

Institutional Factors and Doctoral Degree Completion in South-west, Nigeria Universities

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Abstract

Enhancing the production of highly skilled professionals is a key objective in university education for fostering economic and national development. Understanding students' progress in relation to doctoral degree completion is crucial for institutions seeking improvement. In this study, various institutional factors such as Teaching and Learning Methods, Skills Development, Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms, and Organization and Management were evaluated to assess their impact on indicators like professional exposure, learning environment, and achieving doctoral degrees in Nigerian universities.

The research employed a non-experimental correlation design, involving 126 respondents selected from three South West universities using a multi-stage sampling technique. Data collection utilized the Institutional Factors and Doctoral Degree Completion Questionnaire (IFDDCQ). Research questions were addressed through descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

The findings indicated a significant and positive relationship between doctoral degree completion and factors such as access to teaching and learning materials ($r=0.412$, $p<0.01$), skill development ($r=0.395$, $p<0.01$), assessment & feedback mechanisms ($r=0.328$, $p<0.01$), and organizational & management influence ($r=0.615$, $p<0.01$). Consequently, it's recommended that both the government and universities allocate resources to support timely completion of doctoral programs and organize seminars to educate students on strategies for completing their PhDs within reasonable timeframes.

Keywords: Doctorate degree, Institutional factors, Doctorate degree completion and Universities

1. Introduction

Organizations today are faced with conflicting situations and this hampers their productivity rate. Conflict is prevalent in societies and also work organizations (Uwa, 2014). Conflict management involves implementing strategies to limit the negative

aspects of conflict; hence the need to train workers in conflict management as it will lead to the growth of organizations. Ushie and Ekpenyong (2019) are of the view that the system of industrial relations in Nigeria has been overtaken by persistent industrial disputes that have manifest different sectors of the economy,

this as such leads to low productivity rates in the industrial sector. Furthermore, conflict situations in organizations leads to collective bargaining process which according to Ushie, Ekpenyong and Itari (2018), the protracted collective bargaining process between employers and employees impedes their ability to live in harmony and peace since it frequently results in worker strikes and lockouts.

Post graduate education all over the world is undergoing fast and remarkable innovative changes by providing learners with the needed skills and knowledge to develop independent, creative, analytical reasoning and lifelong learning. Therefore, the demand for doctoral degree holders has increased in recent times because of their potential to promote technological innovation and national development. It is assumed that student self-actualization plays a significant role in attrition, retention and progression rates that will eventually enhance the overall performance and employability of the students and increase the reputation of the institution.

In Nigeria, doctoral degree programme requires both course and research work. The student is expected to complete the course work before going into research study. One of fundamental requirement for the award of a doctorate degree is the completion and submission of your dissertation report commonly referred to as thesis. The research study is expected to identify a researchable problem or a green area in your chosen field of study. The identified area of study is expected to be original, significant and will contribute to knowledge in your field. Many institutions subject the thesis to be defended in an oral examination before an expert panel.

The time it takes to complete a doctoral degree programme varies from one university to another. Doctorate degree programmes are typically meant to take an average of four years to complete. However, some students do not still complete the programme

after seven to ten years while others are known to have finished their PhD within a record period of three years (Wamala et al, 2011, Aina, 2015). This is essentially a function of the kind of research study the student is undertaking. However, it is assumed that the major reason why PhD students in Nigeria abandon their research work was out of various alleged frustrations and victimization among others encountered during the course of study but graduate usually within the stipulated period if they have the opportunity to study abroad.

The social variables regarding health include the circumstances under which individuals grow up, work, live, and age as well as a larger collection of factors and structures that mirror the circumstances of daily living, developing research capacity is crucial (Majeed et al., 2017). There is an urgent requirement to promote connections and collaborations, ensure that studies are close to practice, develop suitable distribution, enhance infrastructure, and incorporate aspects like sustainable development and continuity into the process of developing student research capacity. These abilities are essential for promoting general well-being and enhancing health, especially for financial considerations.

