

## New counselor educators' scholarly productivity: Supportive and discouraging environments

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### **Abstract:**

Eighteen new counselor educators shared in-depth reports of their efforts to establish an early record of scholarly productivity, critical to their success in academe. Analyses of their experiences using consensual qualitative research methods revealed components of both highly positive and highly discouraging program environments and their impact on participants' research goals.

**Keywords:** scholarly productivity | research mentoring | research culture | assistant professors | consensual qualitative research

### **Article:**

Over 2 decades ago, Luce and Murray (1998) asserted that “colleges and universities have a human obligation to those they recruited to provide the conditions needed to be successful” (p. 103). This sentiment seems particularly salient around new professors' development of their research agendas, given that scholarly productivity is a key determination for promotion and tenure decisions (Evans & Cokley, 2008; Miller & Seldin, 2014). In fact, assistant professors' productivity during their first few years sets the stage for their success (Boice, 1992; Magnuson, Black, & Lahman, 2006). Establishing an independent research agenda, however, is one of the most challenging tasks for a new assistant professor (Evans & Cokley, 2008). Even more, research expectations appear to be increasing for all faculty (Eagan & Garvey, 2015), including counselor educators (Davis, Levitt, McGlothlin, & Hill, 2006). Thus, a program environment and culture that fosters new counselor educators' scholarly productivity is vital to their retention and success.

To what extent are counselor education programs providing research supports for their new faculty? Unfortunately, previous researchers (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Okech, Astramovich, Johnson, Hoskins, & Rubel, 2006) found that a significant number of new counselor educators were not receiving the research mentoring they needed to be successful. Others found that this result was particularly true for women and persons of color. In a survey of 115 female faculty (tenured and untenured), N. R. Hill, Leinbaugh, Bradley, and Hazler (2005) found that only 45% reported mentoring programs were available to them, and 70% said that there were few or no research collaborations in their programs. Similarly, Bradley and Holcomb-McCoy (2004) found that African American counselor educators (tenured and untenured) reported that lack of mentorship and collegial support was a major barrier to attaining promotion and tenure; they rated research and publishing as their highest source of stress. In two studies of untenured minoritized counselor educators (Casado Pérez & Carney, 2018; Haskins et al., 2016), participants described marginalization and oppression as well as devaluation of their research. Other authors (e.g., Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Milsom & Moran, 2015) found that new counselor educators were particularly stressed about their research and writing, often citing high teaching and service responsibilities (Bradley, 2005; N. R. Hill, 2004; Shillingford, Trice-Black, & Butler, 2013). In a unique sequence of studies across 6 years, Magnuson and colleagues (Magnuson, 2002; Magnuson et al., 2006; Magnuson, Norem, & Lonneman-Doroff, 2009; Magnuson, Shaw, Tubin, & Norem, 2004) broadly investigated new counselor educators' sources of satisfaction, dissatisfaction, pleasure, and disappointment. When research and scholarship were mentioned, a supportive research culture, especially research mentoring, was important to the faculty members' satisfaction, confidence, and success in promotion and tenure. When such a culture was not present, discouragement sometimes led the faculty to relocate or leave counselor education altogether.

Although these studies suggest that the research culture in counselor education programs is lacking, thus jeopardizing new counselor educators' tenure decisions, they provided limited reports about that culture. Most were focused more broadly (e.g., overall experience or satisfaction with the new role), more narrowly on one aspect (e.g., research mentoring) of the culture, or on specific subgroups of faculty (e.g., African American mothers). Thus, we sought more in-depth perspectives specific to supports and barriers to assistant professors' research and scholarly productivity through consensual qualitative research (CQR; C. E. Hill, 2012). We were guided by one overarching research question: What aspects of their program's environment do new counselor educators identify as conditions that support or discourage their scholarly productivity?

