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Persistence Motivation of Foreign-born Doctoral Recipients in the Field of Education

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Persistence Motivation of Foreign-Born Doctoral Recipients in the Field of Education

By

Sr. Maurice Liguori Okoroji, D. M. M. M.

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy

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APPROVAL FOR SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE

Maurice Liguori Okoroji, has successfully defended and made the required modifications to the text of the doctoral dissertation for the **Ph.D.** during this **Fall Semester 2017**.

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Abstract

Although there has been growing enrollment and doctoral degree production of foreign-born doctoral students in U.S. higher education, persistence/degree completion and time-to-degree remain a continuing problem in doctoral education in general. Despite the substantial number of studies conducted on various aspects of doctoral education, there is still a scarcity of research on exploring the doctoral process of foreign-born students. When foreign-born students are included in the samples, researchers use a theoretical framework that does not give a comprehensive understanding of doctoral experiences of foreign-born students thereby ignoring the salient differences between them and their native-born counterparts, which makes it difficult for U.S. graduate schools to respond to and identify the distinctive needs of this growing group of doctoral students. Also, the field of education has continued to experience the longest time-to-degree in American higher education, with the median duration between starting and completing graduate school from 10.7 to 12.7 years compared to 7.7 to 7.9 years in all fields including education. This study explored the factors that motivate foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue and persist toward the completion of their doctorate in the field of education. Using expectancy-value theory and socialization theory as theoretical perspectives, particular attention was paid to how expectancies and values placed on earning a doctorate motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue their doctoral degree and the strategies they used to mitigate the costs they experienced while in the program, as well as how socialization elements may have contributed to participants' persistence toward degree completion.

Keywords: Foreign-born doctoral recipients, persistence, motivation, expectancies, values, socialization, field of education.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the loving memory of my father, Chief Sir Maurice Onwuatuegwu Okoroji, KSM, Kt.SS, who was my rock, my hero, my confidant, and my model, whose success in life taught me that hard work, discipline, self-sacrifice, perseverance, and above all, the fear of God are fundamental to one's success. "M. O.," continue to rest in perfect peace. Amen. This dissertation is also dedicated to my loving mother, Chief Lady Patricia Nwihuaku Okoroji, who continues to be a pillar of support and encouragement to me since my father passed on. To both of my parents, I am highly indebted and grateful.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

The United States of America is the leading country that attracts foreign-born students, particularly those who desire to pursue their doctoral degree in a western institution due to the quality of programs offered (Institute of International Education, 2015; National Science Foundation, 2014). For the purpose of this study, foreign-born students constituted students who were born outside the United States. They were non-resident aliens with temporary visas, permanent residents, or naturalized citizens (National Science Foundation, 2015). As such, education in the United States was seen by many people as more advanced and comparatively better in some educational areas than were colleges and universities in countries these students came from (Irungu, 2013). This perceived high quality of higher education, availability of a broad range of areas of study, and established academic and student support services were major reasons for foreign-born students' choice of the United States as a destination (Institute of International Education, 2015). Data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2014) indicate there has been a general increase in graduate enrollment, particularly for foreign-born students at the master's and doctoral levels between 1976 and 2013. According to these data, the total graduate enrollment increased from approximately 1.6 million in 1976 to 2.9 million in 2013, by a 50% increase over the 40-year period (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014). Moreover, non-resident alien enrollment (i.e., foreign-born individuals enrolled in graduate programs on a student visa) increased by 300% during the same period from 75,000 to 360,000—the single largest increase of any subgroup (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014). See Table 1 for graduate enrollment and percentage distribution from 1976 to 2013.

Table 1

Total Number of Graduate Enrollment in Degree-Granting Institutions, by Race/Ethnicity: Selected Years, 1976-2013

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity of Students	Fall Enrollment (in thousands)										
	Year	1976	1980	1990	2000	2005	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Enrollment total	1,566.6	1,617.7	1,859.5	2,156.9	2,523.5	2,737.1	2,849.4	2,937.0	2,933.3	2,910.4	2,901.0
White	1,335.6	1,352.4	1,449.8	1,478.6	1,666.8	1,749.6	1,809.5	1,824.9	1,783.3	1,733.8	1,691.5
Black	89.7	87.9	99.8	181.4	259.2	315.2	338.0	361.9	370.9	369.3	367.3
Hispanic	30.9	38.6	57.9	110.8	148.4	169.4	183.0	197.8	205.1	213.4	221.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	28.6	37.7	72.0	132.7	163.0	184.9	194.9	194.3	197.4	196.0	195.2
American Indian/Alaska Native	6.4	6.0	7.3	12.6	15.9	17.7	18.3	17.1	16.1	15.4	14.8
Non-resident alien	75.5	95.1	172.7	240.7	270.1	300.3	305.7	309.3	317.9	332.4	356.9

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), “Fall Enrollment in Colleges and Universities” surveys, 1976 and 1980, and 1990 through 2013; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), “Fall Enrollment Survey” (IPEDS-EF:90); and IPEDS spring 2001 through spring 2014, Enrollment component. (This table was prepared November 2014).

Table 2

PhD Recipients by Ethnicity, Race, and Citizenship Status: 2004-2014

Ethnicity, Race, and Citizenship	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
All doctoral recipient	42,123	43,385	45,622	48,132	48,778	49,553	48,031	48,914	50,961	52,747	54,070
U.S. citizen or permanent resident	28,039	27,945	29,028	29,501	30,844	32,327	31,603	31,726	32,983	33,978	34,005
Temporary visa holders	11,629	12,832	14,198	15,123	15,261	14,737	13,636	14,235	14,784	15,684	15,852
Unknown citizenship	2,455	2,608	2,396	3,508	2,673	2,489	2,792	2,953	3,194	3,085	4,213

Sources: National Science Foundation, National Institute of Health, United States Department of Education, United States Department of Agriculture, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Survey of Earned Doctorate, 2014

Background

The number of foreign-born students who actually earn their doctoral degrees in U.S. higher institutions continues to increase (National Science Foundation, 2014). The National Science Foundation (2014) reported the number of students who earned their PhD in all fields between 2004 and 2014 increased from 42,123 to 54,070, which is a 28.4% change; and a 2.5% change between 2013 and 2014 (52,747 and 54,070 respectively). Among the 42,123 students and 54,070 students who earned their PhDs in 2004 and 2014, 11,629 in 2004 and 15,852 in 2014 were temporary visa holders from different regions of the world. This is a 36.3% change increase in PhD production for temporary visa holders (National Science Foundation, 2014), showing the increasing segment of PhD production is foreign-born students. See Table 2 for PhD recipients by ethnicity, race, and citizenship status.

Although there has been substantial growth in doctoral enrollment and growth as well in PhD degrees awarded, attrition in doctoral programs remains high and time-to-degree has not changed much over the past two decades. According to Bowen and Rudenstine (1992), the attrition rate in the doctoral program is 40 to 60%. Also, the Council of Graduate Schools (2008) indicated only 41% of students who enrolled in doctoral programs in U.S. higher education successfully completed their degrees after pursuing it for 6 to 12 years. Also, the overall median time-to-degree in all fields of study declined from 8 years in 2004 to 7.3 years in 2014 (National Science Foundation, 2014). Scholars have indicated about one-third of students who do not continue in the PhD leave after the first year, another one-third leave before candidacy, and a final one-third during the dissertation phase (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Golde, 1998; Nerad & Miller, 1996; Nettles & Millet, 2006). However, attrition rates differ by discipline and major fields of study. According to the Council of Graduate Schools (2008), the cumulative 10-year attrition rates in 5 broad fields of study are mathematics and physical science, 37%; humanities,

32%; engineering, 26.9%; social sciences, 26.7%; and life sciences, 26.2%. In regard to the field of education, Ivankova and Stick (2007) estimated attrition rate to be 50% while other scholars indicated it might be as high as 70% (Nettles & Millet, 2006). Education scholars have suggested attrition and prolonged time-to-degree are not only costly to institutions; it is heartbreaking and discouraging for students due to financial, personal, and professional consequences experienced as a result of quitting the program (Lovitts, 2001; Wao, 2010).