Jancey and Burns (2013) categorize the causes of student course non-completion into three groups: institutional, situational, and dispositional factors. Institutional factors stem from university policies and structures. Situational factors arise from students' life circumstances, while dispositional factors encompass their individual or collective beliefs, values, and attitudes that can hinder participation. It is popularly assumed that student's retention and completion of doctoral degree is as a result of their individual attitudes, attributes, skills and self-motivation. However, recent researches have shown a range of interacting factors such as intellectual stimulation, social, environment, demography and relevance to employment as reasons for non-completion of

doctorate degree in universities (McCulloch, & Thomas, 2013, Yusuf and Aina, 2018). Therefore, knowing how students are progressing in relation to students doctoral degree completion can help institutions understand where they need to improve.

Given that most post graduate students fund their own tuition and higher education provision is a service. In regards to learning and instruction services, skill development, organisation, and management, universities should take a customer-led strategy rather than depending solely on what it offers to sell themselves. Consequently, it is essential to incorporate students' issues and difficulties into curriculum creation and broader strategic thinking. It is believed that graduate learner satisfaction and retention are significantly influenced by the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Datnow, & Wells, 2018).

The capacity of the educator to raise the achievement of pupils through personal engagement, a sincere passion for the topic of study matter, accessibility to others' opinions (especially students), and a dedication to equitable treatment for all are just a few of the dimensions that make up effective teaching. It's significant to remember that PhD students frequently bring a variety of backgrounds to the classroom. The majority are educators or trainers eager to use or broaden their newly gained knowledge in their designated fields of specialisation. A student's learning style is a reliable indicator of achievement in a web-based educational setting, according to previous research on dropout in an online master's degree programme (Terrell and Dringus, 1999).

Students who lean towards systematic planning and possess a strong intellectual grasp of a situation tend to have a higher likelihood of success compared to those who favor hands-on experiences and interactions with peers. Consequently, this study demonstrates a noteworthy connection between

students' learning styles and their commitment to completing the necessary coursework for graduation.

Agu and Odimegwu (2014) stress the critical need of supervisory involvement in PhD research. They argue that such direction is essential for students' intellectual development throughout their PhD journey. Students acquire important insights into the development of their research and the craft of thesis writing through continual conversations and ideas discussions with their supervisor. The learner's progress through the research process, encouragement of their independence as a researcher, and development of their abilities as skilled academic writing through constructive criticism are all made possible with the supervisor's assistance. Commenting further (Agu and Odimegwu 2014), assessing student satisfaction with educational services benefits both students and the institution by boosting student success and motivation while enabling the institution to enhance services to meet student needs.

In a research carried out by David (2020), and van Rooij, Fokkens-Bruinsma, & Jansen, (2021) on doctoral degree students in England and Australia respectively, on reasons for timely completion of programmes. The studies revealed that providing full or part time scholarship or any form of financial aid/incentives, graduate school deadlines, supervisors, mode of study and provision of jobs influence doctoral degree retention and completion of programme.

One of the fundamental approach towards motivating and sustaining satisfaction with their area of study is adequate research supervision. Research supervision helps to create and encourage independent researchers as well as effectively initiating committed and dedicated students into the academic community (David, 2020). In a research conducted by Agu and Odimegwu (2014), explored research skills development, student satisfaction with various doctoral supervision models, and their

evaluation. Results showed that personally collaborative models were most common and preferred, with face-to-face interactions yielding higher student satisfaction, although both models had similar impacts on research-related abilities.

McCray and Joseph-Richard (2020) conducted a study examining how supervision, psychosocial factors, and project characteristics affected PhD candidates' overall satisfaction with their trajectory, progress, and likelihood of considering quitting. The study asserts that except for the extent of the connection with the supervisor, which had a special impact, the study found that among the leadership attributes taken into account, factors like academic assistance, personal assistance, independence encouragement, accessibility, and high standards had no significant effect on satisfaction and intention to quit. Only the departmental sense of belonging substantially influenced both satisfaction and desire to resign when considering psychosocial variables, highlighting the significance of feeling at home in one's own PhD programme. Workload appeared as a crucial project attribute, strongly correlated with project satisfaction, on-time completion, and quitting intention.

Interpersonal communication and a lack of the abilities necessary to do high-quality research were highlighted as barriers to academic training in a similar study by Ali et al. (2017). Lack of student research funding is one of the cited issues. It was advised that institutions should establish precise and adequate guidelines for accepting and monitoring of learners in doctoral-granting higher education programmes.