## **Method**

### **Participants and Procedure**

The sample was drawn from a larger study in which 49 assistant professors at doctoral and master's counseling programs completed measures of their research self-efficacy, current research culture, interest in research, and scholarly productivity (see Wester, Borders, Gonzalez, & Waalkes, 2019, for descriptions of measures and additional details). Of the 49 assistant professors, 30 (61%) indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview and provided an email contact. Following institutional review board approval, the 30 interview volunteers

were contacted by email or phone; 10 did not respond, had time conflicts, or had provided incorrect contact information. Twenty were interviewed by phone by the first, second, or fourth author; two interviews were lost due to digital recording difficulties, leaving 18 for data analysis.

Of the 18 participants, 13 self-identified as female and five as male; 12 self-identified as Caucasian, five as Black or African American, and one reported “other.” Their ages ranged from 28 to 56 years ( $M = 36.95$ ,  $SD = 6.46$ ). Current employment settings included master’s-only counseling programs ( $n = 7$ ) and those with both master’s and doctoral programs (MS/PhD,  $n = 11$ ). They had been in their positions an average of 2.6 years ( $SD = 1.9$ ). On the basis of ratings from the quantitative study (Wester et al., 2019), four participants reported a high research culture in their programs (all MS/PhD), seven reported moderate research cultures (including three MS/PhD programs), and seven reported low research cultures (including four MS/PhD programs). All participants had at least moderate interest in conducting research and at least moderate research self-efficacy although these were not part of the inclusion criteria; several scored high on both.

### Interviews and Data Analysis

The first, second, and fourth authors created the interview questions (available from first author) based on their knowledge of the broader and counseling-specific literature on researcher identity development, mentoring, and new faculty challenges, as well as their personal experiences as new faculty and new faculty mentors. Questions included open-ended inquiries about barriers and supports to participants’ scholarly productivity, particularly research mentoring, in their current program environment, as well as coping strategies to support their research efforts. Questions about other influences (e.g., doctoral research training environment) are not included here because of space limitations. Telephone interviews ranged from 45 to 60 minutes and were digitally recorded. The recordings were transcribed verbatim by two graduate assistants, including the third author, who deidentified the transcripts before sending them to the other authors.

We elected to analyze the interviews using CQR (C. E. Hill, 2012) to achieve depth in understanding participants’ experiences. CQR is particularly appropriate in analyzing events, such as the examples of encouraging and discouraging influences we asked our participants to provide. In addition, the iterative, multirole coding process enhances trustworthiness through discussion to achieve consensus around themes. Data analysis followed steps for CQR as outlined by C. E. Hill (2012). First, Authors 1, 3, and 4 read a sample of the transcripts and independently created domains; they met to reach consensus on these and then applied them to the remainder of the transcripts and again met to reach consensus. Next, Authors 1 and 3 independently developed core ideas within the domains, meeting regularly to reach consensus. The two then conducted the cross-analysis, which involved creating categories, meeting regularly to reach consensus on these, and noting frequency counts for each category. Author 2 served as auditor at all stages of the data analysis.

### Research Team and Trustworthiness

The three faculty (Authors 1, 2, and 4)—one at each rank (full, associate, and assistant professor) at the time of the study—and one doctoral student (Author 3) were all at the same counselor education program in a midsized university located in the Southeast United States. All were Caucasian women. The three faculty members have extensive experience with qualitative methodologies, including CQR.

Prior to data analysis, we met to share and bracket our potential biases. We all identified a strong interest in enhancing counseling research, demonstrated through previous research on this topic and research mentoring of doctoral students and assistant professors, especially women and persons of color. We agreed that researcher development is continual and that mentors are key to that process. We believed that researcher identity development could be emotional and involve an “imposter syndrome” (Clance & Imes, 1978) We also believed knowledge of and openness to both quantitative and qualitative research were important. We agreed to be alert to possible influences of these beliefs. Once interviews commenced, we met to report and process our personal reactions to some of the interviews (i.e., interviewees struggling with some aspect of their research development and work) in an effort to bracket these and diminish their influence on data analysis. Author 2 in particular noted her “advocacy lens” was activated in interviews with faculty of color. These reactions were discussed as needed throughout the process, including the writing stage.

