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Doctoral Persistence of Students in Business Programs

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Abstract

Doctorate persistence is essential in ensuring student accomplish their educational goals. Currently, the rate of doctorate persistence in the United States is nearly fifty percent. This process evaluation investigates the doctoral persistence of learners in business programs. Therefore, through evaluating various pieces of literature, the review develops a framework for more research to be conducted. Also, through vigilant deliberation of the literature pieces, the evaluation discloses the degree to which student's influences and institutional inspirations affect doctoral persistence.

Similarly, the fundamental variables, including inspiration, personal characteristics, accountability, and the type of program and structure and expectations and communication and curriculum, have an enormous role in realizing the level of doctoral persistence. In a nutshell, the literature review recognizes several techniques required to assist doctoral learners in dealing with persistence challenges. Correspondingly, the resolutions are obtained in two divisions: the student personal and institutional levels.

Doctoral Persistence of Students in Business Programs

Education plays a critical role in individuals' life by providing them with the appropriate knowledge required in the job market. Several studies have defined persistence based on their understanding; for instance, Devos et al. (2017) stated that doctoral persistence is the sustained advancement in accomplishing the doctoral degree. Nevertheless, another research conducted by Gilmore et al. (2016) defined doctoral persistence as the craving for doctoral scholars to persist in the higher education scheme between the enrollment time and attaining their degree. Moreover, with the significant research conducted in understanding doctoral persistence, the theory of persistence was developed. Costa (2017) contented that the persistence theory emphasizes that the scholars' perseverance in higher institutions happens when learners observe that they have magnificently united intellectually and informally with other students and faculty and are advancing in achieving their personal, educational objectives. Severe pieces of literature specify that for the past thirty years, forty to sixty percent of the learners in doctoral programs were not capable of expressing doctoral persistence during their educational program (Devos et al., 2017). Most students, especially those coming from low-income families, have to persevere due to the doctoral attrition and lengthy time in attaining the degree because of financial constraints hence creating a cost burden. Therefore, this paper will review several pieces of literature focusing on the doctoral persistence of students in business programs.

Realizing Doctoral Attrition and Persistence

Doctoral attrition and persistence are essential in finding the cause for increased attrition. Therefore, immense research has been conducted since the 1960s, when doctoral attrition was given much consideration. Attrition is an element of measurement utilized in realizing the rate of learners leaving the school before completing it during their 1st and 2nd year

of higher education. Nonetheless, current research has presented that doctoral attrition causes substantial problems to higher education. Bush (2018) emphasized that the attributable cause to the sluggish achievement was the old-style thoughts that perceived attrition as an essential sign of stability within doctoral learning. Moreover, another research by Wollast et al. (2018) claimed that attrition could be perceived as an elimination procedure where weak in education are removed and the strong continue to accomplishment in their doctorate program.

Beck (2016) supported the Wollast et al. (2018) and Bush (2018) concepts by explaining how attrition filters the quality of students. Therefore, the author claimed that attrition in doctoral business programs ensures that only students who can persevere and acquire the doctorate deserve the skills and be on the job market. Also, the concept was supported by Gilmore et al. (2016) by stating that everyone that matched the education system had more chances of crossing it effectively. Nevertheless, individuals who cannot match the education system were considered to be weak academically and thus could not be sustained. Therefore, this view indicates that the education scheme is biased because it only matches students who can demonstrate their effectiveness in matching the system.

Nevertheless, overall intelligence and educational readiness does not certify predictor of doctoral achievement. Regrettably, the case by Gilmore et al. (2016) does not match every time because more research argues that individuals that start their doctorate programs with gigantic results and above-average scores have reduced persistence and display low achievement rates (Devos et al., 2017). Furthermore, more factors need to be considered that support persistence, including low-income individuals and the first generation. Besides, support from doctoral mates was considered to have a critical role in attaining the doctorate. Another support that is found to reduce the attrition rate in doctorate programs is the support from supervisors, which is

considered to have a core part in completing doctoral tasks. Also, other influences contributing to increased persistence comprise motivation, educational and societal incorporation and financial support.