Research studies by students of post graduate studies is one of the major ways of effectively initiating them into the academic community through supportive and professional relationship, guidance towards preparation for independent research works and building self-fulfillment. Therefore, there is the need

for institutions to be a change agent and make provisions for growth by understanding and recognizing learners' differences, enabling personal and professional development, competence, provision of resources and encouraging collaboration and ability to apply learning and research for national development. Recent studies carried out by Skopek, Triventi, and Blossfeld (2022) revealed that there are high proportions of students who fail to complete their research work within the time given, thereby increasing the dropout rate in the universities. Given the level of hard work put in to gain admission, yet the dropout rate is on the high side without completing the research work. According to Zhou and Okahana, (2019), there are some doctoral degree students who are very unintentional, impatient, and indifferent towards research work while others are inhibited due to office related work pressure. The study equally observed that many of the students experienced enormous range of challenges related to writing and information retrieval skill and good work presentation.

The major challenge here is being able to analyze institutional factors such as teaching and learning method; skills development; assessment and feedback motivations; organization and management; to determine their influence on doctoral degree completion indicators such as professional exposure, learning conduciveness and attainment of doctoral degree in Nigerian universities. Therefore, the study examined the influence of institutional factors on the doctoral degree completion in Nigerian universities.

2. Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. To what extent do teaching and learning methods influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

2. To what extent does skill development relate to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?
3. To what extent does assessment & feedback mechanisms relate to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?
4. To what extent does organization and management influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

3. Hypothesis

H01: There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and completion of doctoral degree programme in Nigerian University.

4. Method

The study adopted a non-experimental correlational design to examine institutional factors and doctorate completion in South-West Universities in Nigeria. Multistage sampling techniques were used in selecting participants from three (3) states out of six (6) states that made up the South-West region of Nigeria. These states are six states in South-west, Nigeria namely Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti. According to Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) official sites, there are one hundred and seventy (170) universities in Nigeria, out of which forty-three (43) are federal universities, forty-eight (48) are state universities while the remaining seventy-nine (79) are private universities.

In the first stage, a random sampling technique was used in selecting three universities from the six states in the south-west Nigeria. The states selected for the study are Lagos, Ogun and Oyo. In the second stage, stratified sampling technique was used in selecting three (3) universities from each of the three states selected for the study. The universities were selected based on ownership, federal, state and private. In the third and the last stage, proportional and random

sampling techniques were adopted in selecting Doctorate degree graduates from each of the universities. In all, one hundred and twenty-six (126) doctorate graduates from the universities participated in the study.

One instrument was used to collect data: Institutional Factors and Doctoral Degree Completion Questionnaire (IFDDCQ). The IFDDCQ was adapted from Wollast, et al (2018) and Sverdluk, et al. (2018). The IFDDCQ is a 5-point Likert scale consisting of thirty-two (32) items distributed into five sub-scales: Teaching and Learning Methods (6 items), skill development (7 items), Assessment and Feedback Mechanism (6 items), Organisation and Management Influence (7 items) and Completion of Doctorate degree (7 items).

To determine the reliability of IFDDCQ items, principal component analysis was employed. The Kaiser-Meyer Olkin results suggested that the items were factorable (KMO=0.78). Also, 27 out of the 32 items corrected at least 0.56, indicating a good factorability. In addition, the Cronbach Alpha statistics of the sub-scale are: teaching & learning methods ($\alpha=0.73$), skill development ($\alpha=0.80$), Assessment & Feedback Mechanism ($\alpha=0.78$), Organization & Management Influence ($\alpha=0.75$) and Completion of Doctorate degree ($\alpha=0.79$). Data collected were presented in frequency, percentages, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

4. Results

4.1.1 Demographic

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	98	77.8
	Female	28	22.2
	Total	126	100.0
Education		21	16.7

Area of Study	Sciences	26	20.6
	Management	11	8.7
	Social Sciences	22	17.5
	Environmental/Engineering	16	12.7
	Arts	20	15.9
	Law	10	7.9
	Total	126	100.0
Age at Admission	25-30yrs	9	7.1
	35-40yrs	22	17.5
	40-45yrs	54	42.9
	46yrs +	41	32.5
	Total	126	100.0
Mode of Admission	M.Phil	18	14.3
	M.Phil/PhD	73	57.9
	PhD	35	27.8
	Total	126	100.0
Cumulative GPA at Admission	3.00 - 3.49	16	12.7
	3.50 - 4.49	70	55.6
	4.50 +	40	31.7
	Total	126	100.0