**Table 1.** Domains and Categories for Work Setting Conditions That Support and Discourage New Counselor Educators’ Scholarly Productivity

Domain and Category	<i>n</i>	Frequency
Barriers		
Current research culture	12	Typical
Research mentoring	13	Typical
Individual factors	13	Typical
Resources	9	Typical
Faculty responsibilities/time	12	Typical
Professional factors	6	Variant
Impact	11	Typical
Coping with barriers	15	Typical
Supports		
Current research culture	17	General
Research mentoring	9	Typical
Individual factors	10	Typical
Resources	7	Variant
Faculty responsibilities/time	4	Variant
Professional factors	7	Variant
Impact	8	Variant
Current mentoring needs		
Needs are not being met	15	Typical
Needs are being met	4	Variant

*Note.* *N* = 18. In line with C. E. Hill (2012), for general, *n* = 17–18 participants; typical, *n* = 9–16 participants; and variant, *n* = 4–8 participants.

In line with CQR, trustworthiness was supported through consensus coding and use of an auditor throughout the process. In addition, we used member checking by inviting all 18 participants to

review the Findings section and Table 1; eight responded and indicated that the findings as written adequately reflected their experiences and also protected their identity. One participant recognized a quote and slightly changed the punctuation to better portray the intended meaning.

## Findings

Data analysis yielded three broad domains—barriers, supports, and current mentoring needs—in participants' reports about their current employment settings; all participants were represented in each domain (i.e., all reported both barriers and supports and spoke to current mentoring needs). Most barriers and supports categories were parallel and included the following: current research culture, research mentoring, individual factors, resources, faculty responsibilities/time, professional factors, and impact (of barriers or supports). The barriers domain included one additional category: coping with barriers. For current mentoring needs, categories distinguished between participants who said their needs were met and those who said their needs were not being met and, for the latter, what those mentoring needs were. These findings are summarized in the following sections and in Table 1. Frequency labels (e.g., general, typical) are in line with C. E. Hill (2012; see note in Table 1). First, we report findings for barriers and supports for participants' current employment setting, and then we summarize findings for current mentoring needs.

### Barriers in Current Employment Setting

Participants' descriptions of barriers in the *current research culture* ( $n = 12$ ) ranged from “not a priority” to “research expectations but lack of support.” Of participants reporting these barriers, two thirds were in programs that had a doctoral program or had recently started a doctoral program. Participants noted that faculty did not talk with each other about research and were not conducting research. Some said that even when a research team existed (which they often had started), most faculty and doctoral students did not get involved. One participant reported wanting to start a student research team for master's and doctoral students but was discouraged from doing so by the department. A female participant described her experience as follows:

There are a couple of us here on the faculty who try to really encourage students and get them involved in research, but there are other faculty who say, “You don't really need to do that.” And they're older and male and I think sometimes students listen to older males more, so ... it's easier for students to say ... why bother?

Some participants described a divide between older faculty, who were not interested in or no longer doing research, and new faculty, who wanted and/or were expected to conduct research to achieve tenure. More concerning were descriptions of an “adversarial” environment in which the new faculty did not feel welcomed to join other faculty on their research or were chided, as new faculty, for making suggestions to support research in the program. Three participants were told they needed to change their research agenda to be able to achieve expectations for promotion and tenure; one participant received this message after the 3rd-year review:

I was told very clearly that the research that I wanted to do would not get me tenure. So, I needed to change and do research that was not of interest to me.... So, I just felt a sense

of having to really change my identity, completely, to be able to fit what the research expectations were. It didn't feel right, for me.... It felt like a negotiation I wasn't willing to make.

Several African American participants noted the lack of faculty of color research role models:

Well, nobody here looks like me (laughs).... And so sometimes that noise [in my head] is exasperating because you don't see people who can relate to you on that level, what it's like to be a Black female in academia doing research.

One participant reported some racial tensions in the community, but not the university, around her research agenda.

Most participants ( $n = 13$ ) reported their program/university provided either no *research mentoring* or research mentors who were not helpful; the latter were almost always formal, assigned mentors. These formal mentors were seen as unhelpful because they came from a different field, seldom or never contacted the participant, or did not seem interested in or understand the new faculty member's research. One participant reported being invited to be involved in the formal mentor's research but only in "self-serving" ways. Participants without a research mentor usually desired one but either had difficulty finding someone who could help or were hesitant to reach out because of fears of a shaming response (e.g., "Why didn't you learn this in your doctoral program?").