Statement of the Problem

Although there has been growth in the enrollment and doctoral degree production for foreign-born doctoral students in U.S. higher education, persistence/degree completion and time-to-degree remain problems in doctoral education in general. Despite the substantial number of studies conducted on various aspects of doctoral education including departmental culture (Gardner, 2010a, 2010b; Golde, 2004; Jones, 2013; Nerad & Stewart, 1991), attrition rates (Ali, Kohun, & Levy, 2007; Bair & Haworth, 2004; Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2000, 2005; Lovitts, 2001; Lovitts & Nelson, 2000; Smith, Maroney, Nelson, & Abel, 2006), and time-to-degree (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; de Valero, 2001; D'Andrea, 2002; Hoffer, Hess, Welch, & Williams, 2007; Kim & Otts, 2010; Malone, Nelson, & Van Nelson, 2004; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011), there are still gaps in the literature. These studies have largely overlooked the increasing cohorts of foreign-born students in American higher education and have mainly concentrated only on a portion of their educational experiences at the doctoral level, and have little focus on their attrition and persistence/completion rates. Most of what is known about doctoral persistence/completion and attrition comes from studies conducted on native-born students. When foreign-born students are included in the samples, researchers use a framework that does not give a comprehensive understanding of doctoral experiences of foreign-born students (Antony, 2002; Gopaul, 2011; Zhou, 2014, 2015), thereby ignoring the salient differences between them and

their native-born counterparts in terms of persistence and educational values (Zhou, 2014, 2015). Although scholars recognize the link between doctoral persistence and socialization (Ellis, 2001; Gardner, 2007; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Golde, 2000), using only socialization theory to study foreign-born students is insufficient to understand the experiences of a diverse student population because it does not give an inclusive view of their experiences, which makes it difficult for U.S. graduate schools to respond to and identify the distinctive needs of this growing group of doctoral students (Austin, 2002; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Gopaul, 2011; Sweitzer, 2009; Zhou, 2014, 2015).

Furthermore, some scholars have argued experiences for graduate education are not the same for all students and using only a particular framework results in something less than satisfactory for students, especially those who are members of a minority or foreign-born (Gardner, 2008a; Lovitts, 2001). As a result of the diversity of students in U.S. doctoral education, other scholars have recommended exploring and incorporating other theories such as, motivation theories into socialization theory, which will address wider sets of questions that are more relevant in understanding other factors associated with the reasons foreign-born students pursue and persist toward successful completion of their degree (Melguizo, 2011).

With respect to interacting with institutional structures, interactions with faculty and peers have been emphasized as an important structure to organize the practices and processes of doctoral education. However, some scholars have argued due to differences in disciplines, doctoral students interact differently because those in the sciences and engineering fields often work and conduct research collaboratively whereas, those students in the humanities and education fields conduct their studies in isolation (Baird, 1993; Mendoza, 2007; Smallwood, 2004). As a result, this type of interaction influences both the quality and quantity of the student

socialization process with faculty and peers (Gopaul, 2011). Studying the role that different disciplines play in doctoral education is a necessary component in understanding how students experience the doctoral process differently (Gopaul, 2011).

Therefore, looking at the differences in the doctoral socialization process, there is a need for incorporating other frameworks in studying foreign-born doctoral students as it relates to their persistence toward attaining their doctoral degree in a particular field of study.

Implementing a more heuristic approach that is pertinent to foreign-born students' uniqueness and what motivates them to pursue a doctoral degree would add a better understanding of the experiences of students from non-western cultures (Eviwie, 2009; Irungu, 2013; Mwaura, 2008; Zhou, 2014, 2015). Also, it is important to note there are differences between foreign-born individuals from different regions or countries in the world. Cultural distance is an essential element when discussing foreign-born individuals. Scholars have indicated foreign-born students from collectivistic and individualistic cultures both experience numerous challenges while studying at U.S. higher institutions. However, those who come from collectivistic cultures experience more challenges because of their larger cultural distance (Zhou, Frey, & Bang, 2011). This finding is consistent with power distance and individualism indices (Hofstede, 1980; Matsumoto, Takeuchi, Andayani, Kouznetsova, & Krupp, 1998).

Of particular interest is to move beyond the predominant sole use of the socialization model (Austin, 2002; Gardner, 2007; González, 2006; Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001; Zhou, 2014, 2015), and explore additional factors by incorporating expectancy-value theory to know the factors that motivate foreign-born students' decisions to pursue and earn a doctoral degree in the field of education. Adding an exploratory model to the socialization model gave this researcher the opportunity to address a wider set of research questions that have not been studied

in-depth by education scholars. Using a more heuristic model filled gaps in the extant literature and guided future studies (Kim & Hargrove, 2013) on foreign-born students' educational experiences and persistence in general. Also, this study focused on the field of education because it is one of the major fields of study that has a significant decline in doctoral degree production and no demonstrable decline in time-to-degree among other major fields (Ivankova & Stick, 2007; National Science Foundation, 2014; Wao & Onwugbuzie, 2011). Table 3 shows PhDs awarded by major fields of study from 2004-2014.

Table 3

PhDs Awarded by Major Field of Study: 2004-2014

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	% Change 2004-14
All fields	42,123	43,385	45,622	48,132	48,778	49,553	48,031	48,914	50,961	52,747	54,070	28.4%
Major fields of study												
Life sciences	8,813	9,310	9,704	10,702	11,086	11,403	11,258	11,462	12,029	12,303	12,504	41.9 %
Physical sciences	6,047	6,693	7,464	7,998	8,133	8,324	8,310	8,664	8,948	9,290	9,859	63.0%
Engineering	5,777	6,426	7,186	7,749	7,864	7,642	7,547	7,986	8,422	8,952	9,568	65.6%
Social sciences	7,043	7,045	7,124	7,198	7,515	7,829	7,769	8,090	8,342	8,393	8,657	22.9%
Humanities	5,210	5,141	5,326	5,092	4,719	4,891	4,971	5,209	5,499	5,666	5,486	5.3%
Education	6,635	6,227	6,122	6,448	6,561	6,561	5,288	4,670	4,803	4,942	4,793	27.8%
Other	2,598	2,543	2,696	2,945	2,900	2,936	2,888	2833	2,918	3,201	3,203	23.3%

Source: National Science Foundation, United States Department of Education, United States Department of Agriculture, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, 2015.

Looking at Table 3, one can see the field of education has been in a downward trend with a percentage change of -27% between 2004 and 2014; with physical sciences and engineering fields having the highest completion rates with 63 and 66% change respectively (National Science Foundation, 2014). The focus of this study was on those who had persisted to earn their doctoral degree in the field of education by identifying the factors that motivated them to decide to pursue and persist toward attaining a doctoral degree in the field of education despite a documented decline in degree production and prolonged time-to-degree.

Theoretical Frameworks

Expectancy-Value Theory

Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation posits an individual's choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by his or her beliefs about how well he or she will do in an activity and the extent to which he or she values the activity (Atkinson, 1957; Eccles et al., 1983). The constructs of expectancy-value theory are:

- expectancy for success,
- individuals' beliefs about how well they will perform in an upcoming task (immediate or longer time),
- ability beliefs refer to individuals' perceptions of current competence at a given activity, and
- subjective task values have to do with the perceived significance of a task or belief about the reason one engages in a particular task.

The task values have four components:

- attainment value—the importance of doing well on a given task,
- intrinsic/interest value—enjoyment one gains from doing a task,

- extrinsic/utility value—usefulness of the task (how a task fits into an individual’s future plans), and
- cost—the cost of engaging in an activity, which is further divided into three sub-components:
 - perceived effort—the amount of effort needed to be successful,
 - loss of valued effort—time lost to engage in other valued activities, and
 - psychological loss of failure—the anxiety related to the potential of failure at the task (Eccles et al., 1983; see Figure 1).

There has been great emphasis placed on the value of education by most foreign-born students and their families. They acknowledge education is “an investment in the family’s human capital with the expected result in increasing net family earning” (Arthur, 2000, p. 22). Higher education has proven to be the road to both social and economic mobility, especially if the degree is from a U.S. institution (Irungu, 2013). As such, foreign-born students view pursuing a doctoral degree in U.S. higher education as an opportunity to make a positive difference in their acquisition of knowledge and scholarly profession. They envision freedom and success (Irungu, 2013). Furthermore, expectancies and values play an important role in predicting an individual’s future decisions, engagement, persistence, and achievement (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). According to expectancy-value theory, motivation depends on an individual’s retention of positive expectancies and values (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

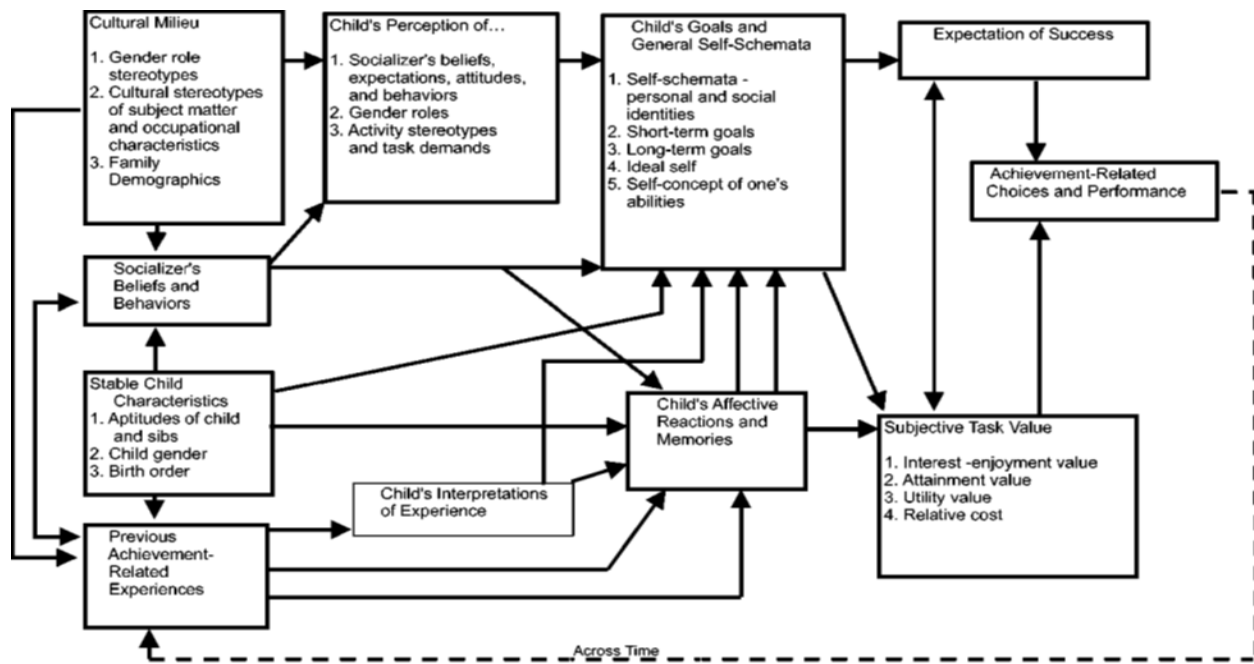


Figure 1. Expectancy-value model of achievement (Eccles et al., 1983).