As presented in Table 1, the majority (98 or 78%) of the respondents are male while 28 or 22% are female. The distribution of the respondents by area of the study show that majority are from sciences (21%), social sciences (18%) and education (17%) while others are from arts (16%), environmental /engineering (13%), management (9%), and Law (8%). In addition, more than half of the respondents 54 or 43% were admitted to a doctorate programme within the age of 40 years and 45 years old, 41 or 33% 46 years old and above, 22 or 18% 35 years and 40 years old while 9 or 7% 25 years and 30 years old. More also, the majority i.e 73 or 58% were admitted through M.Phil/Ph.D programme, 35 or 28% into the PhD programme directly while 18 or 14% through the M.Phil programme. The cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) at admission revealed that 70 or 56% were admitted with between 3.50 and 4.49, 40 or 32% with 4.50 and above while 16 or 13% with GPA between 3.00 and 3.49.

Figure 1. Means of financial support

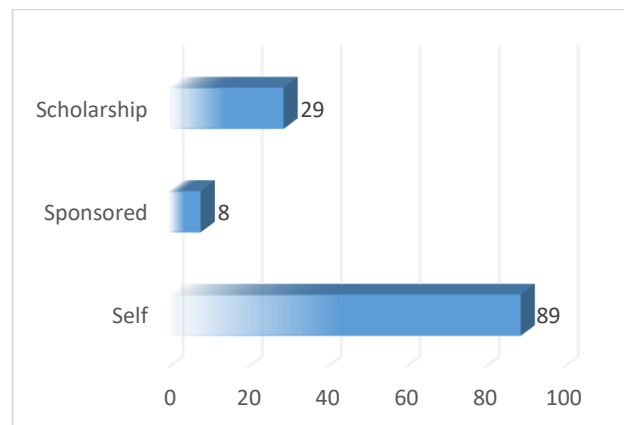


Figure 2. Number of year spent on Phd programme

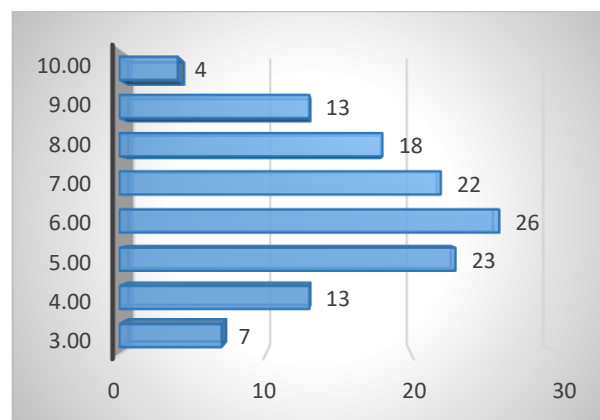


Figure 3. Major Supervisor status

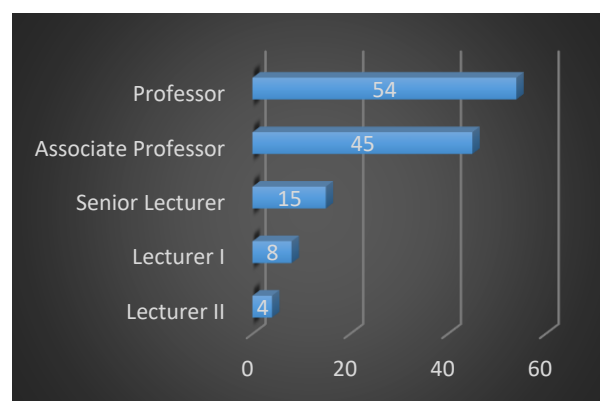
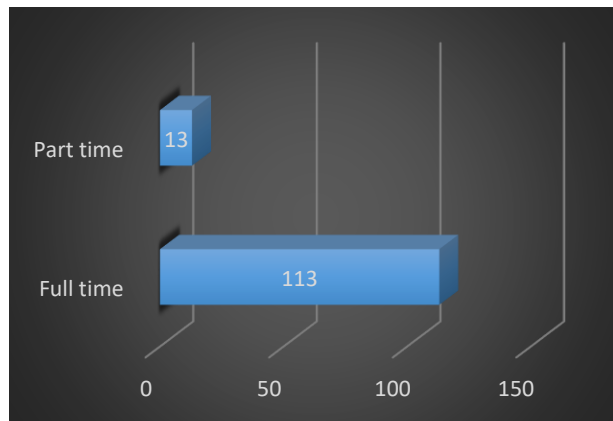
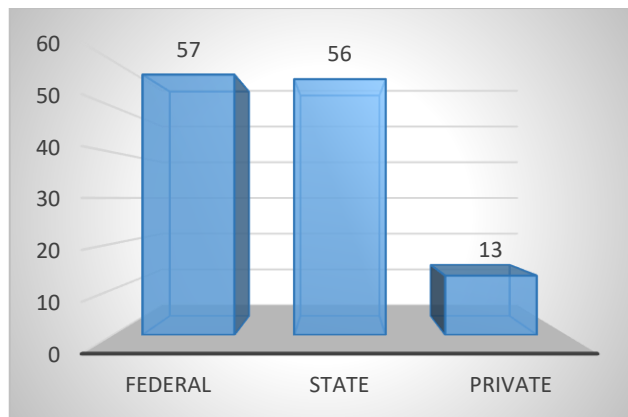