For *individual factors*, most participants ( $n = 13$ ) mentioned a lack of efficacy or confidence (e.g., "I can't do this"), including the fear of being seen as incompetent and believing their research skills were insufficient or limited.

How do I ask these questions about "What does this mean?" without getting looked at like, "You're freaking serious, you don't know what this is? How did you get here?" I think that's kind of my struggle whenever I meet with a research team.... I have to read up so that I can appear to be knowledgeable about what's going on, because I don't want to look incompetent.

Most participants ( $n = 9$ ) named *resources* as barriers, including lack of funding for travel, research incentives, and research graduate assistants. They also identified *faculty responsibilities/time* as a barrier ( $n = 12$ ), usually related to a heavy teaching load (e.g., 3-3 [three courses in fall and three in spring] or 4-4 [four courses in fall and four in spring] or higher; this included some faculty members in doctoral programs), sometimes along with high summer teaching expectations (e.g., four courses) as well as heavy departmental or program administrative or service responsibilities. Several participants reported perceptions that service responsibilities were unfairly distributed between tenured and untenured faculty, sometimes based in gender inequities. One participant felt that, within her department, "Women are expected to take care of the teaching and the service, and then, men get lighter loads and they have more time to write."

Several participants noted family responsibilities (e.g., single mother, new baby); one participant with family responsibilities named poor time management around not holding herself accountable for sticking with scheduled time for research and writing. A few participants cited *professional factors* ( $n = 6$ ), all related to professional counseling journals. These included low impact factors, belief that journal reviewers did not understand the research methodologies they used, and dismay at having found that the “editorial process is not as blind as we think.”

Participants also described the *impact of barriers* ( $n = 11$ ), although these were mixed. One participant reported a positive impact (“more determined despite editorial feedback”), and another stated no impact (takes responsibility for making research a priority, has to make own opportunities happen). Most, however, reported a negative impact, including lowered productivity and even physical illness. The most frequent negative impacts were lowered research interest, self-efficacy, confidence, and sense of competence. For example, one participant shared,

I think a significant barrier for me right now ... is ... because of my current environment, that I feel less competent in some ways than I did maybe even coming out of my doctoral program. Sort of like, I haven't used it so I've lost it, things that I have just forgotten because I haven't been using those skills.

Another participant, in a MS/PhD program, lamented,

Like, I was even at the ACA [American Counseling Association] conference and ... I found myself talking with senior colleagues and not even feeling connected to what they were talking about because I feel so, sort of alienated from even feeling part of a research institution any longer. And feeling like, “Wow I really miss that,” and I really feel like this is a piece of my training that is not being utilized or fostered in my current environment, and missing that.

Participants said they were *coping with barriers* in a variety of ways ( $n = 15$ ). Most were reaching out to find mentors, develop collaborations, and/or create research teams with colleagues at other universities, peers from their doctoral program, or their doctoral chair, as well as networking at conferences. An African American participant explained how, while at conferences, she coped with thoughts of “Am I good enough? Can I do this?”:

But sometimes I look at other people's mentors and they don't even know I'm looking at them. I'm looking at them like, “Wow, you did it. I can do it.” It's like, “Our journeys might not be the same, but gosh I look at you and think, if you did this, I can do this.”

Other participants were also trying to be self-sufficient by identifying their needs. They reported a wide range of activities: increasing self-motivation; learning through reading; collecting data in their classes; using time management techniques; prioritizing writing; setting aside summers for writing; creating a network of practitioners as resources; working with doctoral students; and striving for synergy in teaching, research, and service. Some participants also mentioned exercising and relying on spirituality and praying. Some reported changing expectations or becoming more realistic about what they could accomplish and not beating themselves up about

it. Five of the 18 participants said they were moving to a more research-oriented program at the end of the academic year (“I know I’m going to get the mentorship that I need because I asked on my campus visit”), were considering moving to find a program more supportive of research, or had already done so.