Socialization Theory

Bragg defined socialization as “a learning process through which the individual acquires the knowledge and skills, the values and attitudes, and the habits and modes of thought of the society to which he/she belongs” (1976, p. 3). The socialization process for doctoral students focuses on three interactive domains: student and educational structures, student and faculty, and peer groups within a doctoral program (Bragg, 1976). Bragg (1976) further stated within each of the interactive domains of socialization, students learn the attitudes, norms, and values of the profession within the American context. Nonetheless, based on a study of doctoral student socialization, Turner and Thompson (1993) reported one of the major barriers for underrepresented groups in doctoral education, which includes foreign-born students (Antony 2002; Antony & Taylor, 2004), is that they have fewer opportunities for professional socialization experiences than their peers. This study drew from Thornton and Nardi’s (1975) study of the dynamics of role acquisition of doctoral students where they found socialization

occurs in four stages: anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. They concluded it is the lack of such socialization opportunities within each of the stages that hinders the success of underrepresented groups in doctoral education including foreign-born in both their degree progress and early academic career (Turner & Thompson, 1993).

Additionally, Ward and Bensimon (2002) revealed the inequalities in a doctoral socialization process that pretend to have a value-free, normative process, but in fact, “privileges White student males” (p. 83). The authors argued underrepresented groups in doctoral education; that is, students of color; experience doctoral education differently than their White male counterparts do. As such, the authors called for a reframing of the socialization model that accounts for the experiences of various doctoral student groups. Due to the diversity of students in U.S. doctoral education, scholars have concluded the socialization framework may not be generalizable or applicable to every student in doctoral programs and have recommended using other models that consider underrepresented groups in doctoral education, especially students of color, in understanding doctoral attrition and persistence (Antony, 2002; Austin, 2002; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; González, 2006; Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001; Zhou, 2015) since there are now more underrepresented groups than decades ago.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to explore and understand the persistent motivation of foreign-born doctoral recipients in the field of education. Also, its intent was to fully understand the factors that motivated them to pursue and persist toward degree completion. This study drew from two theoretical frameworks: expectancy-value theory and socialization theory by Eccles et al. (1983) and Bragg (1976) respectively. In this study, I paid particular attention to the expectancies and values participants placed on pursuing and persisting to completion; the costs experienced while in the doctoral program including the strategies they used to mitigate those

costs; as well as the socialization elements that may have contributed to their persistence. This study uncovered other less examined but significant variables that contributed to understanding the complexity of doctoral students' persistence toward the completion of their degree, particularly for foreign-born students.

The overarching research question this study addressed was: How do foreign-born doctoral recipients make sense of their doctoral experience as they persist through their doctoral program in the field of education?

Sub questions within the framework of expectancy-value theory were:

- What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion?
- What values do foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to pursuing and earning a degree in the field of education?
- What costs do foreign-born doctoral recipients experience while pursuing a doctoral degree and what strategies do they use to mitigate the costs of persistence?

Sub question within the framework of socialization theory was:

- How do foreign-born doctoral recipients' interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?

Significance of Study

This study contributed to scholarship on doctoral student experiences toward the completion of a doctoral degree in the field of education. Also, this study provided students' thoughts, feelings, and behaviors regarding their persistence in the doctoral program (Bair & Haworth, 1999; Golde, 2005). The use of a qualitative method in this study gave participants the

opportunity to tell their stories in their own words about their experiences and the factors that motivated them to earn their degrees. Also, based on the paucity of studies on foreign-born doctoral students' persistence toward completion in the literature (Zhou, 2014, 2015), this study added to higher education research on doctoral students' persistence of a particular group in a particular field of study. Finally and most importantly, in contrast to previous studies using only the socialization model, this study gave additional theoretical viewpoints concerning student persistence to the growing body of literature by incorporating expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) to have a more comprehensive understanding of the different factors foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to their persistence toward attaining their doctoral degree in the field of education. This study informed other students of the strategies used to persist toward successful completion of their degrees. This study allowed universities and administrators to make some adjustments to their academic programs and already existing support services that would help all doctoral students, particularly students from non-western cultures, to continually persist toward earning their doctoral degrees (Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Findings from this study add new knowledge of other motivating factors as well as their influence on sustaining foreign-born doctoral students' persistence actions toward degree completion.

Definition of Terms

The following are definitions of terms used in this study:

- *field of study*: the Survey of Earned Doctorates collects data on 317 fields of doctoral study. For reporting purposes, these fields are grouped into 35 major fields and are further aggregated into seven broad fields: life sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, engineering, education, humanities, and other non-science and engineering fields (National Science Foundation, 2015).

- *foreign-born doctoral recipients*: students who were born outside the U.S. and were enrolled and have completed their doctorates in educational doctoral programs after which they returned to their countries or invariably remained in the U.S. These include both immigrants and international students.
- *immigrant doctoral students*: students who were born outside the United States and had immigrated to the United States to live or work temporarily while enrolled in doctoral programs after which they returned to their countries or invariably remained in the United States.
- *international students*: students who are from countries other than the United States and are enrolled in the U.S. higher education for a specified time frame or for the duration of their F-1 or M-1 visas (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).
- *motivation*: the process of stimulating and sustaining goal-oriented behaviors (Weiner, 1992).
- *non-science and engineering (non-S&E)*: A grouping of broad fields of study that include education and humanities (National Science Foundation, 2014).
- *persistence*: “the continuance of a student’s progress toward the completion of a doctoral degree” (Bair & Haworth, 1999, p. 8).
- *science and engineering (S&E)*: A grouping of broad fields of study that includes science (i.e., life sciences, physical sciences, and social sciences) and engineering fields (National Science Foundation, 2014).
- *socialization*: “A learning process through which the individual acquires the knowledge and skills, the values and attitudes, and the habits and modes of thought of the society to which he/she belongs” (Bragg, 1976, p. 3).

- *success*: the completion of the different stages/phases in the doctoral program up to dissertation defense.
- *time-to-degree*: The median time elapsed from the start of any graduate school program to completion of the doctoral degree (National Science Foundation, 2014).

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review discusses the literature that guided this study; the purpose was to explore the motivating factors of foreign-born students who have earned their doctorate (PhD or EdD) in the field of education attributed to their persistence in American higher education. The literature review was drawn from relevant empirical research articles, books, journals, and dissertations that focused on the experiences and persistence of doctoral students in general. First, a brief history of the doctorate in the United States and an overview of the PhD and the EdD education doctorate degrees are presented followed by an overview of doctoral persistence and attrition; and a discussion of the literature on doctoral student persistence in general. Then, the chapter concludes with a discussion of expectancy-value theory and socialization theory as analytical frameworks that examined the factors motivating foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue and persist toward completing their doctorates in the field of education.

Brief History of the Doctorate

The doctoral degree is the highest level of formal study in the United States and in most countries. Also, in the majority of academic disciplines, the doctorate is considered the most prestigious academic degree in higher education (National Science Foundation, 2014). The first doctorate degree dated back about the middle of the 12th century at the University of Bologna, Italy (Eells, 1963). This terminal degree, as it is known, was first awarded in the early European universities after which it spread to the British universities and later to the United States (Cardozier, 1987; Eells, 1963). Formally, the doctor's and master's degrees were used interchangeably, each of which indicated the professor of the degree was qualified to provide instruction to students (Eells, 1963). The words doctor, professor, and master came from Latin words *docere*, *profited* (declare publicly), and *majister* (someone greater) respectively (Eells,

1963; Noble, 1994). These titles were used synonymously in the Middle Ages (Eells, 1963; Noble, 1994).

