining a 13% response rate. Of those 115 participants, 101 questionnaires were analyzed for both quantitative (i.e., Plagiarism Questionnaire) and qualitative (i.e., Virtual Focus Group) data. As such, the following results were presented as a synthesis of both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Research Question 1 – "How do the value statements on plagiarism correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Null Hypothesis: Based on the quantitative data collected for this study, the Null Hypothesis is rejected.

Alternative Hypothesis: Based on the quantitative data analyzed for this study, the

Alternative Hypothesis is accepted. This study found that there is a correlation between

value statements on plagiarism and the plagiarism reporting behavior.

In response to the question of how the value statements on plagiarism correlated with

faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, the overall data showed a significant negative

correlation (i.e., respondents who scored lower on value statements on plagiarism tended to

score higher on the questions directly linked to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior)

between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, *r(99)*

= -.297, p < .05 (see Figure 4.1). Magnitude of correlation was established through the work

of Cohen (1988). In this work, a small correlation was noted if the coefficient value was .1 <

| r | < .3 (Cohen, 1988).
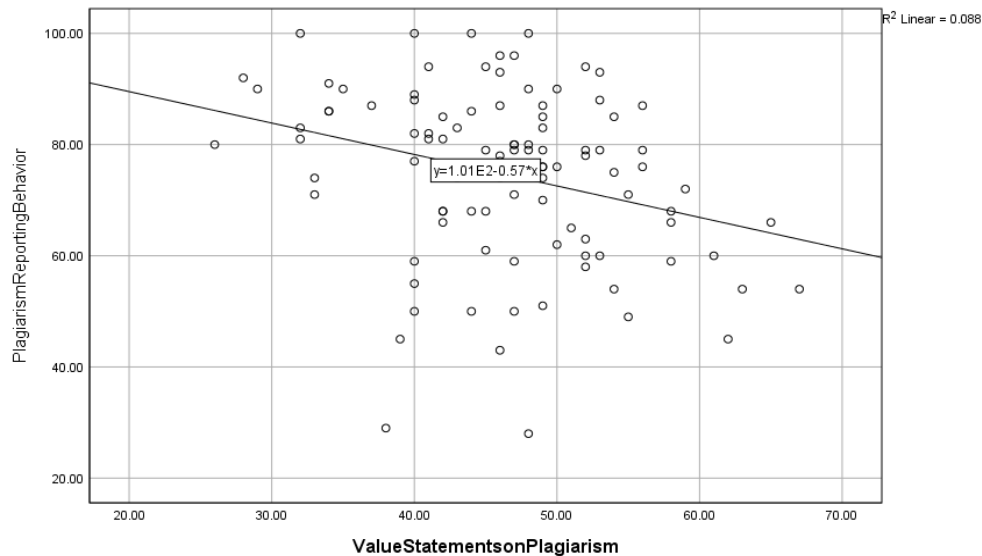
Figure 4.1. Pearson *r* results for correlation between value statements on plagiarism and plagiarism reporting behavior.

Participant F surmised that the reason for the seemingly inflated scores related to

plagiarism reporting could be related to the faculty member's inability to simply summarize

the scenarios that they were experiencing in the classroom. *I don't know that they see the violation in the classroom as clear cut as the scenarios in the questionnaire. They are not able to get there as quickly or as clearly as these scenarios are laid out. Perhaps if they could, we might see more actual reporting* (Participant F).

Participant F also shared her thoughts on the "magic number" that all faculty seemed to have. The magic number theory related to the percentage of plagiarism that a faculty member would allow before they made the decision to report the instance as plagiarism (e.g., 10%, 25%, 50%, etc.). There were several percentages noted within the reporting behavior questions in the survey tool. If that percentage score resonated with the "magic number" for that faculty member, it would make sense to see an increase in score related to reporting behavior.

As intentional (failure to cite) versus nonintentional (inability to cite) plagiarism was considered, the increase in score also made good sense to the researcher. Participant G explained that *faculty were more lenient in cases of inability to cite correctly versus a conscious decision to plagiarize.* The survey tool specifically referenced situations of both natures and the scores followed suit. Intentional plagiarism garnered a higher likelihood of reporting behavior, while unintentional scenarios denoted much lower scores. Many of the questions within the survey tool related to reporting behaviors described students at or near the end of their academic journey. Participant F noted the idea of faculty making decisions based on the level of the course (i.e., the higher the course level, the higher the level of expectation regarding citation and academic honesty). As Participant F explained, *perhaps faculty felt that these students should know better by this stage in their academic career* (see Table 4.3 for additional commentary).

Table 4.3.

Qualitative support for from the virtual focus group participants.

Theme	*Code*	***Support Derived from Focus Group Participants***
Training	Faculty Knowledge and Experience	*"I don't know that they see the violation in the classroom as clear cut as the scenarios in the questionnaire. They are not able to get there as quickly or as clearly as these scenarios are laid out. Perhaps if they could, we might see more actual reporting"* (Participant F)
		"What is the perceived level of understand that each faculty member has regarding APA and plagiarism? Did they have specific training at another institution? It would be interesting to see how those faculty experience/expectations played into their decisions to report." (Participant A)
		"It would be interesting to learn what faculty consider to be an egregious offense, as this term often determines whether faculty submit an offense or not." (Participant H).
	Collaboration Challenges	*"Teachers are not sure if plagiarism happens in these spaces [group assignments]. This also leads to questions as to if students understand the boundary between working together and doing their own work, further complicating the situation for faculty."* (Participant C)
	Intentional vs. Non-Intentional Plagiarism	*"Faculty were more lenient in cases of inability to cite correctly versus a conscious decision to plagiarize."* (Participant G)
Expectation	Plagiarism Defined	*"I think it just speaks to the fact that faculty are not fully clear on what they should or should not do."* (Participant F)
	Student Expectations of Plagiarism	*"Perhaps faculty felt that these students should know better by this state in their academic career."* (Participant F)

Research Question 2 – "How do the individual *value statement factors* (i.e., *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation*, and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors?"

The researcher analyzed how five predetermined value statement factors derived from the literature available on plagiarism correlated to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. These factors included: *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of Retaliation*, and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*.

Research Question 2a – "How does the *plagiarism defined* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

A statistically significant negative correlation was found between the *Plagiarism Defined* value statements and the corresponding faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors, *r(99) = -.23, p < .05 (see Figure 4.2).*
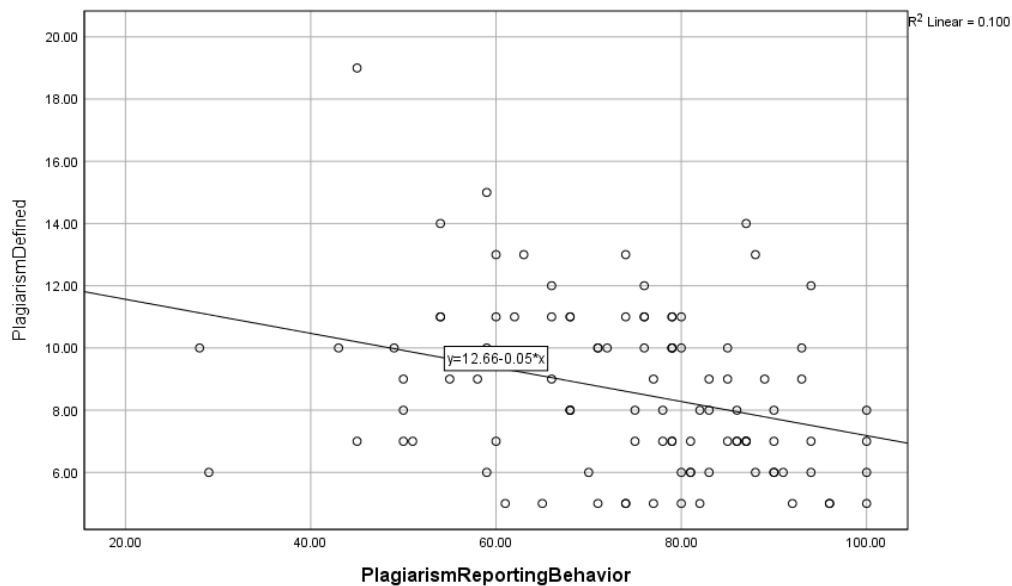
Figure 4.2. Pearson *r* results for correlation between plagiarism defined factor and plagiarism reporting behavior.

While statistically significant, the negative correlation was not a strong one (i.e., -.23). This negative correlation was indicative of faculty tending to select lower levels of agreement towards the value statements on plagiarism and higher levels of agreement in terms of faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors. The opposite of this scenario would also be

true as the negative correlation would be indicative of faculty selecting higher levels of agreement and lower levels of plagiarism reporting.

Research Question 2b – "How does the *Student Rationale and Justification in the Classroom* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

There was a negative correlation found between *student rationale and justification in the classroom* and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior; however, the correlation was not statistically significant.

Research Question 2c – "How does the *Faculty Bias* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

There was a negative correlation found between *faculty bias* and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior; however, the correlation was not statistically significant.

Research Question 2d – "How does the *Faculty Fear of Retaliation* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

There was a positive correlation found between *faculty fear of retaliation* and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior; however, the correlation was not statistically significant.

Research Question 2e – "How does the *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

There was a negative correlation found between *inconsistent plagiarism reporting process* and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior; however, the correlation was not statistically significant.

Research Question 3 – Results and Findings: "What faculty demographic characteristics (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status*, and *Programmatic Area of Expertise*) show higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

To answer the question "which faculty demographic characteristics (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status* and *Programmatic Area of Expertise*) showed higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, descriptive statistics (i.e., mean scores and standard deviation) were utilized to compare participant demographic data to the faculty plagiarism reporting behavior data in order to better define the specific characteristics that could potentially increase the likelihood of faculty reporting an instance of plagiarism. As mean scores were calculated for each demographic variable when compared to scores linked to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, the researcher noticed that there were very small degrees of difference between the scores which ranged from 0 (Extremely Unlikely to Report) to 100 (Extremely Likely to Report). As such, she resorted to calculating Typical, Low, and High ranges. The researcher utilized the normal distribution of plagiarism behavior scores to determine low plagiarism behavior (i.e., < -1SD), typical plagiarism behavior (i.e., -1SD to +1SD), and high plagiarism reporting behavior (i.e., > +1SD) to determine if there were any noticeable outliers that could potentially denote an impact on the likelihood of a faculty member reporting an instance of plagiarism (see Table 4.4).