### Supports in Current Employment Setting

Participants who reported barriers also reported supports, although not always in their program environment. All participants spoke to at least some positive aspect of their current employment setting. In terms of *current research culture* ( $n = 17$ ), some participants referred to a positive culture overall in which “the expectation is for you to do well and be relevant in whatever area in which you are interested.” These faculty often spoke to or implied a person-environment fit (“like-minded colleagues”) based on expectations, support, and role models of faculty interested in research and who got excited when talking about research. Participants noted their colleagues were “interested in my questions/research” and described a culture in which “meaningful and inspiring conversations with other researchers” happened regularly. New faculty were able to pursue their own interests and felt free to ask questions, think aloud, and get feedback. They appreciated positive feedback, encouragement, and praise from their colleagues (“They get excited when I do well”). They were supported through regular collaborations among faculty—pretenured and/or tenured faculty—both within and across departments, as well as collaborations with students. One participant spoke to a synergy of teaching, research, and service that “fit together” and added, “I really do value where I am.”

Most participants ( $n = 9$ ) reported receiving positive *research mentoring* from one or more persons at their universities; most of these were informal mentoring relationships and often contrasted with the same faculty member’s experience with less helpful formal mentors. Most of these mentors were faculty colleagues, although not always in the same department. About half of these participants also mentioned peer research mentors—either pretenured faculty in their department or peers they met through networking at conferences—and about half reported continuing to work with their doctoral or master’s advisers or former doctoral student colleagues as research mentors. Current research mentors provided instrumental support (Kram, 1985) with a range of research tasks, including discussing ideas toward conceptualizing a study, “poking holes” around what questions reviewers might have, providing help with quantitative statistics and new methodologies, providing hands-on experience with a grant, coauthoring or editing manuscripts, and emphasizing impact over numbers of publications. Regarding psychosocial support (Kram, 1985), new faculty said they appreciated the “little things,” such as timely feedback, a quick response to a question, and the sense that the mentor was invested both in the participant’s work and in the participant personally. Participants also highlighted professional guidance, emotional support around professional tasks and personal challenges (e.g., divorce), and, with peer mentors, sharing concerns and victories.

Most participants ( $n = 10$ ) also named *individual factors* as research supports, including traits and skills such as their strong interest in research, confidence and love for writing, and self-awareness of research strengths and weaknesses. Supportive personal traits included determination, self-motivation, discipline, an internal drive, being an organized and detailed person, taking the initiative around research, natural curiosity, and being willing to advocate for



self (e.g., changed research mentors). They also were motivated by their desire to make an impact in the field. One participant said,

And so, I think the human element of it is really important to me. Learning about a subject that is relevant to people in a meaningful way. The more we learn about a subject the more we can help change lives, right? ... So, I think there's that part of it that's about contributing to the world in a positive way.

Another participant shared,

At the end of the day I always have to tie it back to, "Why did you get into this in the first place?" Because you want to learn ways to make mental health more accessible to people from various life experiences and backgrounds.

Related to impact in the field, a few participants also spoke to a personal goal; one participant said, "But I want to have a presence in our field ... I want to be someone somebody can look up to one day." Some participants enjoyed the research process itself; one participant said, "The research/writing publishing process is rewarding and reinforcing, almost addictive in that immediate reward" (getting a revise and resubmit decision from a journal editor). Some participants mentioned their previous careers, which involved writing or gave them knowledge about counseling agencies that were relevant to their research agendas. A few participants named a supportive spouse.

There were four variant support categories. In terms of *resources* ( $n = 7$ ), some participants identified isolated, specific supports within a larger less positive culture (e.g., statistics consultant, membership on dissertation committees, support from university grant office). One participant said personnel in the grant office were "not like these mysterious people that we are told exist but never return an email, they're actually there. They're accessible." Other participants mentioned startup research funding ("funding is huge, I mean, to give incentives, transcribe interviews"), research graduate assistants, and research training opportunities. Participants also noted *faculty responsibilities/time* as a support ( $n = 4$ ), saying that research and writing were part of their faculty role ("required to do it!"; "have to be productive to succeed in academe"); a few participants also reported course releases for research. Some participants highlighted *professional factors* ( $n = 7$ ), such as their involvement in professional organizations, especially the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES) and its regional affiliates. They valued going to conferences to present research, talk with other researchers, and just "being in professional organizations with like-minded people."