In the 19th century, many Americans were said to have pursued graduate education in Germany. Consequently, the American PhD was adopted from the faculty of philosophy, the doctorate awarded in German universities (Eells, 1963; Moore, Russel, & Ferguson, 1960). Scholars have indicated the first PhD degree in the U.S. was awarded in 1861 by Yale University to Eugene Schuyler, Arthur Williams Wright, and James Morris Whiton; it was originally awarded only in the arts and sciences but was extended to most applied fields of graduate study after becoming well established (Berelson, 1960; Cardozier, 1987; Nettles & Millet, 2006). At Yale University, students were required to devote two years to a course of study requested from branches pursued in the Department of Philosophy and the Arts (Eells, 1963). Also, students were required to pass satisfactorily in Latin and Greek languages and final examinations, and to complete a thesis (Eells, 1963) to graduate as a PhD holder.

Overview of PhD and EdD Doctoral Programs

In the United States, the first formal PhD in the field of education was announced in 1893 by Teachers College, Columbia University (Dill & Morrison, 1985). In 1920, the Graduate School of Education at Harvard also announced the first formal doctor of education degree (Anderson, 2011). It was noted, from the beginning, the Teacher College PhD degree in education imitated traditions of other fields and emphasized research, whereas, the Harvard EdD degree, alternatively, emphasized professional practice (Dill & Morrison, 1985). At that time, the difference was on the nature of the two institutions rather than on the requirements of the degrees (Cremin, 1997).

Nonetheless, there has been a narrow view of the EdD doctoral program. As a result, it has been regarded by many as having a lesser value than a PhD degree (Evans, 2007) even

though some studies have not found major differences between the two doctorate programs (Carpenter, 1987). Based on two extensive surveys conducted by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education in 1958 and 1969, it was concluded the difference between PhD and EdD was shadowy (Moore, Russel, & Ferguson, 1960; Robertson & Sistler, 1971). Neither PhD nor EdD programs in education exhibited consistency across institutions; the only distinguishing trait between them was a requirement in a foreign language associated with the PhD. Also, regarding research requirements for the PhD and the EdD degrees, Dill and Morrison's (1985) national survey show many PhD programs required more research courses than did EdD programs. Research objectives for PhD programs tended to be in a pure category while research objectives for EdD programs tended to be in the applied or literacy category (Dill & Morrison, 1985). Also, Eells (1963) compared the PhD and EdD degree programs on the characteristics of (a) nature of the dissertation; (b) entrance requirement; (c) qualifying and final examinations; and (d) means by which the degrees were classified by various agencies collecting information regarding them. From all these comparisons, Eells (as cited in Dill & Morrison, 1985) concluded the two programs were indistinguishable in both theoretical and practical matters.

Above all, some studies have concluded the key difference between PhD and EdD degrees resided in the philosophy of the two degrees (Anderson, 1983; Dill & Morrison, 1985; Toma, 2002; Townsend, 2002). Townsend (2002) noted the original philosophy behind the PhD was to create a doctorate for advanced scholarship focusing on original research. The philosophy behind the EdD program was to create a doctorate, which was specific for advanced scholarship with appropriate applied research. Therefore, the EdD has been known as a professional degree in educational administration. Again, Toma (2002) noted the standard response to the

differentiation of PhD and EdD was that the former was in its development of theory, whereas the latter was in its application. Presumably, the EdD graduates go on to careers in administration while the PhD graduates go on to train future faculty and researchers (Anderson, 2011). In general, scholars argue both PhD and EdD degrees are far more similar than different (Toma, 2002; Townsend, 2002).

Overview of Doctoral Persistence

Persistence has been defined differently by different authors. Bair (1999) defined doctoral persistence as “the continuance of a student’s progress toward the completion of a doctoral degree” (p. 8). Whereas, Seidman (2005) defined persistence as a desire of a student to remain within the system of higher education from the time the student is enrolled in an institution until the student earns his or her degree. It is used interchangeably with retention. However, researchers have differentiated persistence from retention by defining it as an individual’s phenomenon to succeed in college, whereas retention has been defined as an institutional phenomenon whereby students were retained in college (Berger & Lyon, 2005; Hagedorn, 2005; Reason 2009). In other words, a student who successfully enrolls from semester to semester or year to year is more likely to persist to graduation (Longwell-Grice & Longwell-Grice, 2008).

In a paper presented at the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Bair and Haworth (1999) discussed their findings from a meta-synthesis of 118 studies on doctoral attrition and persistence research. The study provides six recurring themes for doctoral student persistence: (a) student/faculty relationships—the amount and quality of time spent between doctoral students and the advisor is directly related to successful degree completion; (b) student involvement in academic life—involvement at the doctoral level includes attendance at graduate and professional association conferences, academic and social activities, attendance at departmental and university meetings, and activities directly related to students’ future

professional aspirations; (c) student satisfaction with the program—the recurring themes in this area of student satisfaction was: program quality, communication with students, fairness of the program, consistency in the evaluation, and interest in students as professionals; (d) student-to-student interaction—doctoral student demonstrating interest and support for other doctoral students are noted to be important to persistence; (e) institutional financial assistance—doctoral students who were able to acquire teaching, research, and/or general graduate assistantships or other financial support by the institution have a higher rate of completion than those students who were unable to receive assistantships; (f) dissertation—elements that support the completion of the dissertation include an effective advisor, an interesting topic, inner motivation, firm deadlines, little or no employment, and future incentives such as post-doctoral fellowship opportunities or employment (Bair & Haworth, 1999).

Overview of Doctoral Attrition

Studies show 40 to 60% of students who started a doctoral program regardless of the discipline or field of study did not complete their degree (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Lieberman & Dorsch, 2005; Lovitts, 2001; Lovitts & Nelson, 2000). Also, this percentage has remained stable for the past four decades (Hoskins & Goldberg, 2005). In a quantitative study, Bowen and Rudenstine (1992) used a dataset from the Doctorate Records File, which included 10 universities and 6 fields of study; they found one-third of doctoral students departed the program after one year of entry; another one-third departed before they complete all required coursework; and another one-third quit before completing their dissertation.

Furthermore, doctoral student attrition may seem to be an individual student's decision that will only affect the student who has decided not to continue or drop out of the program. However, the consequences are far more than anticipated. There are consequences for both the institution and the society as a whole. Lovitts (2001) revealed four reasons for studying doctoral

attrition and the possible prolonged impact: (a) the psychological implication that it may cause a student for leaving the program is of major concern; students in the study reported their decision to discontinue the doctoral degree program was responsible for their feelings of depression and at times, thoughts of committing suicide; (b) the considerable amount of time faculty members spent working with, advising, and mentoring these students who had decided to quit the program could have been used with other students; (c) another concern was the financial cost to the university and department; enrollment decreases when a student or students decide to leave a program; thereby jeopardizing the continuity of the program due to the level of attrition; (d) the last concern identified was the loss of an educated person. When doctoral students fail to persist to completion, there is the loss of the contribution of original research and the opportunity to mentor other doctoral students (Lovitts, 2001).

Review of Relevant Literature on Doctoral Persistence

Studies concerning foreign-born students' persistence have conspicuously been missing from the literature, more so for those in doctoral programs. This group of students continues to receive little or no attention in student persistence studies related to factors that motivate them to completion and their experiences in their program (Mori, 2000). Few of the available studies on foreign-born students' persistence are dissertations written by foreign-born students. They have either focused on international students in two-year and four-year undergraduate institutions (Andrade, 2008; Kwai, 2009; Mamiseishvili, 2012) or on their adjustment and challenging issues while studying in U.S. higher education rather than their successes and persistence (Andrade, 2009). Focusing exclusively on the challenges or adjustment issues of foreign-born students is not only a deficiency (Baptiste & Rehman, 2011) but a limitation of the opportunity to learn from this group of students who have ventured to overcome barriers and achieve success in their pursuits for higher education degrees (Rivas-Drake, 2008).

As previously stated, studies have confirmed different factors lead to student persistence such as demography; motivation; the structure of the program a student is enrolled in; academic and social integration, interaction with educational structures, faculty, and peers; and financial support (Attiyeh, 1999; Bragg, 1976; Girves & Wemmerus, 1988; Strayhorn, 2005; Wao & Onwugbuzie, 2011). These studies have specifically pointed out the factors influencing students are both personally- and institutionally-related (Ivankova & Stick, 2007; Tinto, 1993; Wao, 2010). When students experience a combination of these factors, they become integrated into the university, which leads to persistence (Tinto, 1993, 1997, 1998). Additionally, research has shown when students in the same doctoral program develop a relationship; it promotes persistence toward degree completion (Leatherman, 2000). Gardner (2010a) reported doctoral programs that have a sense of community or a sense of belonging are inclined to providing an environment that cooperates and supports while allowing students to learn from one another. The following section reviews and critiques current conceptualizations of doctoral student persistence by higher education scholars.