Figure 4. Mode of study**Figure 5. University ownership**

As presented in the figures, the majority of the respondents are self-sponsored, while a good number of them spent up to 6 years in the PhD. Also, 84 or 57% of the respondents spent between 4 years and 7 years on the PhD programme, 18 or 14% spent 8 years, 13 or 10% 9 years while 4 or 3% 10 years. It is noticeable only 7 or 6% spent 3 years on the PhD programme.

Evidence from the figure also shows that the major supervisor for the PhD programme is Professor (54 or 43%) and Associates Professor (45 or 36%) while most of the mode of study is full-time (113 or 90%). The analysis also revealed that 57 or 45% study the PhD programme from Federal Universities, 56 or 44% State Universities while 13 or 10% in private universities.

4.1.2 Research Questions 1

To what extent do teaching and learning methods influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

As reported in Table 2, majority of the respondents indicate that to an extent lecturers are good at explaining new concepts and issues to the students ($\bar{x}= 4.52$), they received support from the lecturers in planning their thesis in terms of (topic selection, and methodology.etc) ($\bar{x}= 3.77$), that there is sufficient contact time (face to face and/or virtual/online) between lecturers and students to support effective learning ($\bar{x}= 3.60$) and that their supervisor has the skills and subject knowledge to adequately support their thesis ($\bar{x}= 3.40$). However, most of the indicate that to no extent they are involved in decision making on the progress of their thesis writing ($\bar{x}= 2.55$) and that the learning materials provides useful for their course ($\bar{x}= 2.21$).

Table 2. Teaching and Learning Methods

S/N		Min	Max	Mean	Stdev	Remark
1	Explaining concepts	1	5	4.52	0.88	To an Extent
2	Topic selection & methodology Support	1	5	3.77	1.17	To an Extent
3	Effective Lecturers and students support	1	5	3.60	1.27	To an Extent
4	Adequate Skills and subject support	1	5	3.40	1.33	To an Extent
5	Involvement in decisions making	1	5	2.55	1.55	No extent
6	Provision of learning materials	1	5	2.21	1.19	No extent

4.1.3 Research Question 2:

To what extent does skill development relate to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

As presented in Table 3, majority of the respondents indicate that to an extent the Phd programme created sufficient capacity development to discuss their work with other students (face to face and/or online) effectively ($\bar{x}$ = 3.98), the Phd program has created an opportunity to develop their creative and critical thinking in writing thesis ($\bar{x}$ = 3.46) and that the The PhD programme has enhanced my academic ability ($\bar{x}$ = 3.51).

Similarly, most of the respondents recorded that to an extent that the training received has enhanced their employment status ($\bar{x}$ = 3.66), their ability to communicate information effectively to diverse audiences has developed during ther programme ($\bar{x}$ = 4.33) and that they have developed the skill of independent learning in the course of their programme ($\bar{x}$ = 4.12). On other hand, many of the respondents reported that to no extent they have been able to learn how to access general IT resources including physical and online when the need arises ($\bar{x}$ = 2.75).