Finally, a range of *impacts of supports* was noted by a few participants ( $n = 8$ ). One participant said the research culture had contributed to increases in competence and a more positive researcher identity; similar sentiments were implied by comments about the positive culture (see earlier). Most comments in this category, however, were focused on how participants' own experiences as a mentee influenced their views and actions as mentors. These actions included intentionally and proactively reaching out to potential mentees, especially around offering opportunities to doctoral students and other pretenured faculty. Participants wanted to emulate their own positive mentors, such as sending a message of challenge and support, talking to their

students about the importance of mentorship, and hoping one day to feel as competent as their own mentor. One participant in a master's-only program wanted to "pass it forward" to her graduate assistant.

### Current Mentoring Needs

Most participants ( $n = 15$ ) reported a range of mentoring *needs that were not being met* in their current environment, including wanting help with the range of research tasks (e.g., discussing and refining research ideas, translating ideas into research questions, selecting appropriate methodology and data analysis, recruiting participants, writing, and choosing an appropriate journal). One participant said, "It's not necessarily about having somebody tell me what to do, but to help me, walk me through it." Another participant explained, "Being able to partner with someone all the way through something would be great ... really be a partner, a side-by-side sort of a thing."

Other instrumental support needs (Kram, 1985) included quantitative skills, qualitative skills, time management, and "honest feedback." For psychosocial and relational needs (Kram, 1985), participants usually named personal qualities of the mentor: "kindness and patience would be preferred," "relational aspect of mentoring, so missing in current employment," and "someone who can provide the counselor role to take away pressure/high stakes-nature of research and encourage having fun with it, not attach ego or sense of inadequacy to it." Several participants were looking for someone to hold them accountable (hold their feet to the fire and challenge personal responsibility). Some seemed to despair about getting mentoring: "difficult to know what mentorship needs are when it is completely absent" and "many needs still being unmet/hanging out there."

In contrast, four participants reported their current mentoring *needs were being met*, often by multiple mentors, sometimes including persons in both their doctoral and current programs. Describing a mentoring relationship, one participant noted, "He knows if I need anything I'll ask ... and it's an open-door policy and I'm not shamed for asking." Another stated, "I'm in a really fortunate place in which, or where, the expectation is for you to do well and be relevant in whatever area in which you are interested ... [and] the supports seem to be there to help me do just that."

### Discussion

To provide a more in-depth understanding of the conditions necessary for assistant professors' success in establishing their scholarly productivity, a challenging task (Evans & Cokley, 2008), we interviewed a group of 18 new counseling faculty, all of whom previously had reported at least moderate research self-efficacy and interest in conducting research. Unfortunately, building on their interest and self-efficacy proved to be quite a struggle for many new counseling faculty. The new faculty identified tangible barriers as reported in previous studies of new counselor educators (e.g., Bradley, 2005; N. R. Hill, 2004; Magnuson et al., 2004, 2006, 2009; Shillingford et al., 2013), such as high teaching loads, heavy service responsibilities, and limited resources to support travel and research expenses. Their descriptions of discouraging research cultures and ineffective mentoring, however, were revealing of less tangible challenges. Many participants,

including several employed in doctoral programs, reported their faculty colleagues expressed disinterest in research. Some described overt discouragement of their own work—required for promotion and tenure—as well as their efforts to enhance the research environment of the program. In addition, 13 participants reported having either no research mentor or a negative mentoring experience; their assigned formal mentors were unavailable, nonresponsive, or uninvested in their efforts and success. The effect was rather dire; new faculty reported losing research confidence, efficacy, and interest as well as lowered productivity. Their discouragement, sadness, and even despair about being able to conduct research and write for publication were often palpable, so much so that the interviewers sometimes had to debrief with each other. Even more, some participants seemed to blame themselves for their lack of productivity.