Academic and Social Integration

Studies on academic and social integration have been found to be helpful in creating awareness of what actually motivates doctoral students to persist to the end of their program. Faculty mentoring and advising, relationships between peers and social network are all embedded into the integration model (Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2005; Tinto, 1993). In 2001, Lovitts conducted a study with 820 doctoral students to know the effectiveness of academic integration. The author found students who were strongly connected to their academic community tended to interact more with others in their academic discipline. As a result, they were found likely to be successful in completing their doctoral degree. Also, Holder (2007) found in his survey of 380 doctoral students in different academic disciplines, the support of friends and family and the

assurance they were not alone in their academic struggles contributed to their persistence.

Similarly, graduate students' awareness of their relationship with a mentor was found to be vital to persistence (Girves & Wemmerus, 1998).

Financial Support

Research has been clear concerning the importance of financial support in doctoral students' persistence; stating it is difficult for a student to enroll in a program without financial aid, much less persisting in a doctoral program (Nettles & Millet, 2006). Border and Barba (1998) found 78% of doctoral students would not have enrolled in any doctoral program without financial aid. Also, in interviews conducted with 72 graduate admission officers, Munoz-Dunbar and Stanton (1999) found financial aid was the reason doctoral programs were accessible to some students, especially the underrepresented minorities; these aids include grants, fellowships, and assistantships. Even though the aid given to doctoral students at the time of enrollment is crucial to accessing the doctoral program, Gardner (2008b) found continuous aid to doctoral students determined their persistence and degree completion.

Similarly, Bair and Haworth (1999) found some departments have a higher retention rate than others because they provide their students a combination of aids, whereas those who provide only teaching assistantships have a lower retention rate. Providing students with fellowships during their dissertation year has been found to increase the likelihood of completing their doctoral degree (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992). Any form of financial aid has been found to increase doctoral students' involvement in their department teaching and research, which leads to more interaction with faculty (Border & Barba, 1998). In 1998, Girves and Wemmerus (1998) developed a two-stage model used for studying graduate student persistence. This model states, for students in the master's program, departmental and student characteristics, financial support, and perception of faculty influence persistence. In contrast to students who are pursuing their

doctoral degrees, Girves and Wemmerus stated, performance on qualifying exams, being able to do independent research, and financial support all influence whether a student persists. In sum, research has shown doctoral students who have a combination of financial aids are likely to persist toward earning their degree in a timely manner than those who pay out of pocket.

Expectancy and Values

In a qualitative study, Zhou (2015) wanted to know what motivates international doctoral students to persist despite unsatisfying experience that could threaten completion of their doctoral degree. To understand what participants' persistence, aspirations, and experiences meant to them and their ongoing action, the author interviewed 19 of 41 international doctoral students in a mid-sized public research university. Participants were those who had persisted to candidacy, who provided rich information of persistence experiences (Zhou, 2015). At the beginning of the study, the author used socialization theory, but on realizing international students' unsatisfying socialization and information pertaining to their motivation during the interviews, the author revised his interview protocol based on motivation theory. Zhou (2015) conducted seven of the interviews in Mandarin and then translated them into English, which may have altered some of the participants' responses. Also, shifting from socialization to a motivation perspective for the subgroup of 19 students was based on the author's interpretation of data from the previous students interviewed. This may have "rendered some of the aspects of persistence experience more apparent and other aspects invisible" (Zhou, 2015, p. 724).

Findings from this study show international students were dissatisfied and non-persistent because of conflict in research interest between students' and advisors' expectations. The participants in the study reported they had different research interests from those of their advisors. However, they had to change their research interest to be considered financially in regard to receiving scholarships. Some of the participants reported being overwhelmed by the

high research expectation and thought it was a wrong choice to pursue a career in academia. Also, writing proficient academic English was a challenge for some of the participants. This was consistent with other studies on the barriers international doctoral students encounter while studying in American higher education (Andrade, 2008; Evivie; 2009; Lin & Schertz, 2014; Mwaura, 2008). Despite all these challenging experiences participants related, they still found the strength to persist.

Participants in the study attributed their persistence to four motivating factors related to expectancy-value theory: (a) intrinsic interest in research, (b) intrinsic interest in teaching, (c) high utility value of U.S.-trained PhDs and, (d) high emotional and social cost of quitting the program (Zhou, 2015). Despite unsatisfying experiences, participants' confidence that they could succeed and the high utility value they placed on earning a U.S. PhD gave them reasons to persist to the end. These findings highlight the interaction between individual student's educational experiences and the environment, and the importance of positive interactions in shaping students' motivations. The environmental factors that emerged include family background and expectations, interactions with advisors, immigration context in the United States, and economic and employment conditions for overseas returning PhDs back to their countries of origin (Zhou, 2015, p. 729). These findings corroborate with other findings of the motivations behind foreign-born students going overseas to earn their degrees (Khadria, 2011; Kim et al., 2011). Also, these findings indicate the dynamics between intrinsic and extrinsic values as well as their contribution toward sustaining international doctoral students' persistence toward attaining their degrees.

The following section identifies some personal factors relevant to doctoral persistence.

Personal Factors

In a qualitative study, Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) explored the meaning doctoral recipients attribute to their persistence in an educational doctorate. Interviews were conducted by doctoral students who were enrolled in an online qualitative research method course at a private university while the authors analyzed the results from the interviews. The themes that emerged in participants' descriptions of the pursuit of a doctoral degree in education were personal sacrifice, intervening life experiences, and dissertation challenges. Personal sacrifice was a significant part of each participant's journey to degree completion. Dissertation challenges included time management, research and statistics, the writing process, and challenges associated with the dissertation chair and committee members. The transition from instructor-led to self-directed was the most difficult. Some intervening life experiences delayed some participants' progress and completion; examples include new marriage, having a child, promotion, reassignment, death, and illness of a loved one. Most of the participants identified finding a researchable topic of interest was challenging. Balancing work and other responsibilities while finding time to devote to the process was also extremely difficult (Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012). Among the 76 participants in the study, 55.26% were women, and 44.74% were men; 72.37% were Caucasian.

Furthermore, factors about their persistence emerged through the description of their experiences. Participants indicated personal factors—motivations for pursuing the degree, reasons for persisting, and strategies for the dissertation; social factors—support systems and coping mechanisms; and institutional factors—program characteristics contributed to their persistence. Some participants mentioned extrinsic motivations that led to their persistence, which included monetary incentives and social recognition associated with promotions and new appointments (Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012). Similar to reasons for beginning a PhD

and persisting to completion included personal and professional factors. Participants cited personal traits and characteristics as reasons for persisting. They indicated they were goal-oriented, structured, self-motivated, competitive, etc. Participants' responses about their experiences affirmed prior research, which suggested the doctoral journey could be lonely, stressful, and challenging. In regard to how they persisted to degree completion, participants' responses showed consistency with prior research that posited students' interactions with other students and faculty lead to persistence (Bragg, 1976). They indicated cohorts, approachable advisors, and personable and supportive dissertation chairs were strong reasons for their persistence. Also, academic match fostered academic integration in that participants cited program type—distance or residential; structures—cohort models, the connection between coursework and dissertation; faculty—knowledgeable experts in the field as factors associated with their persistence (Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2012). Intrinsic motivation was one of the themes cited as leading to persistence, which included personal challenge and gaining new skills and knowledge that lead to serving others. These motivations carry individuals through a successful defense and earning a doctorate degree.

While Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw's (2012) findings corroborated with the findings of others in regard to intrinsic and extrinsic motivations toward doctoral persistence, their study had its limitations because they relied on multiple doctoral students who collected data for the study. There are questions they should have been included but were not because they were not part of the interview process. Also, researchers being the primary instrument in the data collection when utilizing qualitative methods (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), the authors failed in this regard because they were not part of the instrument. They assumed those participants were honest in their report and the doctoral students who conducted the interviews gave accurate

recordings. Unfortunately, this may have given room for a great deal of bias. Also, even though the gender distribution of participants was satisfactory, the majority of participants were Caucasians—72.37%, which cannot be transferable to other races or ethnicities.

Internal and External Factors

In a mixed method study, Ivankova and Stick (2007) sought to identify the internal and external factors that contribute to students' persistence in a distributed doctoral program in educational leadership in higher education during the 2003 spring semester. The authors surveyed 278 students who were still enrolled in the program, those who had withdrawn from the program, those who had been terminated from the program, and those who had already completed the program. The goal was to ascertain if the program, online learning environment, students support services, faculty, and self-motivation were predictors to their persistence. The quantitative research questions focused on how the selected variables (internal and external) served as predictors of student persistence in the program. Additionally, to explore the quantitative survey results in greater depth, Ivankova and Stick (2007) conducted four purposeful follow-up case studies with selected participants; the research questions addressed seven internal and external factors: program, online learning environment, faculty, student support services, self-motivation, virtual community, and academic advisor. The results of the study from the quantitative phase show five internal and external factors (i.e., program, online learning environment, students support services, faculty, and self-motivation) were identified by doctoral students as predictors to their persistence. Also, results from the qualitative phase, which was obtained through case studies, showed the quality of academic experience, online learning environment, support and assistance, and student self-motivation were among the factors that predicted their persistence; with “quality of academic experience” reported as the most effective by the participants (Ivankova & Stick, 2007). The findings of this study were consistent with the

academic and social integration model (Tinto, 1975, 1993). Although this study focused on distant education, it is relevant to stakeholders in that it makes them aware of the intensity of influence external and internal factors have on students' persistence in a distributed learning environment. This enables them to develop strategies to increase doctoral students' persistence, which leads to graduation (Ivankova & Stick, 2007).