Research Question 3a – "How does *gender* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Gender did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from males and females fell within typical range.

Table 4.4

Typical, high, and low ranges for statistical mean scores from demographic variables compared to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior.

	Plagiarism Behavior		
Classification	Low	Typical	High
Score	59 or lower	60 to 90	91 or higher

Research Question 3b – "How does *highest academic credential earned* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Highest academic credential earned did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from Associate's Degrees, Bachelor's Degrees, Master's Degrees, and Doctoral/Terminal Degrees fell within typical range.

Research Question 3c – "How does *ethnicity* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Ethnicity did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from Caucasian, African American, and Asian fell within typical range. One participant identifying as Hispanic responded with a 100% likelihood of reporting an instance of plagiarism. While this person was the single representative of the Hispanics in this sample, it would not be statistically reasonable to utilize this participant to represent a "group" that did not exist in this sample.

Research Question 3d – "How does *age* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Age did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from 21-30 years, 31-40 years, 41-50 years and 51+ years fell within typical range.

Research Question 3e – "How does *years of experience* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Years of experience did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from 1-10 years, 11-20 years, 21-30 years, and 31+ years fell within typical range.

Research Question 3f – "How does *academic status* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Academic status did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from full-time and part-time faculty fell within typical range.

Research Question 3g – "How does *programmatic area of expertise* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Programmatic area of expertise did not impact the plagiarism reporting behavior. Scores from Business, Health Sciences, Technology, Nursing, Early Childhood Education, and General Education fell within typical range. Justice Studies (M=53.5) was the exception, denoting a substantially lower likelihood of faculty teaching within this discipline reporting an instance of plagiarism. As there were only 6 participants (6% of reporting population) who identified as teaching within this school of, this finding was deemed statistically irrelevant (see Table 4.5 for mean scores).

Table 4.5.

Demographic statistics and mean scores related to faculty plagiarism reporting behavior.

Faculty Status			
Part-Time		Full-Time	
50 (50%)		51 (50%)	
M=75.48		*M*=73.73	

Academic Credential			
Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctoral/Terminal Degree
1 (1%)	6 (6%)	63 (62%)	31 (31%)
M=81	*M*=73.67	*M*=75.06	*M*=73.61

Ethnicity					
Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Other	No Answer
84 (83%)	8 (8%)	1 (1%)	0 (0%)	2 (2%)	6 (6%)
M=74.3	*M*=73.6	*M*=100	*M*=NA	*M*=82.5	*M*=73

Programmatic Area of Expertise							
Business	Technology	Health Sciences	Justice Studies	Design	Nursing	Early Childhood Education	General Education
10 (10%)	10 (10%)	29 (29%)	6 (6%)	0 (0%)	28 (28%)	9 (9%)	9 (9%)
M=78.4	*M*=72.2	*M*=75.2	*M*=53.5	*M*=NA	*M*=77.11	*M*=78.4	*M*=73.6

Age				
20-30 years	31-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	No Answer
4 (4%)	19 (19%)	23 (22%)	49 (49%)	6 (6%)
M=78.75	*M*=78.42	*M*=69.83	*M*=76.37	*M*=63.5

Years of Teaching Experience			
1-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	31+ years
47 (46%)	42 (42%)	4 (4%)	8 (8%)
M=75.17	*M*=73.36	*M*=74.25	*M*=77.75

Gender			
Male	Female	Other	No Answer
19 (19%)	79 (78%)	0 (0%)	3 (3%)
M=69.37	*M*=76.20	*M*=NA	*M*=65.3

The virtual focus group conversation was able to provide more insight as to how demographic variables might have the ability to influence faculty plagiarism reporting. For example, while those faculty associating with the 51+ age group were some of the study's highest reporters, questions were raised by focus group participants regarding the plagiarism understanding and/or philosophy of these faculty. To better explain this concept, Participant D noted that *you often hear about faculty being more willing to make exceptions (teachable*

moments) when they are just starting out and then they become jaded over time and no longer want to hear excuses – they simply submit the violation. Participant C in the Virtual Focus Group detailed what he alluded to as *plagiarism baggage.* He noted that many instructors for this institution came to teaching later in life with oftentimes limited teaching experience and high expectations.

This statistic related to age tied directly to years of teaching experience. Forty-six percent of reporters associated with 1-10 years of experience which would align with the age statistics that were found. Participant A explained that this was very representative of our overall faculty. *It's a lot of people that are at retirement age and they don't want to stop working, and what they have [financially] is not enough to sustain them.* Several participants noted that these older faculty members had done their time in the field and now they wanted to take that experience and share it with others. This would account for the higher age demographic and the fewer years of teaching experience (see Table 4.6 for additional commentary).

Table 4.6.

Qualitative support derived from the virtual focus group participants.

Demographic Data	Support Derived from the Focus Group
Age	*"The 51+ instructor would be very much representative of our faculty. I interview a lot of people that are of retirement age that have left the field but do not have the means or desire to do so." (Participant A)*
	"In all honesty when we are looking for an adjunct, we are hoping for retirement...especially for the residential courses because they have the flexibility to do so." (Participant H)

In addition to being utilized as supplementary support for the quantitative data, the qualitative data obtained from the virtual focus group was also transcribed and then coded by means of a Data Analysis Spiral method. A detailed analysis of this process can be found in Chapter 3. The transcript was evaluated in terms of primary and secondary codes which were then grouped together into themes (see Appendix I). Four specific themes evolved from the focus group data: training, communication, perception, and expectation.

Training focused primarily on additional work that needed to be done in terms of faculty understanding how plagiarism is defined, how plagiarism is identified in the classroom, and the appropriate application of punitive consequence when a violation is observed. Communication related more to the responsibility that deans and administration have in coaching/mentoring their faculty to better understand the plagiarism reporting process, how violations are viewed by the institution, and why some violations are sent back to the faculty (e.g., lack of evidence or documentation). This theme also spoke directly to retaliation as deans and administration need to be communicating reassurance to faculty regarding the distinction between personal performance reviews and plagiarism reporting behavior. Perception focused chiefly on the actual plagiarism reporting process. Primary codes such as time consumption, additional workload, inadequate plagiarism detection tools, and previous experience at other institutions were common throughout the discussion. Finally, expectation spoke to exactly that, expectations. Plagiarism expectations, student expectations, and classroom expectations. Additionally, this theme also related to faculty expectations. As Participant F noted, *I think it just speaks to the fact that faculty are not fully clear on what they should or should not do* (see Figure 4.3 for a visual representation of the coding process).
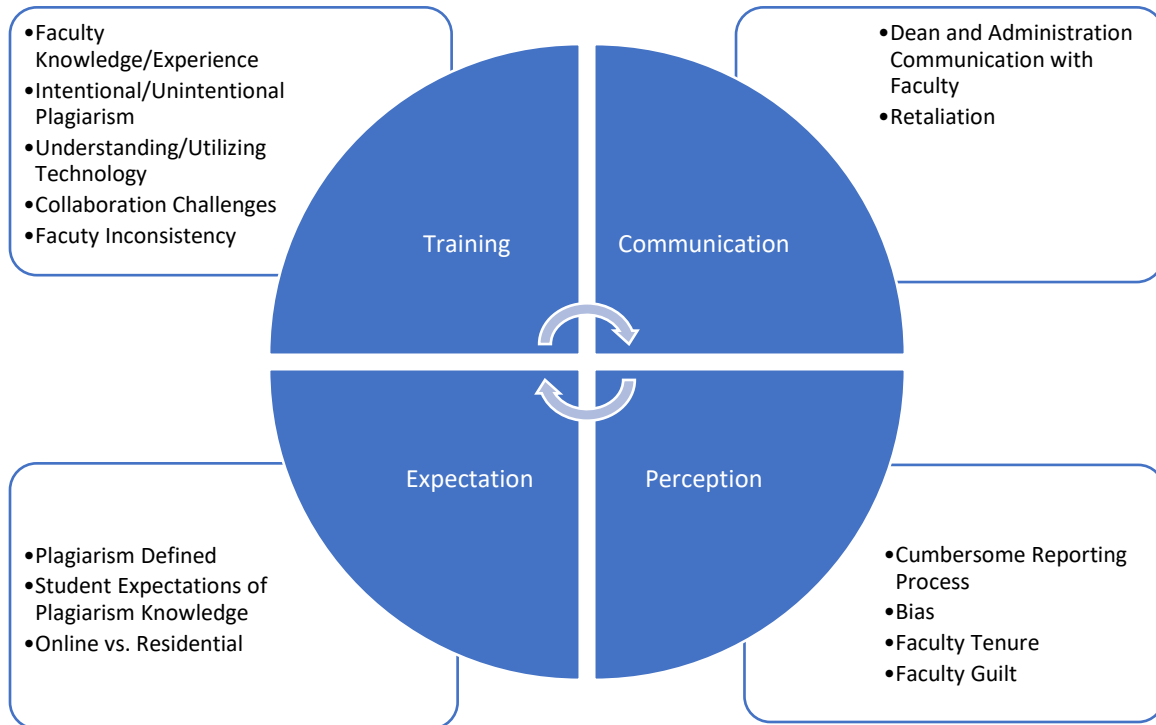
Figure 4.3. Virtual focus group themes and secondary codes.

This study provided detailed information pertaining to the plagiarism reporting habits of online faculty. In terms of how the value statements on plagiarism correlated with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior, the Pearson *r* correlation provided an answer, a small statistically significant negative relationship between both variables. Additionally, of the five value statement factors derived from the literature available on plagiarism, only one produced a level of statistical significance when the Pearson *r* test was run. *Plagiarism Defined* produced a negative correlation that ran contrary to the available literature on plagiarism. The study also determined that none of the variables had any perceivable impact on the likelihood of faculty submitting a plagiarism violation.

Chapter 5 will include a deeper analysis as to how these results related to the available literature on plagiarism and the research gap found between faculty teaching in online classrooms versus brick and mortar institutions. Additionally, the researcher will

conclude with her final recommendations to the institution, unforeseen limitations of the

study, and items that may prove worthwhile fodder for future research.