Doctoral Persistence and Completion Rate

The challenge of irregularities in the accomplishment of doctoral programs makes the following of persistence to be problematic. Nevertheless, Bush (2018) provided data stating that the projected higher education doctorate persistence rate is roughly fifty percent. In the same way, there are restrictions in the research that present exact replication on doctoral achievement rate. Nevertheless, different from the persistent rates, accomplishment rate can utilize exterior procedures to permit the scholars to realize the pertinent achievement divisions. The achievement rate has been projected to be fifty percent for the past three thirty decades, which is a correct fit for the persistence rates. Therefore, pieces of literature continue to preserve these numbers.

Wollast et al. (2018) stated that approximately fifty percent of the doctoral students who started the program do not finish graduation. Therefore, most of these students do not complete graduation because they face substantial financial challenges and emotional weights. Nevertheless, the completion rates have remained constant for the past three decades, which has resulted in getting more attention presently. For instance, the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) performed a conference in 2002 that extremely concentrated on doctoral persistence and achievement rates. Bush (2020) claimed that between 1992 to 1995, the achievement rate was forty-six percent and from 1995 to 1997, it was forty-seven percent. Therefore, considering that the higher education systems are established to deliver quality education and allow students to progress their educational knowledge, it is essential to seek research that enhances doctoral

student's persistence and achievement rates. However, doctoral students are not completing their education programs at a high rate in the United States because of the cast problems encountered, such as an economic downturn that increases the living costs and textbook expenses.

Reasons for Doctoral Students Persisting

Significant research has been done to present the cause of individuals persisting in doctoral programs. Based on different pieces of literature, the majority of the authors have divided the factors into two divisions, including personalized factors and institutional factors.

One of the institutional factors presented by Posselt (2018) is responsibility. Student responsibility plays a critical role in determining their doctorate persistence and accomplishment. For instance, doctorate students need to attend their classes on time frequently and be prepared with all the required materials. Besides, student responsibility happens when they are involved in learning by realizing that they are accountable for their educational achievement. This is presented when they make decisions and take activities that result in their goal of education success. For example, ¹Rockinson-Szapkiw et al. (2017) stated that mothers involved in doctoral in business programs find it difficult to take care of their children and at the same time finance their education.

Ghee et al. (2016) added that motivation and goals are other factors that enhance an individual's doctoral persistence. Therefore, motivations ²play a critical role in enhancing the efforts of individuals in attaining education. Also, doctoral students have intrinsic together with extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is related to personal objective, accomplishment, desire to have a certain title and enjoyment of a challenge. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is related to personal integrity and marketability in an individual's career and the suitability for an

elevation of the career. Consequently, since motivation is connected with goals and accomplishment, students pursuing a doctorate in the business program can persevere in their education because goals can be altered as time moves resulting in new motivation.

Moreover, another research by Kennedy et al. (2016) claimed that personal attributes, including learning styles and intelligence, results in doctorate persistence. Doctorate in business programs comprises a dissertation as a critical element. Therefore personal attributes can facilitate an individual's ability to persist in their doctorate education. Also, Sellami et al. (2021) claimed that personal qualities might change based on the program. For instance, a student undertaking a business program will need to have creativity and self-governing ideas valued. The same source added that students who have suitable coping skills to deal with education pressure and stress have a capacity to persist in their doctorate education. Stress ³ plays a significant role in increasing the attrition rate in doctoral programs. For instance, students that get funds from scholarships and assistantships have lower stress than those who do not get any funds. Similarly, individuals getting help by attending seminars and stress management programs can deal with stress. Besides, Falconer (2016) stated that an efficient personal sustenance scheme is essential in shielding stress, especially through friends or religious assistance, which aid in the control of stress.

Ghee et al. (2016), demographic factors are critical in doctoral persistence, such as gender, age, ethnicity and marital status. The same source claimed that older white individuals have sophisticated opportunities of accomplishing their doctoral program than younger students. On the other hand, male learners have more probable to attain doctoral education than female individuals. At the same time, Rockinson-Szapkiw et al. (2017) indicated that married learners have more chances of being persistent in attaining education than unmarried learners.