Table 3. Skill Development

S/N		Min	Max	Mean	Stdev	Remark
1	Sufficient capacity development	1	5	3.98	1.09	To an extent
2	Creative and critical thinking	1	5	3.46	1.48	To an extent
3	Enhanced academic ability	1	5	3.51	1.46	To an extent
4	Enhanced employment status	1	5	3.66	1.38	To an extent

5	Access to IT resources	1	5	2.75	1.46	No extent
6	Communicate information effectively	1	5	4.33	1.06	To an extent
7	Skill of independent learning	1	5	4.12	1.06	To an extent

4.1.4 Research Questions 3

To what extent does assessment & feedback mechanisms related to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

Evidence from Table 4 revealed that most of the respondents to an extent reported that the criteria used in assessing their work have been made clear in advance to us ($\bar{x}$ = 4.21), assessment criteria and marking scheme have been fair to the students ($\bar{x}$ = 4.10) and that The course works are too many and irrelevant to the programme ($\bar{x}$ = 3.34).

However, majority of the respondents to no extent reported that feedback on their work has been prompt from their supervisors ($\bar{x}$ = 2.75), the supervisor provides helpful feedback on the progress of their work ($\bar{x}$ = 2.79) and that It usually take a longer time to get response concerning PhD thesis defense from the post graduate schools, ($\bar{x}$ = 2.05).

Table 4. Assessment and Feedback Mechanism

S/No		Min	Max	Mean	Stdev	Remark
1	Criteria used in assessing work	1	5	4.21	1.04	To an extent
2	Fairness of Assessment criteria and marking	1	5	4.10	0.95	To an extent
3	Many and irrelevant to the programme.	1	5	3.34	1.05	To an extent
4	Prompt feedback from my supervisors	1	5	2.75	1.20	No extent
5	Helpful feedback on the progress	1	5	2.79	1.29	No extent
6	Longer time to get response	1	5	2.05	0.95	No extent

4.1.5 Research Questions 4

To what extent does institutional organization and management influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities?

As reported in Table 5, most of the respondents indicate that to an extent the institution is only interested in the tuition paid by students and not in the progress of the student ($\bar{x}= 3.13$), the institutions rarely organize seminars to sensitize students on ways to assist Phd students for timely completion of the programme ($\bar{x}= 4.53$), that The PhD programme is well organised and runs smoothly ($\bar{x}= 3.51$) and that University organises comprehensive set of educational programmes that enable life-long learning on issues relevant to PhD programmes ($\bar{x}= 4.11$).

However, majority of the respondents reported that to no extent, the university has relevant Journals and books required for the PhD programme ($\bar{x}= 2.53$), they have been able to access specialised equipment, facilities, or rooms when they needed them for their studies ($\bar{x}= 2.32$) and that library resources and services are good enough for my needs (including physical and online) ($\bar{x}= 2.63$).

Table 5. Organisation and Management Influence

S/no		Min	Max	Mean	Stdev	Remark
1	Relevant Journals and books required	1	5	2.53	1.27	No extent
2	The institution interested in the tuition	1	5	3.13	1.35	To an extent
3	The institutions rarely organize seminars	1	5	4.52	0.96	To an extent
4	Access to specialised equipment & facilities	2	5	2.32	0.94	No extent
5	Good library resources and services	1	5	2.63	1.28	No extent

6	The PhD programme is well organised	1	5	3.51	1.29	To an extent
7	Organises comprehensive set of educational programmes	2	5	4.11	0.85	To an extent

4.1.5 Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant relationship between institutional factors and completion of doctoral degree programme in Nigerian University

As presented in Table 6, a positive and significant relationship is recorded between completion of doctorate degree with teaching and learning materials ($r=0.41$, $p<0.01$), skill development ($r=0.40$, $p<0.01$), assessment & feedback mechanism ($r=0.328$, $p<0.01$) and organisation & management influence ($r=0.62$, $p<0.01$). A cursory look at the analysis show that organisation and management influence reported a stronger association with doctorate completion than others institution factors measure in the study.

Table 6. Correlation matrix showing relationship between institutional factors and completion of doctorate degree

S/ N		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Std
1	Teaching & Learning Materials	1	.22*	.22*	.11	.41**	21.8	3.3
2	Skill development		1	.48*	.14	.40*	24.3	4.7
3	Assessment & Feedback Mechanism			1	.11	.33*	24.1	3.9
4	Organisation & Management Influence				1	.62*	25.8	3.0
5	Completion of Doctorate degree					1	25.0	4.0

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5. Discussion of Findings

The result of the study in research question one revealed that teaching and learning methods and completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities are significantly related with the co-efficient value of teaching and learning methods influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities ($r=0.412$, $p<0.01$). The study revealed that to an extent lecturers are good at explaining concepts, helping students in topic selection and giving methodology support, student support and involvement in decision making. The study equally revealed that the respondents disagreed that students were involved in decision making and provision of learning materials.