CHAPTER 5.   CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

Approximately a year before the researcher began her doctoral program, she was asked to join a three-member Academic Integrity Committee for her institution. In this role she had the opportunity to view not only the violations of her students, but students throughout a multi-campus system. As she began the research for this project, she noticed a substantial differentiation in the reporting behaviors of her faculty and current statistics found in the literature on plagiarism. Robinson and Glazer (2017) noted that 2/3 of college students had admitted to some degree of plagiarism during their academic career; however, studies showed that faculty reporting rates were not aligning with those statistics. The emerging questions she faced included: why faculty were seemingly so hesitant to submit an instance of plagiarism and who were taking part in these research studies (i.e., who was responsible for creating the available data).

While hesitancy related to plagiarism reporting was not a new phenomenon, the researcher discovered a substantial gap in the literature. She was able to find a myriad of studies pertaining to faculty perceptions on plagiarism. Additionally, studies pertaining to plagiarism reporting in distance education were also readily available. However, these studies were being conducted at traditionally brick and mortar institutions that only casually offered online courses. As the researcher considered this gap in the literature, she noted a heightened degree of interest surrounding a study detailing faculty plagiarism reporting at a predominately online institution.

Josien et al., (2015) noted that plagiarism violations were continuing to rise exponentially at academic institutions around the world. The statistical disconnect between

her faculty and the world that Josien et al., (2015) described, provided fodder for the authors'

concerns in the form of not only inconsistent tools and reporting procedures provided to

faculty, but also detailing the role that faculty and administrators played in the decision to

report an instance of plagiarism. What evolved from this institutional and higher education

dilemma was a dissertation that encompassed a correlational study that defined the level of

relationship between plagiarism reporting behaviors of faculty teaching at a primarily online

institution and five predetermined value statement factors derived from the available

literature on plagiarism that were traditionally believed to influence plagiarism reporting

behaviors. Chapter 5 will summarize the study and how it served the academic literature

while also providing insight into potential recommendations and opportunities for future

studies.

Research Questions

The methodology selected for this dissertation included a pragmatic mixed-methods

study specifically addressing plagiarism reporting in a predominantly online post-secondary

institution. Moreover, the current study identified potential correlations between plagiarism

reporting behaviors of faculty teaching in the online modality and five predetermined value

statement factors derived from the available literature on plagiarism that have been proven to

influence reporting behaviors in other studies. The following research questions were

addressed:

RQ1: "How do the value statements on plagiarism correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting

behavior?"

RQ2: "How do *value statement factors* (i.e., *Plagiarism Defined, Student Rationale and*

Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty Fear of

Retaliation, and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors?"

Research Question 2 was disaggregated by value statement factors. These factors were either internal or external to the faculty participant. Each value statement factor was defined in Chapter 2. For a more specific reference, individual value statements on plagiarism for each value statement factor can be found in the Plagiarism Questionnaire (Appendix A).

Internal Factors:

RQ2a: "How does the *plagiarism defined* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2b: "How does the *student rationale and justification of plagiarism in the classroom* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2c: "How does the *faculty bias* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ2d: "How does the *faculty fear of retaliation* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

External Factor:

RQ2e: "How does the *inconsistent plagiarism reporting processes* factor correlate with faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3: "Which faculty demographic variables (i.e., *Gender, Highest Academic Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status*, and

Programmatic Area of Expertise) show higher faculty plagiarism reporting behavior?"

Research Question 3 was disaggregated by Plagiarism Questionnaire demographics:

RQ3a: "How does *gender* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3b: "How does *highest academic credential earned* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3c: "How does *ethnicity* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3d: "How does *age* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3e: "How does *years of teaching experience* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3f: "How does *academic status* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

RQ3g: "How does *programmatic area of expertise* impact the likelihood of plagiarism reporting behavior?"

In terms of association, the relationship between the dependent variable (faculty reporting behavior) and the independent variable (predetermined value statement factors) had already been established through a variety of studies included in the accompanying literature review. What was not certain was the level of association that each variable could potentially produce.

Overview of the Sample, Data Collection & Analysis

In terms of the participants involved in the study, the quantitative portion of the

research included 101 faculty members who were asked to complete a 37-item Plagiarism Questionnaire of the researcher's own design (see Appendix A) that detailed their perceptions of plagiarism via value statements on plagiarism derived from the five predetermined value statement factors, as well as bits of insight into faculty plagiarism reporting habits that stemmed from responses to 10 scenario-based questions.

Once the questionnaires were completed, the data were analyzed by means of the Pearson Product-Moment Coefficient (Pearson *r*), statistical mean scores, and standard deviation to better understand not only the level of variable relationships, but also to better define which faculty characteristics perhaps impacted the likelihood of a faculty reporting an instance of plagiarism. The resulting data analysis was presented to a nine-member virtual focus group composed of Academic Deans who represented campuses across the multi-campus system. The goal of the group was to assist in both substantiating the data presented to them from the study, as well as providing additional insight and perspective into the behaviors presenting via a series of semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix H).

Synopsis of Findings

Prior to data analysis the researcher established both her Null Hypothesis (i.e., there was no relationship between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior) and her Alternative Hypothesis (i.e., there was a relationship between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors). After running tests on the data and collecting the results, the researcher was able to reject the Null Hypothesis. The Alternative Hypothesis was approved as a correlation existed between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors.

In terms of whether the five value statement factors (i.e., *Defining Plagiarism, Student Rationale and Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, Faculty Bias, Faculty*

Fear of Retaliation, and *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes*) potentially impacted the plagiarism reporting behaviors of faculty, the Pearson *r* test resulted in a statistically significant negative correlation between the value statement factors and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. Additionally, a statistically significant negative correlation was also found between the value statement factor, *Plagiarism Defined*, and faculty plagiarism reporting behavior. While the other four value statement factors held no statistical significance, there was a certain degree of practical importance in the qualitative data provided by the virtual focus group. The qualitative data obtained from this discussion was instrumental in assisting the researcher to better understand the behaviors that presented and in establishing recommendations that might quell those behaviors.

In terms of what specific demographic variables (i.e., Gender, Highest Credential Earned, Ethnicity, Age, Years of Teaching Experience, Academic Status, and Programmatic Area of Expertise) might potentially impact the likelihood of faculty reporting an instance of plagiarism, no connections were found and all mean scores fell into the typical range with the exception of ethnicity and programmatic area of expertise. In the case of ethnicity, the researcher noted one participant who identified as Hispanic and had a Score=100 denoting an extremely high likelihood of plagiarism reporting. While one individual was not representative of the reporting population, this response was deemed statistically irrelevant. Additionally, those faculty teaching within the School of Justice Studies scored extremely low (*M*=53.5) denoting a low likelihood of those faculty reporting a plagiarism violation. As there were only 6 participants (6% of reporting population) who identified as teaching within the School of Justice Studies, the results were deemed statistically irrelevant.

The virtual focus group data were utilized to provide additional insight and

perspective for the quantitative results. As the transcripts of the conversation were broken down and coded, four resounding themes emerged: training, communication, perception, and expectation. While these themes provided qualitative support for the quantitative data, they were also critical components in the process of preparing recommendations for the institution under study.

Findings Related to the Literature

Findings from this research had numerous ties to the literature presented in Chapter 2. Most noticeable were many of the resources related to *Plagiarism Defined*. This value statement factor held the most amount of uncertainty in terms of response rate when compared to the other four. For example, the study conducted by Josien et al., (2015) related to 16 scenarios. The outcome of this study noted that of the 16 scenarios presented, faculty only overwhelmingly agreed on five out of the 16 scenarios that the behavior being presented in the scenario was not appropriate and should be noted as a plagiarism violation (i.e., 31% agreement). As the researcher considered her study, she noticed a similar correlation with the scenario-based questions in that only 16% of those faculty surveyed selected "Extremely Likely" to report the instance described as plagiarism.

The questionnaire involved in this study included 10 scenario-based questions where participants were asked to determine how likely they would be to submit the scenario as a plagiarism violation (i.e., 0 "Extremely Unlikely" to 10 "Extremely Likely"). These 10 questions were directly linked to the value statement factors in that each value statement factor had two corresponding scenarios. The scenario-based questions did not include any reference to age or gender, and the content ranged from copy/pasting and lack of citation to stealing the work of a fellow student and purchasing a paper. There were two questions (Question 2 and Question 4) that specifically detailed more extreme consequences for the

student if the violation was submitted (i.e., failed courses and postponed graduation dates);
however, no noticeable change in score was observed. The mean scores for Questions 1-7
ranged from 7.24 to 9.4 (see Appendix A). The scores diverged when citation challenges
were introduced (e.g., you discovered that the student used small sections of content from a
variety of online resources...and only listed one of the resources on their resource page).
Questions 8 (*M*=3.48), 9 (*M*=5.03), and 10 (*M*=5.11) saw a noticeable decrease in mean
scores (see Appendix A). This drop in score led the researcher to believe that unintentional
plagiarism, or as Jocoy and DiBiase (2006) referred to as poor writing versus actual cheating,
may play a larger role in faculty decisions to report plagiarism. As one considered the non-
traditional student base of the institution under study, the increased utilization of the
teachable moment began to make sense. As Participant F noted that while there will always
be those extreme reporters, there are also those faculty who are more inclined to utilize this
teachable moment. Those faculty who *know that it was not intentional, that it was just a
mistake. The student just did not know any better* (Participant F). Students who have not
been prepared for the rigors of academic writing and those students returning to school after
a 20-30 year hiatus; how do we adequately prepare them for the educational world they are
about to enter?

Faculty included in the 16% noted above (i.e., "Extremely Likely" to report the
scenario as plagiarism) scored 90 points or higher when answering these scenario-based
questions. While the research found higher levels of agreements than Josien et al., (2015),
the question of whether faculty would follow through in reporting a plagiarism violation
remained. As several participants in the virtual focus group noted, there was often an

obvious disconnect between what was said and what was done in terms of faculty plagiarism reporting.