Personal and Institutional Factors

In another study conducted at a southeastern public university, Wao and Onwugbuzie (2011) utilized a mixed method approach to identify the factors influencing the time students take to attain their doctoral degrees in an education program. Just like the previous review, this study was sequential whereby the quantitative phase preceded the qualitative phase. Consequently, data collected from surveyed participants (quantitative phase) were used to select participants for more in-depth responses (qualitative phase) to the study. Faculty members were part of the focus group, which raised the credibility of the findings of this study (Creswell, 2007). In the quantitative section of the study, student-level variables such as gender, age, ethnicity, GPA, and Graduate Record Exam scores were the focus of the survey questions. Also, in the qualitative section, program-level variables such as the size of the program, size of the department, and proportion of student body admitted into the program were the main focus of the interview questions and focus group (Wao & Onwugbuzie, 2011). Purposeful selections of students who had finished their coursework or those who had already earned their doctoral degrees within three years prior to the date of participation were included in the study; and all 12 participants in the interview and focus groups were predominantly White except for one African American. Also, faculty participants were associate professors who had served on five dissertation committees and had been in the department for five years (authors were very careful

in choosing participants who had experience to provide rich and adequate information about attaining doctorate degree).

The results of the study showed the factors influencing students' persistence were both personally- and institutionally-related. For instance, when the participants were asked to think back and identify the factors that influenced their time in their doctorate program and which of the factors contributed the most, some participants responded "program structure" while some responded "motivation," both institutional and personal factors respectively. The results of this study showed combinations of institutional and personal factors predicted students' time to the doctorate. Accordingly, academic and social integration, personal attributes, economic factors, and external factors all were found to have a positive impact on attaining a doctoral degree. However, academic integration was found to be the strongest predictor of students' persistence to the completion of the program while the economic factor was found to be a moderate contributor to graduation. Nonetheless, the level of integration in one of the aforementioned domains is contingent on how students progress in their program. This finding is consistent with other findings and theories concerning student persistence and "integration" (Astin, 1975; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1980; 1983; Tinto, 1975, 1993). The more integrated a student is, the higher the likelihood the student will graduate from the program. Alternatively, Attiyeh's (1999) finding about the economic factor being a strong predictor to students' persistence contradicts Wao and Onwugbuzie's (2011) finding that economic factors such as work and financial support were very moderate predictors of students' persistence. This discrepancy could be as a result of the participants in both studies. Wao and Onwugbuzie's (2011) participants were predominantly White graduates and White faculty members, whereas Attiyeh's (1999) participants were of a

different demographic group, predominantly Black minorities. This means demography could be a motivating factor for persistence toward degree completion.

Socialization

In an empirical study, Gardner (2008a) sought to understand the effects of the socialization process on doctoral student success in the disciplines of chemistry and history in two institutions—one mid-sized, public lower-rank institution (land grant) and one large, prestigious public institution (a flagship university); both were located in the same state. Both institutions were classified as doctoral extensive in Carnegie Classification and were state-supported. The 40 doctoral students included 14 males and 26 females. Among them were 3 Asian Americans, 1 African American, and 36 Caucasians. International students were not included in the study because their experiences in the doctoral program were generally noted to be very distinct and particular to their culture (Mallinckrodt & Leong, as cited in Gardner, 2008a), which indicated socialization theory might not adequately explain what motivates foreign-born students' persistence toward degree completion. The semi-structured interview focused on participants' socialization experiences in their programs. Data analysis was conducted inductively by identifying common themes and concepts across experiences. Six themes emerged from the study; however, the author focused more on one of the themes—"fitting the mold."

In analyzing the socialization experience of the participants in the two disciplines, Gardner (2008a) found five groups of doctoral students emerged, who described their experience as one that "did not fit the mold" of traditional graduate education including women, students of color, older students, students with children, and part-time students. These students discussed negative interactions with others, structural impediments to success, and general feelings of "differentness" that affected overall satisfaction and integration in their degree programs

(Gardner, 2008a). Students' experiences indicated the socialization process in the departments did not consider the diversity of backgrounds and experiences of present students, which resulted in less than satisfactory experience for participants. Four students of color—three Asian Americans and one African American—continually remarked about issues of integration and a general lack of satisfaction in their overall experiences. They saw themselves as not “fitting the mold.” Experience in graduate education is not the same for all students; it varies widely by discipline, background, and institutional context. According to Gardner (2008a), the “normative socialization pattern may not fit underrepresented students' lifestyle and the diversity of their background and culture; it makes them feel that they do not ‘fit in the mold’” (p. 135). The findings of this study correlated with Zhou (2015), who found his participants were dissatisfied with the socialization process in the program; as a result, Zhou had to change his interview protocol.

In another study, Gardner (2010b) interviewed 16 faculty members to better understand their perceptions about the socialization process and their role in it within 5 doctoral programs. The author included five top programs at one institution in relation to their completion rate, which ranged from 58.6% in history to 71.1% in engineering. The faculty members with extensive experience in teaching, advising, and chairing doctoral students' dissertation were participants in the study. The interview protocol focused on how faculty interacted with students in regard to their teaching and advising practices; how faculty perceived successful students; and how they facilitated this success along with the department or program. Also, participants were asked how they actually went about socializing with students. The findings of the study differed among and within different doctoral programs. Findings showed the emergence of programmatic and structural components, and rarely on the role of peers in the socialization process. Lack of

socialization experience for some students was, in part, due to part-time and older student status. The majority of faculty members indicated they did not see the day-to-day interaction they had with students as something that would contribute to overall socialization, even though other studies indicated interactions were important to students' persistence and completion of their program (Weidman et al., 2001).

Social Support Network

In a qualitative study, Jairam and Kahl (2012) sought to examine the experience with a social support network of 31 participants who had successfully completed their doctoral degrees in various disciplines. The participants were asked to: (1) describe the behavior of their social support network that was helpful to doctoral degree completion and (2) describe the behavior of their social support network that was detrimental to degree completion (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). The results of the study show participants' social support networks included three different groups: academic friends, family, and faculty who provided both positive and negative support (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). Most importantly, support from academic friends was reported more than any other group because academic friends provided both emotional and professional support. For example, one participant reported on emotional support stating that her colleague was ready to listen to her when she was upset and gave perspectives regarding how to deal with stress (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). In regard to professional support from academic friends, one participant reported, "the intelligence, creativity, and accomplishment of my writing group inspired me" (Jairam & Kahl, 2012, p. 317). In regard to negative social support, most of the participants reported some academic friends, family, and faculty made their experience unpleasant. Some of the negative social supports were competition among academic friends, lack of understanding from family, inappropriate communication from faculty, and lack of professionally active faculty (Jairam & Kahl, 2012). This result corroborates with prior research by Kerlin (as cited in Jairam & Kahl,

2012), who suggested doctoral students' social support networks are typically made up of their advisor, family members, and peers. Apparently, positive social support leads to persistence and ultimately to degree completion. It is possible those students who do not persist in their programs might not be receiving enough social support. Therefore, administrators and faculty should intend to increase the positive social support of all students for doctoral students to have rounded experience and persist through graduation (Jairam & Kahl, 2012).

Institutional Characteristics

Attiyeh (1999) conducted a study with graduate students in a PhD program to know the relationship between persistence through three observed transition points; first, second, and third years in a graduate school, and which variables are identified as potential determinants of persistence. The author used a multivariate statistical method to determine the influence of financial support, institutional characteristics, student aptitude and achievement, and demography on student persistence (Attiyeh, 1999). The results of the study show three variables; financial support, institutional characteristics, and student aptitude and achievement; are positively related to student persistence (Attiyeh, 1999). The findings are as follows: institutional characteristics—the quality of the program determines if students continue in the program. Pertinent to student aptitude and achievement—the result shows the greater a student's academic ability, the more likely the student remains enrolled through the transition points (Attiyeh, 1999). Concerning financial support—it was found that students were most likely to persist because financial aid made the graduate study cost-effective, which is a genuine reason for remaining in college (Attiyeh, 1999). The findings of this study ascertain financial support has an influence on students' persistence no matter what the student's personal characteristics. Demographic characteristics, which include student citizenship, gender, ethnicity, and age, were found to be inconsistent with student persistence. Persistence is more consistently related to

student aptitude and achievement, institutional characteristics, and financial support than demographic characteristics (Attiyeh, 1999). Also, the findings in this study were consistent with the findings of previous studies, which confirmed multiple variables or factors were positively related to students' persistence, including financial support.

The following section discusses the foundations and components of the theoretical frameworks used to analyze data in this study. Both frameworks provided a lens to examine the factors that motivated doctoral persistence.