This finding collaborates with the findings of Cooksey and McDonald (2019), that there was inadequate faculty guidance and advice to students on how to get started on thesis writing. Also, unavailability of materials needed and inadequate support from lecturers to doctorate students in the university. Many lecturers embraced the conventional method of teaching and learning that is centered on the old curriculum, methodology, theoretical based knowledge and recommended textbooks. There is the need for detailed conversation/communication on what is required for enhanced decision and direction in topic selection among doctorate degree student. Furthermore, the need for adequate support by supervisors and easy accessibility of required materials for thesis writing.

The table further revealed that skill development in terms of sufficient capacity development, creative and critical thinking, enhanced academic ability an status skill independent learning and effective communication is significantly related to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities ($r=0.40$, $p<0.01$). However, access to IT resources is not adequately available to

students. Therefore, there is the need for university leadership to develop effective IT management strategies to promote awareness, adequate knowledge and collaboration with other universities in order to enhance teaching and learning practices. This finding collaborates with the findings of Ali et al (2017) that lack of adequate skills needed to perform high quality research as challenges to research training. This can be achieved through development of qualities and skills among the students.

Also, the study revealed that assessment & feedback mechanisms is significantly related to the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities ($r=0.328$, $p<0.01$). Information provided by the supervisor to the students is regarded as an ongoing process of learning support. Despite the assessment and feedback mechanism the supervisors is still lacking in bridging the gap between the actual level of performance and the desired learning goals to enhance completion rate. Concerns have been raised about the quality of assessment and feedback received by students in the areas that include; the needs of the students, desired information in terms of correction and facilitation to have better understanding of the concepts and variables involved in the study. This corroborates with the findings of Evans (2016) in a study that students usually complain on the proficiency of feedback received in terms of content, timing, activities and clarity of the desired expectations. Therefore Evans (2016) suggested that it is important to consider the method of application of the information provided by lecturers and also development and adaptation of the knowledge and skills acquired from feedback to new and different learning circumstances.

The result of the study in research question four revealed that institutional organization and management influence the completion of the doctoral degree programme in Nigerian Universities ($r=0.615$, $p<0.01$). Students who developed a positive

relationship with faculty members and the institution at large had greater motivation to academic achievement. Despite the consensus on the importance of good leadership and management of institutions and its influence on student's outcome, there is still lack of collaborative organizational learning, structures and promotion of positive school climate.

There is the need to have a robust institutional management that encourages student's participation, collaboration, effective teaching methods and programmes, in order to promote students motivation, engagement and completion rate. In other words, provision of financial aids, relevant books, journals, specialized equipment and facilities and IT resources will aid in completion of doctorate degrees in Nigerian Universities. The findings of the study collaborates with the findings of Skopek, Triventi, and Blossfeld, (2022), that schools' abilities to improve and sustain effectiveness over a long term are not primarily the result of the institutions leadership style but their understanding and identification of the school and students needs and the application of clearly articulated and organizationally shared educational values. This can be achieved through combining both transformational and instructional leadership strategies.

According to Annah., Bengesai, and Vinodhani Paideya (2018), graduates are more likely to have advantages in their academic and financial lives. In order to increase graduation rates, institutions should provide scholarships and educational assistance as top priority.

6 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study established that institutional factors such as teaching and learning materials, skills development, assessment & feedback mechanism and organisation and management influence contributed significantly

and related to completion of doctorate degree in South-West Universities in Nigeria. The study also revealed that organisation and management influence reported a stronger association to completion of doctorate degree programme.

The study therefore recommends the following:

1. The government should increase funding allocated to the universities for learning materials in particular for the doctorate programme
2. The universities should provide access to unrestricted information technology resources to the doctorate students within the campus that can support teaching and learning
3. Doctorate supervisor should provide prompt feedback to the students relating to the progress of PhD program to reduce years spent in the programme
4. The university management through the library should provide relevant journals, books to support the doctorate program
5. The institutions should organize regular seminars to sensitize students on ways to assist PhD students for timely completion of the programme.

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