The works of Holbeck et al., (2015), Jocoy & DiBiase (2006), and Bennett et al., 2011) also detailed the challenges of defining plagiarism. The researcher found a minimum of 20 varying definitions of plagiarism that brought academia closer to understanding the nuances of this offense, but no closer to pinpointing a universal definition that would guide faculty in their understanding of reporting and consequence. A lack of definition was noticeably observed in the questionnaire data, in that there were varying levels of response from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree." The focus group participants explained it as a great level of uncertainty. Some faculty were secure in their definition of plagiarism, while others struggled to make the distinction between what is and is not a reportable offense. The level of uncertainty perceived by the virtual focus group participants tied directly to the work of Robinson-Zanartu et al. (2005) in that faculty were often blatantly uncertain as to how to respond to instances of plagiarism, both in process and in consequence.

As the researcher considered the negative correlation between beliefs on plagiarism defined and the likelihood of reporting an instance of plagiarism, she could not help but wonder why it occurred. In theory, the more one is inclined to agree with these value statements, the more likely they should be to report an instance of plagiarism. However, a positive correlation between the value statements on plagiarism and faculty plagiarism reporting is not what came to pass. As the focus group conversation was considered, perhaps Participant F provided the most rational explanation for this disconnect. In her commentary, she surmised that the reason for these seemingly inflated scores could be related to the faculty member's inability to simply state the scenarios they were experiencing in the

classroom. Faculty often struggled to summarize their situation down to two or three succinct sentences. *I don't know that they see the violation in the classroom as clear cut as the scenarios detailed in the questionnaire. They are not able to get there as quickly or as clearly as these scenarios are laid out. Perhaps if they could, we might see more actual reporting* (Participant F). In other words, faculty see the scenarios presented in the questionnaire as very cut and dry and easy to respond to. They do not always see their own situations as being that simple.

Another query that arose from the focus group was how comfortable and/or diligent faculty were with their own citation methods. When discussing Question 8, which related to online resources being referenced as 'public domain' and the idea that students are more inclined to justify usage without citation because it is available to anyone for use, approximately 80% of faculty agreed with this statement. With such a high level of agreement, the participants began to question where students might have received this impression. The query led to a discussion about the faculty member's own ability to cite within their courses (i.e., announcements, discussion forum posts). The usage of memes and clipart were commonplace in an online classroom. While there was a degree of public domain and free for use, this did not negate the need for citation. As Participant F noted, *if faculty are not mentoring/modeling appropriate citation methods in their classrooms, what message is being delivered to the students?* Furthermore, the researcher identified that it is more difficult to hold students accountable when faculty are not utilizing proper citation techniques. While the current study did not provide an answer to this question, what it did bring to the table was potential rationale as to why faculty were hesitant to report instances of plagiarism, uncertainty in theory and practice. This perceived uncertainty would allow for

the creation of training, coaching, and mentoring opportunities between faculty and their deans.

Additionally, there was the disconnect between the readily available plagiarism detection tool and the faculty. All faculty teaching for this institution have access to Grammarly accounts. Within Grammarly, a plagiarism detection feature exists that many faculty utilize on a regular basis. Plagiarism detection tools such as Grammarly are extremely helpful if one understands how to utilize the resource properly. The potential downside to this tool lies in its analytics. Faculty submit a paper and Grammarly informs the faculty member what percentage of the paper is not original. However, there are countless faculty who only see the resulting percentage score. If that score is above a certain level (i.e., their "magic number"), they opt to submit the violation. As Participant C explained, *a high score on Grammarly did not necessarily mean that a student had plagiarized*. The report that accompanied the analysis was often incorrectly interpreted creating a mismanagement of the tool. What these faculty had not taken into consideration was what non-original content was being identified. In many cases, these were actual questions that were part of the original assignment instructions or segments of text that the student cited, but perhaps cited incorrectly. While the content was not original, it was also not plagiarism. In her role on the Academic Integrity Committee for this institution, the researcher could further validate these comments through her own experience with faculty and students in the cases she reviewed. This gave the researcher reason to pause and question if faculty truly understood the nuances of plagiarism or if they simply allowed Grammarly to make those decisions for them.

While the overall statistical results of the study noted above ran contrary to the available literature on plagiarism, the remaining value statement factors produced a larger

degree of alignment to that literature as one considered the raw data from the Plagiarism

Questionnaire and commentary from the virtual focus group. In terms of *Student*

Justification of Plagiarism in the Classroom, the researcher noticed the resemblance to the

work that Senders (2008) had completed on this topic. Senders (2008) explained that as

students were being asked to utilize more online sources and social media options, both

citation and ownership became more of a gray area. The questionnaire housed questions

related to collaborative work and public domain. Responses to these questions were

extremely varied. Questions from the focus group arose regarding faculty understanding of

public domain and fair use and whether faculty had or were currently teaching courses that

contained a group project.

There were also questions pertaining to whether online students were more likely to

plagiarize than residentially based students. Again, the responses to these questions were

disconnected. Kennedy et al. (2000) explained that access to the Internet was creating and

promoting opportunities for plagiarism to occur in the online modality to a larger degree than

in traditional residential classrooms. Moreover, Miller and Jones (2012) noted that in their

study of 639 students, 57.2% noted that it was easier to cheat in the online environment.

However, in this study, faculty seemed uncertain as their responses to two similar questions

pertaining to the online modality appeared to contradict themselves.

When asked about *Faculty Bias*, 99% of faculty surveyed acknowledged that they

believed that they treated all students fairly. However, Participant D specifically called out

Question 30 and 31 both of which related to multiple students submitting identical work and

which student was penalized with the plagiarism violation. She brought up the notion of time

and the idea that *whoever turns it in first often looks less guilty*, however, this may not

always be the case. In the experience of the researcher as a member of the Academic Integrity Committee, there have been cases involving husbands and wives, siblings, and friends, among others, and not all cases resulted in the scenario presented by Participant D. As she noted, *we are working on an assumption* (Participant D).

Perhaps Participant D's assumption that the first person to submit the work being questioned as plagiarism often looks less guilty could also be viewed in more of a stereotypical manner. Conaway and Bethune (2015) noted that "In online education the absence of [verbal/nonverbal] signals removes the barriers used to self-monitor attitudes and allows subconscious, internal attitudes to drive behavior" (p. 162). For example, Participant I explained that for faculty, it was often difficult to get past the *once a cheater, always a cheater mentality*, particularly when the student had previous violations in that instructor's course. The group questioned whether a student in the aforementioned situation would receive the benefit of the doubt in a battle of who submitted first.

In terms of *Faculty Fear of Retaliation*, the responses for Question 17 (see Appendix A) indicated that 20% of those surveyed agreed that they were fearful of physical and/or psychological retaliation from students when reporting instances of plagiarism. In their 2006 study, Flint, Clegg, and MacDonald explained that "staff were concerned about the personal repercussions of confrontations with students...faculty did not always feel protected by university procedures," especially in cases where the student's academic future was in jeopardy (p. 147). As was discussed in Chapter 2, it was no longer just about the plagiarism violation committed by the student, rather it was about the consequences and potential fall out for the said offense on the faculty.

The raw data from the question tied to *Faculty Fear of Retaliation* resonated with the virtual focus group. Participant H discussed the potential impact of student retribution on end of quarter student evaluations (EOQs*). I think they are very worried about EOQs and receiving a bad review because that review then follows them to their annual performance evaluation and lowers their score*. Participant C agreed and noted that faculty may not address this issue as directly as we [deans] would want them to due to what consequence lay ahead for that faculty member.

Questions pertaining to *Inconsistent Plagiarism Reporting Processes* provided some interesting ties to the available literature. While most of the responses favored understanding the plagiarism reporting process and the detection tools available to faculty, there was a wide variety of responses that the focus group members related to uncertainty. Eighty-six percent of the faculty agreed that the current plagiarism reporting process was easy to navigate. However, this left 14% of participants reporting to the contrary. Where the divide became more noticeable was in Question 23 from the Plagiarism Questionnaire which indicated that the time faculty spent reporting a plagiarism violation was reasonable. To this question, 22% of those surveyed responded with some level of disagreement. Additionally, in Question 24 which related to faculty having access to the tools necessary to detect plagiarism, 21% of the reporting population responded with some level of disagreement. The disagreement noted in the responses to the aforementioned question related directly to the work of Holbeck et al (2015). In their study, they stated that faculty felt that the reporting process was cumbersome and time consuming, not all paperwork was accessible, and that additional training and norming sessions would be necessary to perpetuate full understanding of the process.

Conclusions

Recommendations for Implementation

The researcher discovered that the most useful information for the institution derived from this study came via recommendations for change. Three specific recommendations evolved from the statistical data and the virtual focus group narrative.

Consistent plagiarism education/training for both faculty and deans.

Based on the levels of uncertainty observed in the questionnaire data and the responses from the virtual focus group, the overwhelming recommendation for the researcher's institution was the implementation of consistent training for faculty and deans related to understanding plagiarism and application of punitive consequence. Participant F pointed out that many of the questions were substantially varied in their responses. To her, and many others, this denoted a degree of uncertainty. *I think it just calls to the fact that faculty aren't fully clear on what they should or shouldn't do* (Participant F).

The results that were garnered from the coding analysis of the focus group, faculty, deans, and administration all had a level of accountability and responsibility in the plagiarism reporting process. Faculty needed to be responsible for educating their students about the resources available to them and the importance of public domain and fair use. Moreover, faculty were responsible for understanding the plagiarism reporting process and the tools available to ensure efficient and effective reporting. Consequently, faculty should expect a plagiarism reporting process that is user-friendly from both a process and time management perspective. Additionally, this expectation should also include access to plagiarism detection tools and continuous training on how to use the tools and their corresponding analytics reports appropriately. Deans and administration must be responsible for supplying the

appropriate plagiarism detection tools to their faculty and the creation and delivery of the

training that their faculty would need to facilitate accurate usage of these tools.

Increased communication between deans and faculty to better understand the reporting

process and the importance of documentation.

Deans and other academic administrators need to be held accountable for their role in

the process. The researcher emphasized a need for increased communication from deans to

faculty in order to provide a better understanding of when and how to submit a plagiarism

violation. More important perhaps, was their belief in aiding faculty in their understanding

of why a violation may have been returned from the Academic Integrity Committee.

Participant F explained that deans did not have visibility into all the integrity violations that

each of their faculty submitted. As such, this participant expressed frustration in knowing

when and how to connect with one of their faculty that was struggling with the reporting

process for additional training. As Participant F stated,

> The system we have in place right now does not provide the opportunity for a
>
> dean to work directly with a faculty member to increase their understanding of
>
> a violation when it is returned. It doesn't lend us that opportunity to go back
>
> and have those conversations at this point. If a faculty member doesn't reach
>
> out to the dean to say 'I don't understand' there can be a miss.