Conversely, participants who reported more positive experiences sometimes named supportive resources and reduced teaching loads, but more often emphasized a positive culture in which research was deemed exciting and valued. They felt their colleagues were invested in their scholarly success and their personal well-being, and they believed their questions were welcomed. These participants reported effective research mentoring within and beyond their department, often involving multiple peers and former mentors, as well as colleagues. As a result, they felt more confident, hopeful, and empowered, and they had positive expectations about doing scholarly work that was important to them and to the profession. They expressed gratefulness for their colleagues' availability, interest in their work, and celebrations of their successes.

Thus, it seems the overriding impact of a counseling program's research culture cannot be overemphasized. New faculty in supportive cultures seemed buoyed and assured of their success in making a difference. Those in more discouraging environments often seemed exhausted, both physically and emotionally, and distraught around the potential loss of their research identity and scholarly contributions. Indeed, scholarly thinking and its products are vital to the professionalization and advancement of a discipline (Barner, Holosko, Thyer, & King, 2015; Walker, Golds, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008). Unfortunately, the potential contributions of many of these new faculty members, as well as doctoral students in their programs, are being thwarted or even lost.

At the same time, the agency of many of these new faculty members, including those experiencing discouraging research cultures, in supporting their own development as researchers was notable. Several participants reported much initiative, creativity, and tenacity in locating the tangible and emotional supports they needed for their research efforts. Many were continuing research collaborations with doctoral mentors as well as doctoral peers, intentionally reaching out to faculty with related interests at their universities and elsewhere, networking at professional conferences, and bringing together pretenured faculty to form writing and "accountability" groups. Their overriding desire was for collaborations that offered both task-specific help (e.g., quantitative skills) and emotional support (e.g., bolstering self-beliefs, venting frustrations, increasing motivation, problem solving). They valued their research topics as important to the field, connected to their personal values, or central to their identities. Participants who were asked to change research topics responded with perseverance and persistence. Their goals for

their scholarly productivity were not just related to making tenure; they also wanted to advance a cause or make a difference.

The lack of reports of overt racial and gender discrimination described in previous literature (e.g., Bradley & Holcomb-McCoy, 2004; Casado Pérez & Carney, 2018; Haskins et al., 2016; N. R. Hill et al., 2005) was surprising, although those studies were specific to race/ethnicity and gender in contrast to our more heterogeneous sample. The only instance of overt racism reported was external to the university. In fact, three of the five African American faculty members reported all their mentoring needs were being met. The other two noted lack of research mentoring and other supports but did not ascribe that to their race. Gender issues for this primarily female-identified group seemed more pronounced, especially around power dynamics between new female faculty and older male faculty (full) professors related to unequal service expectations. These identity-related findings certainly create a mixed, and likely incomplete, picture. We did not explicitly ask about the impact of race, culture, or gender on research productivity, but rather more general questions around self-identified barriers and supports. All three interviewers were Caucasian, which could have influenced faculty of color's willingness to participate or to share overt discrimination. Nevertheless, our results seem to offer hope that at least a few new faculty of color and women are working in research cultures that provide the mentoring and other supports they need to be productive researchers.

In addition to the aforementioned limitations (e.g., research team composition, lack of questions specific to race and gender), participants were perhaps a select group; all reported at least moderate interest in conducting research and research self-efficacy, which may explain why they volunteered for the interviews. We have only the faculty members' perspectives around the research culture of their current program; colleagues, even pretenured colleagues, may have described different perceptions and experiences.

## **Implications**

Our findings highlight the importance of proactive efforts to create a supportive research culture for new faculty (Gonzalez, Wester, & Borders, 2019). We offer several specific suggestions based on participants' stated needs. First, counselor educators can help new faculty members construct a multifaceted plan for their researcher development, thus normalizing the need for ongoing support and learning postgraduation. This plan might start with helping new faculty generate a research "mission statement" (Wester, Wachter Morris, & Jones, 2018) that articulates motivations and goals around what they want to contribute to the profession. Such a statement would acknowledge their strengths as well as research knowledge and skills needed to reach their goals, and then exploration of resources (e.g., mentors) needed to support this work.