On the other hand, educational institutions also have factors that determine persistence in the doctoral program. For example, Gittings et al. (2018) explained that curriculum and program are some of the factors that impact the level of doctorate persistence. Therefore, the authors argued that programs that consider learners' requirements and learning styles are ascribed to an increased persistence rate in adult learners. Besides, they specified that adult learners have more chance of persisting, especially when the programs they join are supple and pertinent to their proficient exercise. Posselt (2018) doctoral persistence is more in educational institutions that have recognized students' problems when changing from class materials and assignments to the dissertation. Consequently, programs that can find the issues can develop a link to skills needed to guarantee an effective doctoral degree.

Another research conducted by Posselt (2018) discovered that program structure and type have a substantial effect on the experience and incorporation of students. As indicated earlier, attrition is almost fifty percent in the doctorate program. Therefore, the structure needs to fit the students. Dwelling deeper Rockinson-Szapkiw et al. (2016) performed research on recognizing the momentous incorporation as well as institutional influences that project online doctoral persistence; therefore, they noted that support services such as the program's quality, education incorporation, societal unity with faculty and family incorporation enhance online doctoral persistence. Also, another paper by Rockinson-Szapkiw et al. (2017), different from the opinion and stated that long-distance students have less persistence to doctoral programs because they are immensely isolated because of reduced socialization and relation with the faculty. However, students in the regimented program have increased doctoral persistence.

Doctoral students have significant expectations while enrolling in the program. Although these expectations can be changed based on the program, the coursework and institutional

policies. Kuo et al. (2017) stated that institutional policies and doctoral programs govern the doctoral persistence of students. Also, the authors indicated that they are pleased when their expectations are attained. Nonetheless, in the case where the expectations are altered, learners always question the academic scheme because it changes them from their goals, resulting in damaging impacts on their persistence level. Besides, with the increased discrepancy between learners' academic goals and the curriculum, most of them with the least information concerning the procedures in the program will have an increased likelihood of stopping their education before completion.

Addressing Doctoral Persistence

Doctoral persistence in business programs has gained tremendous attention for the past few years because of its complexities. Therefore, several scholars have engaged in the issue by recommending and using different methods to develop strategies from different perspectives.

Kuo et al. (2017) provided one of the strategies as encouraging inspirations and leadership assistances, for instance, purpose, commitment and decision-making, which are essential to achieving the doctoral program. Creating inspiration and leadership skills is vital because it is supported by Gittings et al. (2018), in the essence of assisting a learner to become autonomous and self-reliant. Therefore, a self-reliant student is accountable and can be able to evaluate their education. Also, Gittings et al. (2018) resolved that doctorate learners have an increased probability of accomplishing their educational program. Hence, the school's knowledge in leadership assistance is more persuaded to encouraging inspirations that result in doctoral persistence.

Societal incorporation and collaboration are considered important features in upholding doctoral persistence. The research conducted by Holmes et al. (2016) emphasized that emerging Peer mentorship plans are an inordinate method to encourage societal relations. Furthermore, peer mentorship plans are essential because it is a prodigious approach to endorsing healthy and advantageous associations among the aristocracies. It offers a chance for them to get direction on persistence. Another research by Sellami et al. (2021) claimed that educating students on critical coping skills is fundamental as it is ascribed to educational success. Therefore, learners with high capabilities in managing stress conditions usually display a greater probability of having higher academic performance.

Furthermore, coping techniques with greater effectiveness comprise ambitious thoughtful and optimistic reframing. Kennedy et al. (2016) added that personal characteristics are fundamental in coping skills. However, problem-focused techniques are critical in enhancing the energies and planning to assist learners in realizing their problems and concentrating on evading the challenges.

In summation, the literature review discloses that doctoral persistence is an intricate process that incorporates several influences. Numerous studies have been directed towards the topic and this has yielded an inclusive outline on the doctorate persistence of students in business. Nonetheless, every study identifies that doctoral achievement is because the learners associating with a societal and institutional ecosystem were accomplishing the two outcomes resulting in achievement for a doctoral program. Also, doctoral persistence is perforated with immense hindrance and problems that require to be overawed when an individual wants to have a doctoral degree. As indicated in the literature, the attrition rate remains rising for the past three decades, making more academic institutions concerned. Therefore, being considerate of students'

influences and institutional influences will help inspire persistence and reduce increased attrition rates in doctoral programs. Also, realizing the various approaches needed to encourage doctoral students in business programs and higher institutions will provide solutions to continuous achievement in the program.

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