Increased communication and coaching opportunities from their direct supervisors may have

a greater impact on faculty in terms of continued reporting rather than the faculty member

succumbing to the common misconception that no one listens, so why bother.

Creation of plagiarism resources and talking points that would be utilized by both deans and faculty when talking to students about the rigors and responsibilities of academic writing.

There was ample discussion regarding the deans' communication with students. Questions arose regarding who was responsible for educating students about proper APA formatting and the rules of appropriate citation in academic writing. While this 'education' traditionally fell to faculty for implementation, an argument could be made for the role that the deans played in this process. In the current process at this institution, as a student receives their second plagiarism violation, a notification is sent to the student's dean. In turn, the dean is required to reach out to the student for an integrity consult where they would meet to discuss the challenges with the student's writing as well as the resources that are available to correct the errors. As a member of the Academic Integrity Committee for this institution, the researcher was disappointed to learn how many deans disregard this corrective action. A recommendation was made to develop both a best practices resource for deans including specific talking points and resources to include when conducting an integrity consult as well as a tool box for faculty that included specific resources and activities that could be used in the classroom to assist in the plagiarism education of their students.

Opportunities for Continued Research

When identifying potential avenues of continued research, three specific topics emerged from the research results. While most of these topics were related to the literature presented in Chapter 2, the resulting research would not only provide additional support to the questions asked in this current study, but it would also enhance the available literature directly correlated to plagiarism and reporting behaviors of faculty. These topics included:

The importance of plagiarism to faculty and their teaching philosophy.

Perhaps one of the most thought-provoking discussion points that came from the virtual focus group was in regard to whether plagiarism was important to the faculty and their teaching philosophy. The researcher was particularly intrigued with the findings of this discussion as it illuminated further areas of opportunity related to appropriate workload and personal experiences of faculty members. As class sizes increase, and faculty are being asked to do more with less, one might conclude that faculty are more concerned with the content of the paper and whether their students understand the material being presented to them (i.e., faculty want to assess each assignment as quickly as they can) rather than assessing the assignment for original content and student voice. However, one might also ask how much experience that faculty member had with the citation method utilized by the institution. The results of the study left the researcher with a mounting interest related to nuances in style, ability of faculty in identifying plagiarism, and the role of technology in the reporting process. All of which would need to be addressed by means of training/norming sessions for both faculty and deans.

What constituted the 'magic number' for faculty in terms of how much of an assignment would need to be plagiarized for a faculty member to report it as a violation.

The researcher was intrigued by Participant F's notion of the 'magic number' theory. To better explain this hypothetical scenario, the participant discussed her experiences with various faculty members and the percentage of plagiarized material that would need to be present for that faculty member to move forward with a plagiarism violation. The researcher, as well as the rest of the focus group, was left to speculate where this number came from. After much discussion, it was discovered that many faculty within the institution being studied were seeking or had sought advanced credentials at other institutions that utilized

Turnitin.com. Many of these faculty had also taught for institutions that employed this tool. In this instance, students were not allowed to submit their paper to the instructor if they had a score higher than 25% which denoted that 25% of the paper was not original to the writer (e.g., direct quotes and other cited material). While this specific percentage had been referenced within the organization in an unofficial capacity, there were still many other numbers related to plagiarism percentages being utilized by faculty throughout this multi-campus system. Because of this ambiguity, there is an area of opportunity to further explore what faculty believe is the acceptable threshold for cited content withing student writing.

K-12 plagiarism expectations and the student transition to higher education.

Finally, discussions were had regarding K-12 expectations regarding plagiarism and how those expectations might change during the transition to post-secondary institutions. Available literature indicated that students in the K-12 world have very different views on plagiarism. Moreover, these views were not serving the students well as they entered the world of higher education. It would be interesting to determine the training that is done in the K-12 classroom to prepare students for academic writing and the rigors that accompany that work in the post-secondary classroom. Participant I noted:

> When these students reach college, they are held to a different set of expectations and the student often responds with 'well, I've done this before' or 'this is how I have always written.' How do we bridge the gap and bring them [students] up to speed on appropriate academic writing when they have been allowed to get away with it for so long?

A study involving K-12 students and their knowledge/usage of citation tools, public domain, and fair use might also provide some additional rationale for the reporting behaviors witnessed in the current study.

Final Thoughts

From the researcher's perspective, if she had the opportunity to complete this same research study again, she would opt to make two substantial changes: consider equity amongst the participants in terms of demographic representation and complete the project with undergraduate faculty who taught solely in the online modality. Each of these items as detailed in the current study posed their own sets of challenges when data analysis was considered.

The researcher was satisfied with her sample size; however, what she had not taken into consideration was how the participants fell in terms of demographic representation. This oversight made it difficult to find any level of statistical significance for Research Question 3. Small numbers in one group and larger numbers in others made it difficult to identify which demographic variables could potentially impact the likelihood of a faculty member reporting an instance of plagiarism.

In the current study, faculty had an opportunity to participate if they had taught an online course in the past three years. Without this time frame, the researcher doubted that she would have obtained the 100-member sample size needed to move forward with the study. A plaguing curiosity remained for the researcher as to the differences in reporting tendencies of faculty teaching residential courses and those who taught exclusively in the virtual environment.

Overall, this study was able to answer the research questions while filling a noticeable gap in the available literature on plagiarism in online higher education. The researcher

discovered that the Academic Integrity Process at her institution was doing the job that it was designed to do; however, there were some substantial challenges that would need to be addressed in terms of communication. Moreover, the results provided her with some thought-provoking ideas and data points to bring forward to her administration in terms of recommendations and potential changes to the current reporting process. Finally, this study provided new information regarding what drove faculty to report instances of plagiarism while also adding credence to much of the available literature presented in Chapter 2. However, it is important to mention that a study with strictly online faculty is still missing from this literature.

In Chapter 2 it was noted that very little research had been done in terms of faculty teaching within the virtual environment. While this statement is no longer completely true, the world of higher education has a long way to go in understanding plagiarism and how it is addressed in the online classroom. This dissertation work was established as a catalyst for other studies, as an opportunity to learn more about the plagiarism reporting behaviors of faculty within the online teaching environment. It is the hope of the researcher that others will find interest and value in this study and that the same interest and value will inspire them to explore additional research opportunities within this realm of perpetual uncertainty.

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APPENDIX A. Plagiarism Questionnaire - Full Research Study

*A few minor verbiage changes were made to the scenario questions after the completion of the pilot study to more strongly align the value statements to the scenario questions.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PLAGIARISM DEFINED						
I believe that I have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student has not included a reference page for his/her assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student does not include in-textual citations in his/her assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student copies another's work ultimately utilizing it as his/her own without providing proper credit.	□	□	□	□	□	□
STUDENT ACCOUNTABLITY						
I believe that all academic resources should be cited per institutional guidelines regardless of the assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that the perceived anonymity of the online modality may be responsible for an increase in plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that students classify online resources as "public domain" therefore justifying usage without appropriate citation.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that group projects/collaboration create opportunities for plagiarism to occur.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that students with lower GPA's may be more inclined to plagiarize as a means of "catching up" when struggling academically.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that online students are more likely to plagiarize than residentially based students.	□	□	□	□	□	□
BIAS						

I believe that I treat all students fairly.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that there are faculty who provide preferential treatment to high-achieving students.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I utilize rubrics when grading to further ensure fairness for my students.	□	□	□	□	□	□

FEAR OF RETALIATION

I fear physical and/or psychological related retaliation from students when reporting plagiarism.	□	□	□	□	□	□

REPORTING TOOLS/PROCEDURES

I understand the plagiarism reporting process for the academic institution where I currently teach.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that the plagiarism reporting process for the academic institution is easy to follow.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that the time I spend reporting a plagiarism violation is reasonable.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that I have access to the tools that I need to verify plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I follow up with each student who receives a plagiarism violation regarding appropriate resources to ensure that a similar violation does not happen again.	□	□	□	□	□	□

Consider the following scenarios. Please consider how likely you would be to report these instances as plagiarism if you encountered them in your online courses.

Student X turned in a paper that was 85% copied from a student submission turned in two quarters ago. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

    Extremely Likely (10) I---I (0) Extremely Unlikely

You discover that Student X committed a plagiarism violation in your course. The student is in their final term before graduation. An additional violation would result in a failure of your course. This result would also include a postponed graduation date. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

    Extremely Likely (10) I---I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Student X submitted a paper that utilized a variety of direct quotations. The student failed to include any means of citation that denoted the source of the quoted material. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

    Extremely Likely (10) I---I (0) Extremely Unlikely

The academic institution that you teach for has been struggling with retention rates as of late. The administration is asking for all faculty to do "everything" that they can to ensure that students are successfully passing their courses. Upon review of the final course projects, you noticed that two students submitted the exact same paper for the second time. The egregiousness of this violation would result in a failing grade in the course. How likely would you be to feel comfortable submitting the plagiarism violation knowing its potential impact?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Student X submitted their final project. Two days later Student Y submitted an identical project. How likely would you be to submit a plagiarism violation for Student Y?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

In relation to the previous question, how likely would you be to submit a plagiarism violation for Student X and Student Y?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

You discovered that Student X submitted a purchased paper for their final project. You provided feedback to the student to let them know that a plagiarism violation would be issued. Student X was extremely angry about this citation. He/She denied purchasing the paper. Student X then threatened you with physical harm unless the violation was retracted. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Student X submitted a visual presentation for their final project. The student included their references on the final slide but failed to incorporate any in-text citation. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Student X submitted their final research project. When grading the student's paper, you discovered that the student utilized small sections of content from a variety of online resources to justify his/her stance on a controversial issue. You noticed that the student had listed only one of the resources on their resource page. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Student X submitted an initial online discussion forum post. You noticed that the student included a few very familiar quotes, but you do not see any citation or reference as to where the student found the content. Student X also failed to utilize quotation marks within the posting. How likely would you be to report this as a plagiarism violation?