Theoretical Frameworks for the Current Study

Maxwell (2005) defined a theoretical framework as the “system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs one’s research” (p. 33). Theoretical frameworks guide the study and support the theories and themes presented in the research. Drawing upon expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) and socialization theory (Bragg, 1976), this dissertation attempted to identify factors that motivate foreign-born students to pursue and persist toward earning their doctoral degree in the field of education.

Expectancy-Value Theory

The expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation (Eccles, et al., 1983; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) posited an “individual’s choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by their beliefs about how well they will do on an activity and the extent to which they value the activity” (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000, p. 68). Most investigations of how the expectancy-value and possible selves theories influence achievement have been conducted with children and adolescents with respect to their academic achievement (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995, 2002; Kao, 2000; Kerpelman, Shoffner, & Ross-Griffin, 2002; Markus & Nurius, 1986; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Atkinson (1957) proposed the first formal model of achievement motivation based on

expectancies and values. Expectancy refers to an individual's perception of the likelihood of future success or failure on a task (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

Individuals who have a higher expectancy on a task are more likely to remain motivated and put more effort into achieving their ultimate goal (Morrone & Pintrich, 2006). Expectancy is influenced by factors such as dispositions, ability beliefs, the perceived task difficulty, and goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Values refer to the perceived significance of a task or beliefs about the reason one engages in a particular task (Atkinson, 1957).

Wigfield and Eccles (2000) further refined the expectancy-value model of achievement motivation. This later model, which incorporated the work of many other motivation theorists (Bandura, 1997; Battle, 1965; Covington, 1992; Crandall, 1969; Lewin, 1938; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Weiner, 1985), differs from Atkinson's model in that it also considers social and psychological influences on choice and persistence, rather than cognitive perceptions alone. In this model, both negative and positive costs of engaging in activities are taken into consideration when determining the relative value of tasks and the likelihood of success (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

The overall value of a task is dependent on four components: attainment value, interest (intrinsic) value, utility (extrinsic) value, and cost (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

Attainment value. This refers to the importance of doing well on a task that conveys the information about an individual's ability in meeting his or her professional, personal, and social needs (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). To maintain a positive sense of self-ability, individuals must feel able and demonstrate the ability to themselves and others.

Individuals may seek challenging activities and strive to excel; an example is completing a

doctorate because they have basic needs for attainment (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The sense of attaining an ultimate goal is shaped by career pathways such as deciding to pursue and earn a doctorate or any other academic career (Le & Gardner, 2010).

Interest (intrinsic) value. This is what motivates the desire in an individual to engage in an activity for no apparent reward except for engaging in the task itself (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Individuals who are intrinsically motivated have an “inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenge, to extend and exercise their capacities, and to learn” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p, 70). These individuals who are motivated may sometimes be viewed as being unreasonable based on cost-effectiveness (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). Lindholm (2004) reported intrinsic interest in research is a major motivation to pursue a doctorate. Faculty advisors consider students’ intrinsic interest in research as essential to help students transition from dependent to independent scholars and achieve success (Gardner, 2009; Lovitts, 2008).

Utility (extrinsic) value. This refers to how well a task relates to an individual’s current and future goals (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). An individual may perceive a task as having a positive value because the task facilitates future goals, even though the individual does not have any interest in that particular task (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Cost. In contrast to the first three sub-components of task values above, which reflect positive reasons for wanting to engage in an activity, Eccles et al. (1983) proposed a fourth value labeled cost. Eccles et al. suggested the overall value of a task can be negatively impacted by the perceived costs associated with performing the task. Three types of cost were theorized by Eccles et al.: (a) the amount of effort needed to be successful in the task, (b) the time lost to engage in other valued activities, and (c) emotional/psychological states that result from struggle or failure in the task. The first two types of cost were noted as costs of success (e.g., needing to

give up time and energy for a task or needing to give up doing other valued activities), whereas the third was linked to costs of failure (e.g., embarrassment or anxiety). It was predicted the choice to want to do an activity would entail a cost/benefit analysis. Also, there can be substantial emotional, social, and financial costs of either quitting or remaining in the doctoral program. Nonetheless, stress exists at all stages; from transitioning to graduate schools, to passing qualifying exams, to transitioning to independent researchers, to finding employment upon graduation; all of which can threaten persistence (Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2005; González, 2006; Lovitts, 2008). Studies have shown quitting creates feelings of incompetence that can ruin students' lives psychologically and otherwise (Golde, 2000). Finally, these expectancy and value components are uniquely interrelated and are not to be seen as independent of each other as explained individually above (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000). All of the components interact with the immediate learning environment, creating changing influence on individuals as time goes on (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002).

Socialization Theory

Bragg (1976) described socialization in his work on doctoral students as a learning process comprised of the interaction between individuals and their environments with the goal of individuals developing their group identities. Bragg (1976) conceptualized socialization in doctoral education on the organizational level; individual "actors" (doctoral students) were assumed to have equal opportunities to learn about and adopt the organization as they persist toward their academic goal. For instance, Van Maanen and Schein (1979) explained effective socialization occurs when doctoral students internalize their professional norms and values into their personal identities and sense of selves. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) further argued students who do not internalize professional norms and attitudes into their personal identities are at greater risk for dropping out from doctoral programs.

Bragg (1976) further described the socialization process for doctoral students focusing on three interactive domains—student and educational structure, students and faculty, and peer groups within a doctoral program. Bragg concluded within each of the interactive domains of socialization, students learn the attitudes, norms, and values of the profession. Examples include participating in a selective admissions process, apprenticing under faculty mentors, and informally discussing professional values and attitudes with a faculty member and student peers.

In a study of doctoral student socialization, Turner and Thompson (1993) reported one of the major barriers for underrepresented doctoral students is that they have fewer opportunities for professional socialization experiences than their peers. Their work drew from Thornton and Nardi's (1975) study of the dynamics of role acquisition of doctoral students where they found socialization occurs in four stages—anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. They concluded the lack of such socialization opportunities within each of the stages hinders the success of doctoral students in both their degree progress and early academic career (Turner & Thompson, 1993).

More recently, Weidman, Twale, and Stein (2001) built upon Weidman and Stein's (1990) conceptualization of undergraduate student socialization, tailoring it to doctoral-level education. The monograph cited by Weidman, Twale, and Stein (2001) is considered one of the few contemporary texts on the subject of doctoral student socialization. Earlier models of persistence (Bragg, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) held individuals' background and experiences constant once they chose to enroll in a doctoral program. Meanwhile, the model produced by Weidman et al. (2001) suggested doctoral student characteristics; that is, background and experiences; vary both in an academic setting and beyond, which is paramount to the way in which one understands socialization. This model named background characteristics

including gender and socioeconomic status echoing earlier theoretical models that also considered these factors in their conceptualizations of socialization. Weidman and his colleagues argued these characteristics impact how socialization affects persistence of various student groups and researchers should not treat all doctoral students as a singular group when testing the impact of socialization.

Nettles and Millett (2006) explained doctoral students experience socialization within the norms of their respective disciplines, academic departments, and institutions due to “knowledge investment and involvement” (p. 103). Students who progress through the stages of doctoral socialization tend to thrive while those who do not are at greater risk for attrition, as they may lack a sense of belonging to the institution, department, and/or doctoral program. Therefore, students must learn the “rules of the game” (p. 67) of their given academic department and institution if they are to thrive toward degree completion.

While earlier work on socialization (Bragg, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) framed the outcome of internalizing group and organizational norms as unproblematic, scholars have since challenged this assumption. Ward and Bensimon (2002) demonstrated the inequities in a doctoral socialization process that assumes a value-free, normative process, but in fact, “privileges White student males” (p. 83). They argued underrepresented doctoral students experience doctoral education differently than their White male counterparts. As such, the authors called for a reframing of socialization that accounts for the experiences of various doctoral groups.

Furthermore, little attention has been paid to the discussion on the “re-socialization” process of students who transfer from their initial doctoral program to a new doctoral program within or at another institution. Finally, an improved understanding of how personal

characteristics, self-beliefs, values, and culture affect doctoral student socialization and the resulting persistence and impact of these variables on motivation, may inform institutional structures, academic programs, as well as doctoral advising to improve the doctoral student experience for diverse student populations.

Summary

The review of the literature revealed doctoral persistence has been researched heavily over past decades using multiple research methods, particularly, quantitative methods and a variety of samples. However, these studies have combined students disproportionately from different backgrounds while disregarding the uniqueness of nationalities, races, and ethnicities, which, in fact, neglects individual students' experience (Irungu, 2013) of the doctoral journey. Although the number of foreign-born graduate students has grown six times more than the general graduate enrollment in the past four decades (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2014), there is still a paucity of persistence studies specifically on foreign-born students. Also, some studies cited above have proven using only the socialization model is slightly adequate in understanding the persistence motivation of doctoral foreign-born and other minority students in U.S. higher education (Gardner, 2008a; 2010b; Zhou, 2014, 2015). Therefore, this study intended to partially fill this gap by incorporating both expectancy-value and socialization theories in understanding the motivating factors foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to their persistence, and in this way, contribute to research on doctoral student persistence. Table 4 provides an overview of the literature reviewed in this chapter.