The desirability of multiple mentors (e.g., Higgins, 2000; Higgins & Kram, 2001; Johnson, 2002) could be discussed, followed by an action plan for constructing such a mentoring network both within and outside the counseling program. Rather than being assigned a formal mentor (De Janasz & Sullivan, 2004; Johnson, 2002), new faculty could be encouraged to meet with faculty colleagues to discuss their research mission statement and ways their colleagues might be of support (e.g., teaching a new qualitative method, editing manuscript drafts). Assuming program faculty have desirable mentoring characteristics (Borders et al., 2012), such

an approach would encourage new faculty members' agency and allow them to determine fit of needs, work styles, and personalities. Indeed, this could be a program-wide effort, as all faculty could share their research mission statements, self-assessments of strengths and current areas of growth, and action plans, perhaps illustrating how mission statements and needs evolve over time. Such an approach certainly could promote colleagues' interest in and support of each other's research agendas, an important component of the positive research cultures described by the participants in this study. It also seems imperative to proactively address discouraging research cultures rather than wait for new faculty to leave—or fail. Whether such efforts could be achieved internally or would require external intervention might vary by dynamics within each counseling program.

More broadly, a larger conversation at the professional level may be needed. Research has a predominant role in program accreditation standards at the doctoral level (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs [CACREP], 2015). Doctoral programs are characterized as evidencing “scholarly inquiry,” “generating new knowledge for the profession,” and supporting “faculty and students in publishing and/or presenting the results of scholarly inquiry” (CACREP, 2015, Section 6, Standard A.2). “Research and scholarship” is one of five core areas in a doctoral program (CACREP, 2015, Section 6, Standard B). In addition, counseling faculty are expected to be involved in “research and scholarly activity” (CACREP, 2015, Section 1, Standard X). Multiple participants in this study, however, pointed to the lack of faculty research involvement and, even more discouraging, to adversarial attitudes toward research in programs where they were employed. Thus, additional consideration by CACREP regarding examination of the research culture in counseling programs—in new doctoral program applications as well as reaccreditation self-studies—seems warranted.

The attention of ACES leadership and membership also seems warranted. Our findings reflect ongoing concerns about the quality of doctoral research training (Borders, Wester, Fickling, & Adamson, 2014), new faculty members' self-reported needs for additional research training (e.g., Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008; Milsom & Moran, 2015; Okech et al., 2006), and department chairs' questions about the quality of new faculty's research backgrounds (Barrio-Minton, Myers, & Morganfield, 2012). ACES has not formally considered the doctoral degree since 1977 (Bloom, 2015); facilitation of a national conversation would complement current ACES efforts (e.g., ACES INFORM) to enhance members' research knowledge and skills.

Future researchers might consider focusing on research barriers and support of minoritized faculty, given that our interview questions were not specific to their situations, and also given that previous researchers (e.g., Casado Pérez & Carney, 2018; Haskins et al., 2016) had explored their experiences more globally. Some attention to new faculty with low research self-efficacy and interest could be instructive. Longitudinal studies across doctoral training through promotion and tenure would track the impact of barriers and supports on counselor educators' research and scholarly productivity. Investigation of positive research cultures seems a particularly fruitful avenue. Notably, one participant in our study wrote, “I love what I do. I feel very privileged to be in a space where I can research what the heck I want to research when I want to research it. So, it's very empowering. Yeah, I love my job.” What is this program doing well, and how was such a positive research culture created?

Highly productive researchers in counseling (Niles, Akos, & Cutler, 2001) and counseling psychology (Duffy, Torrey, Bott, Allan, & Schlosser, 2013) reported that their early success was due to mentorship and support, ability to focus on research topics about which they were passionate, collaborations, good time management, and a supportive work environment—all of which were reflected in our participants' interviews. Thus, it seems incumbent upon counselor education programs to create research cultures that fulfill their “human obligation to those they recruited to provide the conditions needed to be successful” (Luce & Murray, 1998, p. 103), for the benefit of both new faculty members and the vitality of the profession.

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