Extremely Likely (10) I--I (0) Extremely Unlikely

Demographic Information			
Academic Status	□ Full-Time	□ Part-Time	
Highest Academic Credential Earned	□ Associate's	□ Bachelor's	□ Master's	□ Doctorate/Terminal Degree
Ethnicity	□ Caucasian	□ African American	□ Hispanic	□ Asian
	□ Other: _____		□ Choose Not to Answer
Gender	□ Male	□ Female	□ Other	□ Choose Not to Answer
Total Combined Years of Teaching Experience	□ 1-10	□ 11-20	□ 21-30	□ 30+

Programmatic Expertise	□ Business	□ Health Sciences	□ Design	□ Education
	□ Technology	□ Justice Studies	□ Nursing	□ General Education
Age	□ 20-30	□ 31-40	□ 41-50	□ 51+
	□ Choose Not to Answer			
Current State of Residence	_____			

APPENDIX B. Plagiarism Questionnaire - Pilot Study

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PLAGIARISM DEFINED						
I believe that I have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student purchases a paper from an online resource then submits the work as their own.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student has not included a reference page for his/her assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student does not include in-textual citations in his/her assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student copies another's work ultimately utilizing it as his/her own without providing proper credit.	□	□	□	□	□	□
STUDENT ACCOUNTABLITY						
I believe that all academic resources should be cited per institutional guidelines regardless of the assignment.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that the perceived anonymity of the online modality may be responsible for an increase in plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that students classify online resources as "public domain" therefore justifying usage without appropriate citation.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that group projects/collaboration create opportunities for plagiarism to occur.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that students with lower GPA's may be more inclined to plagiarize as a means of "catching up" when struggling academically.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that online students are more likely to plagiarize than residentially based students.	□	□	□	□	□	□

BIAS						
I believe that I treat all students fairly.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that there are faculty who provide preferential treatment to high-achieving students.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I utilize rubrics when grading to further ensure fairness for my students.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I believe that stereotypes as applied to students (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.) have the potential to impact my plagiarism reporting decisions.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I practice "blind" grading (i.e., grading without knowing which student's paper you have) to ensure fairness for my students.	□	□	□	□	□	□
FEAR OF RETALIATION						
I fear physical and/or psychological related retaliation from students when reporting plagiarism.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I fear physical, psychological, and/or job performance related retaliation from my academic administration when reporting plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I fear that the academic administration will not support my decision to report plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I have been asked to retract or adjust a plagiarism violation by the college for a reason unrelated to the violation I submitted.	□	□	□	□	□	□
REPORTING TOOLS/PROCEDURES						
I understand the plagiarism reporting process for the academic institution where I currently teach.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that the plagiarism reporting process for the academic institution is easy to follow.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that the time I spend reporting a plagiarism violation is reasonable.	□	□	□	□	□	□
I feel that I have access to the tools that I need to verify plagiarism violations.	□	□	□	□	□	□

I follow up with each student who receives a plagiarism violation regarding appropriate resources to ensure that a similar violation does not happen again.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Consider the following scenarios. Please determine whether or not you would report these instances as plagiarism if you encountered them in your online courses. Space has been provided for additional commentary.

Student X turned in a paper that was 85% copied from a student submission turned in two terms ago. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

You discover that Student X committed a plagiarism violation in your course. The student was in their final term before graduation. An additional violation would result in a failure of your course. This result would also include a postponed graduation date. Would you report the plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Student X submitted a paper that utilized a variety of direct quotations. The student failed to include any means of citation that denoted the source of the quoted material. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

The academic institution that you teach for has been struggling with retention rates as of late. The administration is asking for all faculty to do "everything" that they can to ensure that students are successfully passing their courses. Upon review of the final course projects, you noticed that two students submitted the exact same paper for the second time. The egregiousness of this violation would result in a failing grade in the course. Would you feel comfortable submitting the plagiarism violation knowing its potential impact?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Student X submitted their final course project. Two days later, Student Y submitted an identical project. Would you submit a plagiarism violation for Student Y?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

In relation to the previous question, would you submit a plagiarism violation for Student X and Student Y? Why or why not?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

You discovered that Student X submitted a purchased paper for their final project. You provided feedback to the student to let them know that a plagiarism violation would be issued. Student X was extremely angry about this citation. The student denied purchasing the paper. Student X then threatened you with physical harm unless the violation was retracted. Do you still submit the plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Student X submitted a visual presentation for a final project. The student included their references on the final slide but failed to incorporate any in-text citation. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Student X submitted their final research project. When grading the student's paper, you discovered that the student utilized small sections of content from a variety of online resources to justify his/her stance on a controversial issue. You noticed that the student had listed only one of the resources on their resource page. Would you report this as plagiarism?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Student X submitted an initial online discussion forum post. You noticed that the student included a few very familiar quotes, but you do not see any citation or reference as to where the student found the content. Student X also failed to utilize quotation marks within the posting. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?

___YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE Rationale:

Demographic Information			
Academic Rank	□ Full-Time	□ Part-Time	
Highest Academic Credential Earned	□ Associate's	□ Bachelor's	□ Master's	□ Doctorate
Ethnicity	□ Caucasian	□ African American	□ Hispanic	□ Asian
	□ Other: _____			□ Choose Not to Answer
Gender	□ Male	□ Female	□ Other	□ Choose Not to Answer
Total Combined Years of Teaching Experience	□ 1-10	□ 11-20	□ 21-30	□ 30+
Programmatic Expertise	□ Business	□ Health Sciences	□ Design	□ Education
	□ Technology	□ Justice Studies	□ Nursing	□ General Education
Age	□ 20-30	□ 31-40	□ 41-50	□ 51+
	□ Choose Not to Answer			

APPENDIX C. Recruitment Email - Faculty

Hello Distinguished Rasmussen College Faculty…

My name is Laurie Larson and I am the Academic Dean for Rasmussen College at the St. Cloud campus. Currently I am pursuing an Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University - Moorhead. At this point in my program, I am moving forward with my dissertation and the research associated with my project; thus necessitating this correspondence to you.

The title of my dissertation is "Uncertainty in Academia: Undergraduate Faculty Reporting Behaviors Regarding Academic Integrity in Distance Education," and the purpose of the research is to determine how the perceived performance roles and expectations of undergraduate faculty impact the plagiarism reporting process within a distance education program at an associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree-granting institution with campuses in the Midwest and Florida. I am hoping to further explore and how five predetermined external factors derived from the literature may influence and/or impede faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors in the online modality.

Data for this study will be collected via a questionnaire sent to online faculty containing a mix of Likert Scale and open ended scenario based questions. Once this initial data is collected, 7-10 Academic and/or Nursing Deans are being asked to participate in a 1-2 hour virtual focus group to discuss the results of the questionnaire, how these results align with reporting behaviors you are witnessing from your faculty, as well as an opportunity to discuss potential solutions to concerning data points.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed.

If you choose to participate in the faculty portion of this study, I would ask that you complete and return the attached informed consent form via email at your earliest convenience. Once that is complete, you will receive a hyperlink to access the online questionnaire.

I would like to have all Informed Consent Forms returned and Academic Integrity Questionnaires completed prior to Monday, September 30, 2019.

Thank you in advance for your participation. I am genuinely looking forward to your feedback!

Laurie

Laurie Larson | Doctoral Candidate
Minnesota State University - Moorhead
P: 320-282-3111
Laurie.larson@go.mnstate.edu

APPENDIX D. Informed Consent Letter - Faculty

"Uncertainty in Academia: Undergraduate Faculty Reporting Behaviors Regarding Academic Integrity in Distance Education"

Dear Participant:

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with your campus administration or academic institution.

The purpose of the study is to determine how the perceived performance roles and expectations of undergraduate faculty impact the plagiarism reporting process within a distance education program at an associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree-granting institution with campuses in the Midwest and Florida. I am hoping to further explore how five external factors derived from the available literature may influence and/or impede faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors in the online modality.

Data for this study will be collected via a questionnaire sent to online faculty containing a mix of Likert Scale and open ended scenario based questions. Once this initial data is collected, 7-10 Academic and/or Nursing Deans are being asked to participate in a 1-2 hour virtual focus group to discuss the results of the questionnaire, how these results align with reporting behaviors you are witnessing from your faculty, as well as an opportunity to discuss potential solutions to concerning data points. Individuals involved in the data collection will be the researcher only.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. I will be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher will know your identity as a participant.

There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are a better understanding as to the importance of fair and equitable reporting for your students. These results may also provide valuable insight into the institutional reporting tools and processes that exist and how they can be streamlined for a more effective and efficient faculty experience.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. I will do my best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) storage of data, notes, and transcription work, will be kept in a secured location accessible only to me; (2) purging of all personally identifiable information from transcripts, and research reports submitted to me. This research project will require digital audio recordings of the focus group conversation. The digital audio recording, accompanying notes, and transcriptions will be kept on a password protected computer. Information from this study will be kept until August 2020 when all information will be destroyed.

Please feel free to ask questions regarding this study. You may contact Laurie Larson if you have additional questions. Contact Laurie Larson, Academic Dean, Rasmussen College, St. Cloud at 320-282-3111 or by email at larsonla@mnstate.edu. Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Lisa I. Karch, Chair of the Minnesota State University - Moorhead Institutional Review Board at 218-477-2699 or by e-mail at: irb@mnstate.edu.

If you feel that you are experiencing adverse consequences from this study:

Please contact our Life Assistance Program at 1-800-538-3543 for 24/7 support, or visit the website for additional resources at www.cignabehavioral.com/cgi.

Acceptance to Participate: *Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, and you have consented to participate in the first portion of this study (Academic Integrity Questionnaire). You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty after signing this form.*

_____   _____
Signature   Date

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Laurie Larson

APPENDIX E. Recruitment Email - Dean

Hello Distinguished Rasmussen College Deans…

My name is Laurie Larson and I am the Academic Dean for Rasmussen College at the St. Cloud campus. Currently I am pursuing an Educational Doctorate in Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University - Moorhead. At this point in my program, I am moving forward with my dissertation and the research associated with my project; thus necessitating this correspondence to you.

The title of my dissertation is "Uncertainty in Academia: Undergraduate Faculty Reporting Behaviors Regarding Academic Integrity in Distance Education," and the purpose of the research is to determine how the perceived performance roles and expectations of undergraduate faculty impact the plagiarism reporting process within a distance education program at an associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree-granting institution with campuses in the Midwest and Florida. I am hoping to further explore and how five predetermined external factors derived from the literature may influence and/or impede faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors in the online modality.

Data for this study will be collected via a questionnaire sent to online faculty containing a mix of Likert Scale and open ended scenario based questions. Once this initial data is collected, seven to 10 Academic and/or Nursing Deans are being asked to participate in a one to two hour virtual focus group to discuss the results of the questionnaire, how these results align with reporting behaviors you are witnessing from your faculty, as well as an opportunity to discuss potential solutions to concerning data points.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed.

If you choose to participate in the virtual focus group for Academic and Nursing Deans, I would ask that you complete and return the attached Informed Consent Form via email at your earliest convenience. Once that is complete, you will receive a link to a Survey Monkey Poll to determine potential scheduling availability for the event.

I would like to have all Informed Consent Forms returned and Survey Monkey Polls completed prior to Monday, September 30, 2019.

Thank you in advance for your participation. I am genuinely looking forward to your feedback!

Laurie

Laurie Larson | Doctoral Candidate
Minnesota State University - Moorhead
P: 320-282-3111
Laurie.larson@go.mnstate.edu

APPENDIX F. Informed Consent Letter - Dean

 "*Uncertainty in Academia: Undergraduate Faculty Reporting Behaviors Regarding Academic Integrity in Distance Education*"

Dear Participant:

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with your campus administration or academic institution.

The purpose of the study is to determine how the perceived performance roles and expectations of undergraduate faculty impact the plagiarism reporting process within a distance education program at an associate's, bachelor's, and master's degree-granting institution with campuses in the Midwest and Florida. I am hoping to further explore how five external factors derived from the available literature may influence and/or impede faculty plagiarism reporting behaviors in the online modality.

Data for this study will be collected via a questionnaire sent to online faculty containing a mix of Likert Scale and open ended scenario based questions. Once this initial data is collected, 7-10 Academic and/or Nursing Deans are being asked to participate in a 1-2 hour virtual focus group to discuss the results of the questionnaire, how these results align with reporting behaviors you are witnessing from your faculty, as well as an opportunity to discuss potential solutions to concerning data points. Individuals involved in the data collection will be the researcher only.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. I will be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and only the researcher and fellow focus group members will know your identity as a participant.

There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are a better understanding as to the importance of fair and equitable reporting for your faculty and students. These results may also provide valuable insight into the institutional reporting tools and processes that exist and how they can be streamlined for a more effective and efficient faculty experience.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed. I will do my best to keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality: (1) storage of data, notes, video, and transcription work, will be kept in a secured location accessible only to me; (2) purging of all personally identifiable information from transcripts, and research reports submitted to me. This virtual focus group will require WebEx recording as well as digital audio recording of the conversation. The WebEx archive, digital audio recording, accompanying notes, and transcriptions will be kept on a password protected computer. Information from this study will be kept until August 2020 when all information will be destroyed.

Please feel free to ask questions regarding this study. You may contact Laurie Larson if you have additional questions. Contact Laurie Larson, Academic Dean, Rasmussen College, St. Cloud at 320-282-3111 or by email at larsonla@mnstate.edu. Any questions about your rights may be directed to Dr. Lisa I. Karch, Chair of the Minnesota State University - Moorhead Institutional Review Board at 218-477-2699 or by email at: irb@mnstate.edu.

If you feel that you are experiencing adverse consequences from this study:

Please contact our Life Assistance Program at 1-800-538-3543 for 24/7 support, or visit the website for additional resources at www.cignabehavioral.com/cgi.

Acceptance to Participate: *Your signature indicates that you have read the information provided above, and you have consented to participate in the virtual focus group for Academic and Nursing Deans. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty after signing this form.*

_____   _____
Signature   Date

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Laurie Larson

APPENDIX G. Content Validity Index Testing

Is this indicator…	Essential to measure the construct	Useful but not essential to measure the construct	Not necessary to measure the construct	Comment or Recommendation	CVI Agreement - Must meet 62% threshold
PLAGIARISM DEFINED *Item 1: I believe that I have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism.*					80%
Reviewer #1		X		Some may not be self-aware of their lack of knowledge.	
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Is there a place you will offer a full definition?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X		Perhaps remove "I believe that" wording	
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 2: I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student purchases a paper from an online source and submits the work as his/her own.					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			This helps to determine if faculty truly know the components of integrity issues.	
Reviewer #6		X		Pronoun shift creates some ambiguity.	
Reviewer #7		X		The challenge I have with this question is I'd usually classify it as contract cheating rather than plagiarism (it is also a type of plagiarism). But I don't know how you'd capture that without wider changes.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 3: I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student has not included a reference page for his/her assignment.					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Does it matter if the reference page is proper format per the college, thus it is important students are following guidelines appropriately.	

Reviewer #6		X		Pronoun shift creates some ambiguity.	
Reviewer #7		X			
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student does not include in-textual citations in his/her assignment.					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 5: I believe a plagiarism violation has occurred when a student copies another's work ultimately utilizing it as his/her own without providing proper credit.					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X			Wording is confusing.	
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
STUDENT RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION					
Item 1: I believe that all academic resources should be cited per institutional guidelines regardless of assignment.					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Do you need to specifically indicate what "cited properly" means? Or would questions around in-text, reference page, and quotes or paraphrasing as needed?	
Reviewer #6		X		Is there a way to clarify what you mean by resources?	
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X			
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 2: I believe that the perceived anonymity of the online modality may be responsible for an increase in plagiarism violations					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4		X			
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X			
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 3: I believe that students classify online resources as "public domain" therefore justifying usage without appropriate citation.					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4		X			
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8		X			
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: I believe that group projects/collaboration create opportunities for plagiarism to occur.					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X			
Reviewer #8		X			
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 5: I believe that students with lower GPA's may be more inclined to plagiarize as a means of "catching up" when struggling academically.					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4		X			
Reviewer #5	X				

Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8			X		
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			

Item 6: I believe that online students are more likely to plagiarize than residentially based students — 70%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4			X		
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X			
Reviewer #10			X		

BIAS

Item 1: I believe that I treat all students fairly. — 100%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 2: I believe that there are faculty who provide preferential treatment to high-achieving students. — 90%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X			What is meant by "overachieving"? A student performing better than their background would suggest? Or someone who is already "top of the class"?	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 3: I utilize rubrics when grading to further ensure fairness for my students. — 80%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6		X		Do faculty believe that rubrics create grading fairness?	
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X			
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: I believe that stereotypes as applied to students (e.g., ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc.,) have the potential to impact impact my plagiarism reporting decisions.					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		In reflecting in online environments, do you think the results will change compared to residential in this area?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X		Will this tell us anything useful? Some people may interpret this as "more likely to report" others as "less likely to report".	
Reviewer #8		X			
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 5: I practice "blind" grading (i.e., grading without knowing which student's paper you have) to ensure fairness for my students.					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3		X		Change "student's paper you have" to " the student's paper"	
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			This is a great indicator.	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X		One disadvantage of blind marking is that it also means that faculty can't recognize student writing style, so they will not know when contract cheating cases occur. So it can also lead to unfairness.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
FEAR OF RETALIATION					
Item 1: I fear physical and/or psychological retaliation from students when reporting plagiarism violations.					90%
Reviewer #1	X			Often seen in course evaluations	
Reviewer #2	X				

Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		This area addressing physical fear I struggle with. Are the targeted faculty primarily online or are there residential? It might throw off the responses if there is no chance of physical but a chance of job performance retaliation, etc.	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 2: I fear physical, psychological and/or job performance related retaliation from my academic administration when reporting plagiarism violations.					80%
Reviewer #1			X	Rarely do I see any retaliation past the faculty member detecting the plagiarism.	
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		I wonder if a statement along the lines of fear of future scheduling, etc., by administration based on submissions might shed some light.	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 3: I fear that the academic administration will not support my decisions to report plagiarism violations.					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: I have been asked to retract or adjust a plagiarism violation by the institution for a reason unrelated to the violation I submitted.					90%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				

Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
REPORTING TOOLS AND PROCEDURES					
Item 1: I understand the plagiarism reporting process for the institution where I currently teach.					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 2: I feel that the plagiarism reporting process for the academic institution is easy to follow.					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X			
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 3: I feel that the time I spend reporting a plagiarism violation is reasonable.					80%
Reviewer #1	X			Once reported there is an excessive amount of nonproductive time consumed by the student.	
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3		X		Change "spend to report" to "spend reporting"	
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X			Consider removing "I spend" and replace with "spent" --for those that have not submitted a violation -- then you can capture all's perception of the process.	
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: I feel that I have access to the tools that I need to verify plagiarism violations.					100%
Reviewer #1	X			Definitely dependent on the institution.	

Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			In this section, or possible retaliation, would you want to include something about when a case is returned, or not acted upon and how that impacts future reporting?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 5: I follow up with each student who receives a plagiarism violation regarding appropriate resources to ensure that a similar violation does not happen again.					80%
Reviewer #1	X			I wish all faculty would.	
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Do you want to draw light on how the follow up occurs? Or that might be an outcome based on findings.	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X		This may be a local operational issue, but is this the responsibility of the person who put the allegation forward? In many places, there is a deliberate separation of concerns, as the student may be more comfortable getting support through a third party.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X			Perhaps include a NA option as some may never have submitted a violation or encountered a violation.	
Reviewer #10	X				
** Section 1 Content Validity Index: 83.60%					

Is this indicator…	Essential to Measure the Construct	Useful but not essential to measure the construct	Not necessary to measure the construct	Comment or Recommendation	Agreement
SCENARIO BASED QUESTIONS					
Item 1: Student X turned in a paper that was 85% copied from a student submission turned in two terms ago. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				

Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 2: You discovered that Student X committed a plagiarism violation in your course. The student was in their final term before graduation. An additional violation would result in a failure of your course. The result would also include a postponed graduation date. Would you report the plagiarism violation?					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Do you need to define what "report" means? And have you considered adding a scenario where the faculty previously submitted but the committee returned for in-course correction or something like that?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X			Not sure about "committed a plagiarism violation" as I presume the faculty member, at this point, is only putting a case forward, but they would not be the one to decide if this was plagiarism or not.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 3: Student X submitted a paper that utilized a variety of statistics and direct quotations. The student failed to include any means of citation that denoted the source of the quoted material. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 4: The academic institution that you teach for has been struggling with retention rates as of late. The administration is asking for all faculty to do "everything" that they can to ensure that students are successfully passing their courses. Upon review of the final course projects, you noticed that two students submitted the exact same paper for the second time. The egregiousness of this violation would result in a failing grade in the course. Would you feel comfortable submitting this plagiarism violation knowing its potential impact?					90%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				

Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7			X	I think this can be interpreted multiple ways and I don't know how to rewrite it without making it even more complex. For instance, have the two students submitted the same paper as one another? Or is it the same paper they submitted for an earlier deadline.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 5: Student X submitted their final course project. Two days later Student Y submits an identical project. Would you submit a plagiarism violation for Student Y?					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7			X	I understand why you are asking this, but I immediately thought that you can't judge whether Student X or Student Y was responsible, so this question is really impossible to answer fairly, particularly in light of 6.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X			Name choices. - Perhaps remove the names for all scenarios and just include student 1/2 when needed. For this question in particular it is unclear if you are trying to measure their perception of the scenario or if there is a bias based upon the assumptions of ethnicity. A bias may not be admitted in the rationale.	
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 6: In relation to the previous question, would you submit a plagiarism violation for Student X and Student Y? Why or why not?					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X			
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 7: You discovered that Student X submitted a purchased paper for their final project. You have provided feedback to the student to let them know that a plagiarism violation would be issued. Student X was extremely angry about this citation. He/She denied purchasing the paper. Student X then threatened you with physical harm unless the violation was retracted. Do you still submit the plagiarism violation?					
					90%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7		X		Why is the faculty member contacting the student directly? Also, wouldn't the faculty be expected to report the threat (which I presume would have a good chance of leading to expulsion?)	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 8: Student X submitted a visual presentation for a final project. The student included their references on the final slide but failed to incorporate any in-text citation. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?

70%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3		X		Change "power point" to a more generic term such as presentation.	
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X		Not all citation styles address in text citation in PowerPoints directly. APA does not although Rasmussen has created our own suggestions/guidelines.	
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 9: Student X submitted their final research project. While grading the student's paper, you discovered that the student utilized small sections of content from a variety of online resources to justify his/her stance on a controversial issue. You notice that the student had listed only one of the resources on their resource page. Would you report this as plagiarism?

90%

Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9		X		The scenario is a bit unclear as to whether or not the student cut and paste form all the articles -- also the faculty member would not have the insight into how many articles were downloaded by the student. Perhaps be more direct in stating that some portions of direct cut and paste while some were not.	
Reviewer #10	X				

Item 10: Student X submitted an initial online discussion forum post. You noticed that the student included a few very familiar quotes, but you do not see any citation or reference as to where the student found the content. Student X also failed to utilize quotation marks within the posting. Would you report this as a plagiarism violation?					100%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
** Section 2 Content Validity Index: 90%					
Is this indicator…	Essential to Measure the Construct	Useful but not essential to measure the construct	Not necessary to measure the construct	Comment or Recommendation	Agreement
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION					
Item 1: Academic Rank					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3		X		Change "EdD/PhD" to Doctorate to include JD, DC and others.	
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 2: Highest Academic Credential Earned					90%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X				
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				

Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 3: Ethnicity					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X			
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 4: Gender					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		Do you need to offer "other" or option to not report here?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X			Other as an option.	
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 5: Total Combined Years of Teaching Experience					90%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2	X				
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5	X			Are you interested at all in whether they are residential or online?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 6: Programmatic Expertise					80%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2		X			
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		Do you need Gen Ed?	

Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10	X				
Item 7: Age					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X		Do you want to offer age blocks as opposed to an open response?	
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
Item 8: Current State of Residence					70%
Reviewer #1	X				
Reviewer #2			X		
Reviewer #3	X				
Reviewer #4	X				
Reviewer #5		X			
Reviewer #6	X				
Reviewer #7	X				
Reviewer #8	X				
Reviewer #9	X				
Reviewer #10		X			
** Section 3 Content Validity Index: 77.50%					
** OVERALL Questionnaire Content Validity Index: 83.70%					

APPENDIX H. Virtual Focus Group Interview Protocol

1- What (if anything) sticks out to you regarding the data presented?
2- Is there a specific question(s) that you found to be particularly interesting or telling?
3- How do you see the results of this questionnaire aligning with the behaviors that you are witnessing from your faculty?
4- What additional external factors (not addressed in this study) may need to be considered for future research studies?
5- How would you rate the current academic integrity reporting process at your institution?
6- What specific changes would you like to see made to the current process to create a more user-friendly experience for faculty?

APPENDIX I. Virtual Focus Group Code Book

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">Virtual Focus Group Code Book</td></tr>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Secondary Codes</th>
<th>Primary Codes & Questions*</th>
<th>Quotes</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Faculty Knowledge & Experience</td>
<td>Academic Background
Hard Core Reporters vs. Teachable Moments
My class, my rules (Q. 19)
Defining Egregious
Understanding of Plagiarism Tools and Usage (Q. 24)
3 Strikes Mentality (Q. 19-20)</td>
<td>"I don't know that they see the violation in the classroom as clear cut as the scenarios in the questionnaire. They are not able to get there as quickly or as clearly as these scenarios are laid out. Perhaps if they could, we might see more actual reporting" (Participant F)

"It would be interesting to learn what faculty consider to be an egregious offense, as this term often determines whether faculty submit an offense or not." (Participant H).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intentional vs. Unintentional Plagiarism</td>
<td>Taking vs. Forgetting (Q. 1-5)</td>
<td>"Faculty were more lenient in cases of inability to cite correctly versus a conscious decision to plagiarize." (Participant G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding & Utilizing Technology</td>
<td>Changing Technologies (Q. 8)
Social Media
Public Domain and Fair Use
Education
Faculty Mentoring of appropriate use</td>
<td>"Public Domain is not actually as clearly understood across the newer tech generation...things like intellectual property laws and media laws are not entirely understood. Changing technology and online source availability fuels the ambiguity of how to cite it." (Participant B)</td>
</tr>
</table>

	Collaboration Challenges	- Unclear student outcomes (Q. 9) - Individual vs. Group Work (Q. 9) - Faculty Experience with Collaborative Assignments (Q. 9)	*"Teachers are not sure if plagiarism happens in these spaces [group assignments]. This also leads to questions as to if students understand the boundary between working together and doing their work, further complicating the situation for faculty." (Participant C)*
	Faculty Inconsistency	- Ok in one class but not another - Same plagiarism policy, varied interpretations - Magic Number	*"Varied responses [in the questionnaire] could also imply non-compliance with institutional policy leaving students to question why their behavior was acceptable in one class but not in another." (Participant D)*
Perception	Cumbersome Reporting Process	- Time Consuming (Q. 21-25) - Additional Workload (Q. 21-25) - Inadequate Tools (Q. 24) - Previous Experience at other Institutions (Q. 21-25)	*"What is the perceived level of understand that each faculty member has regarding APA and plagiarism? Did they have specific training at another institution? It would be interesting to see how those faculty experience and expectations played into their decisions to report." (Participant A)* *"I don't get paid for this or it's not my job." (Participant B)*
	Bias	Time Denoting Guilt (Q. 12-13)	*"Once a cheater, always a cheater." (Participant H)* *"Whoever turns it in first often looks less guilty…we are working on assumption" (Participant D)*
	Faculty Tenure	- Jaded by Experience - Lazier with Age	*"Plagiarism Baggage" (Participant C)*

	Faculty Guilt	• Repercussions for Student • Enough is Enough Mentality	*"I had to report...I felt such guilt. As an instructor who appreciates the teachable moment, some students won't accept the coaching. It was terrible. There is a point where you have to say enough is enough." (Participant B)*
Expectation	Plagiarism Defined	• Unclear Definition (Q. 1-5) • Attempting to Cite (Q. 1-5)	*"I think it just speaks to the fact that faculty are not fully clear on what they should or should not do."* *(Participant F)*
	Student Expectation of Plagiarism Knowledge	• Credential Sought vs. APA expectations • Faculty Instruction – Citation Implied	*"Perhaps faculty felt that these students should know better by this state in their academic career." (Participant F)* *"When these students [K12] reach college, they are held to a different set of expectations and the student often responds with 'well, I've done this before' or 'this is how I have always written.' How do we bridge the gap and bring them [students] up to speed on appropriate academic writing when they have been allowed to get away with it for so long?" (Participant I)*
	Online vs. Residential Classroom Expectations	• Ease of copy/paste (Q. 5) • Anonymity of Online (Q. 7/11) • Time Management Challenges (Q. 10)	*"Residential courses take away opportunities for plagiarism. Your discussion is live, and it is engaging; however, it also takes away the need for citation skills...so where are students learning proper citation techniques?" (Participant F)* *Perhaps students were more apt to be comfortable crossing a line consciously in the online world knowing that they have some anonymity and that they will never have to encounter the instructor face-to-face. They are not forced to be judged in person. It creates a bit of a shield, almost like a buffer that makes them feel immune to potential consequences. (Participant G)*

Communication	Dean & Administration Communication with Faculty	• Lack of Visibility • Faculty Understanding (Q. 1-5) • Returned Plagiarism Case Reactions (Q. 17-21)	*"The system we have in place right now does not provide the opportunity for a dean to work directly with a faculty member to increase their understanding of a violation when it is returned. It doesn't lend us that opportunity to go back and have those conversations at this point." (Participant F)* *"Why should the faculty go through all the extra time and effort for this to get returned to them with no resolution?" (Participant H)*
	Retaliation	• Student Complaint leads to violation reduction (Q. 17) • Personal Performance (Q. 17) • Communication for kickbacks (Q. 17) • Unrequested Dean Intervention (Q. 17-20)	*"Why bother to submit the violation, it's just going to come back. Nobody listens." (Participant H)* *"I think they are very worried about EOQs and receiving a bad review because that review then follows them to their annual performance evaluation and lowers their score." (Participant H)* *I can say that I have encountered situations where other deans have asked me to coach my faculty on what they submit and don't submit relating to the number of violations that they are putting forth. The messaging from other deans asserts that more violations creates more work for the dean. I'm having to now have conversations versus if you wouldn't have submitted this violation I wouldn't be." (Participant D)*

*Question numbers correlate with the Plagiarism Questionnaire taken by faculty participants in Phase 1 of the research study (see Appendix A).