Table 4

Overview of Reviewed Literature on Doctoral Persistence

Author (Year)	Topic	Sample and Setting	Design and Purpose	Findings
Gardner (2008a)	Fitting the mold of graduate school: A qualitative study of socialization in doctoral education	Two institutions (one “land grant” and one “flagship”) 40 doctoral students; 3 Asian Americans, 1 African American, and 36 Caucasians	Qualitative methodology To understand the effects of the socialization process on doctoral students’ experience that facilitate or impede success and degree completion in the disciplines of chemistry and history	Show disparate experiences for individual participants. Also, experience varied by discipline and institutional context; as well as by gender, race, age, enrollment, and familial status. The “normative socialization pattern” did not fit underrepresented students’ lifestyle and the diversity of their background and culture, which made them feel that they do not “fit the mold.”
Zhou (2014)	International students’ motivation to pursue and complete a PhD in the U.S.	19 international doctoral students A mid-sized public research university	Qualitative Author wanted to know what motivates international doctoral students despite unsatisfying experience that could threaten completion of the doctoral degree	Findings from this study were two-fold: (a) international students were dissatisfied and non-persistent because of conflict in research interest between students and advisors’ expectations, (b). Intrinsic interest in research and teaching, high utility value of U.S. trained PhD and high emotional and social cost of quitting the program motivated them to persist.
Spaulding & Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012)	Hearing their voices: Factors doctoral candidates attribute to their persistence.	76 participants A private university	Qualitative The authors explored the meaning doctoral recipients attribute to their persistence in an educational doctorate	Findings show that personal, social, and institutional factors; as well as intrinsic & extrinsic motivation contributed to participants’ persistence.
Wao & Onwugbuzie (2011)	A mixed research investigation of factors related to time to the doctorate in education	12 participants ABDs, doctoral recipients within three years, and faculty members Southeastern public university	Mixed method approach to identify the factors that influence the time students take to attain their doctoral degree in an education program	Results show that academic and social integration, personal attributes, economic factors, and external factors were influenced time-to-degree. However, academic integration was found to be the strongest factor.
Jairam & Kahl (2012)	Navigating the doctoral experience: The role of social support in successful degree completion.	31 participants who have completed their doctorates Multiple universities from the United States	Open-ended online qualitative survey Authors sought to examine the experience with social support network—academic friends, family, and faculty toward persistence	Academic friends influenced persistence because they provided both emotional and professional support.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapters I and II present the background and rationale for the need to conduct research on doctoral student motivation toward persistence, particularly for foreign-born doctoral students. This chapter presents the methodology employed in this qualitative study of the motivation of doctoral students. The study addresses two key gaps in the current literature in higher education on doctoral persistence—a lack of qualitative research and inclusive theoretical models that represent the voices of foreign-born doctoral students in American higher education. First, this chapter explains how expectancy-value theory and socialization theory allow for a unique exploration of the relationships between foreign-born doctoral recipients' motivation and persistence toward doctoral degree completion. Next, it discusses how qualitative interview data capture foreign-born doctoral recipients' expectancies and values; interactions with institutional structures; and relationships with faculty and peers drive them to persist toward attaining their doctoral degree. This chapter includes a description of the study; the plans for collecting, preparing, and analyzing data. It also includes details about the methodological approach, sampling procedure, and the data analysis. Finally, this chapter concludes with a review of the limitations of the study and personal subjectivity brought to the study.

Purpose of Study

The continuous high rate of doctoral student attrition ranging between 40 and 60% (Ali, Kohun, & Levy, 2007; Bair & Haworth, 2004; Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Council of Graduate Schools, 2008; Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2000, 2005; Lovitts, 2001; Lovitts & Nelson, 2000; Smith, Maroney, Nelson, & Abel, 2006), the decreased number of doctoral degree production and prolonged time-to-degree in the field of education (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; de Valero, 2001;

D'Andrea, 2002; Hoffer, Hess, Welch, & Williams, 2007; Kim & Otts, 2010; Malone, Nelson, & Van Nelson, 2004; National Science Foundation, 2014; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011), as well as the paucity of studies on foreign-born students despite the salient growth in their enrollment and doctoral degree production, led to the eminent need for a deeper understanding of this population's persistence factors toward doctoral degree completion. As such, the main purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of foreign-born doctoral recipients in the field of education. This researcher paid particular attention to the expectancies and values that motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue and persist toward degree completion. Additionally, this researcher explored the socialization components that may have contributed to foreign-born doctoral recipients' persistence toward the completion of their doctoral degree in the field of education. The research questions that guided this study were as follows:

Overarching research question: How do foreign-born doctoral recipients make sense of their doctoral experience as they persist through their doctoral program in the field of education?

Sub-questions within the framework of expectancy-value theory:

1. What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion?
2. What values do foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to pursuing and earning a degree in the field of education?
3. What costs do foreign-born doctoral recipients experience while pursuing a doctoral degree and what strategies do they use to mitigate the costs of persistence?

Sub-questions within the framework of socialization theory:

1. How do foreign-born doctoral recipients' interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?

Methodological Approach

Given that the nature of this study was exploratory, a qualitative research design was used by employing in-depth interviews to collect the accounts of foreign-born doctoral degree recipients. Creswell (1998) defined qualitative research as “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (p. 15).

Merriam (2009) indicated four main characteristics of qualitative research: the focus is on process meaning and understanding; the primary instrument of data collection and analysis is the researcher; the process is inductive, and the product is richly descriptive. Additionally, a common characteristic of qualitative research is that a sample is purposive and small (Merriam, 2009). My research fits both Creswell's and Merriam's descriptions of qualitative research because my goal was primarily to deepen an understanding of how foreign-born students experienced their persistence toward doctoral degree completion. Second, this researcher solicited foreign-born doctorate recipients who were willing to reflect and expand on their doctoral experience via semi-structured interviews. An interview protocol that focused primarily on their ability and beliefs and values that motivated them to pursue a doctorate was completed as well as the socialization process that contributed to their persistence in earning a doctoral degree in the field of education. Third, the research process was both deductive and inductive as this researcher sought to identify themes emergent from the data. Fourth, findings of data were presented in a descriptive manner using participants' words and quotes, rather than numbers or graphs. Finally, the design was flexible and able to respond to changing conditions and the

sample was small and purposeful. Taken together, this research fits the qualitative research approach to the inquiry because it allowed for exploration of the experiences as described by participants regarding what motivated them to pursue and persist toward doctoral degree completion. Also, the information-rich data collected added to the body of knowledge on this topic and provided detailed accounts and examples, which are absent in quantitative research.

Theoretical Frameworks

Expectancy-value theory and socialization theory were used in the analysis of foreign-born doctoral recipients' experiences, motivational factors for pursuing and persisting, as well as the socialization components that contributed to their persistence toward earning their doctoral degree in the field of education. Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation posits an individual's choice, persistence, and performance can be explained by the beliefs about how well one will do in an activity and the extent to which one values the activity (Atkinson, 1957; Eccles et al., 1983). The constructs of expectancy-value theory are:

- expectancy for success—individuals' beliefs about how well they will perform in an upcoming task (short- or long-term).
- subjective task values—are values that have to do with the reason(s) one engages in a particular task or activity.

The task values have four components:

1. attainment value—the importance of doing well on a given task,
2. intrinsic/interest value—enjoyment one gains from doing a task,
3. extrinsic/utility value—usefulness of the task, and
4. cost value—the cost of engaging in an activity, which is further divided into three sub-components.

- a. perceived effort—the amount of effort needed to be successful,
- b. loss of valued effort—time lost to engage in other valued activities, and
- c. emotional/psychological cost of failure—the anxiety related to the potential of failure at the task (Eccles et al., 1983; see Figure 1).

Socialization has been described as “a learning process through which an individual acquires the knowledge and skills, the values and attitudes, and the habits and modes of thought of the society to which he/she belongs” (Bragg, 1976, p. 3). According to Bragg (1976), the socialization process for doctoral students focuses on three interactive domains: student and educational structures, student and faculty, and peer groups within a doctoral program. Bragg (1976) further stated within each of the interactive domains of socialization, students learn the attitudes, norms, and values of the profession within the American context. Also, Thornton and Nardi’s (1975) study of the dynamics of role acquisition of doctoral students found socialization occurs in four stages—anticipatory, formal, informal, and personal. They concluded lack of socialization opportunities within each of the stages hinders the success of underrepresented groups in doctoral education including foreign-born students in both their degree progress and early academic career (Turner & Thompson, 1993).

Research Site

As part of the data collection of this study, this researcher solicited participants who had completed their doctoral degrees in the field of education from a private institution in the northeast of the United States. This institution was chosen because of its wide range and diversity of students in terms of gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic class, religious background, and high faculty/student interactions. This institution offered both undergraduate and graduate programs in more than 90 majors. It had a total enrollment of 10,100 students;

5,800 undergraduates and 4,300 graduate students with 70 countries represented and a diversity rate of 44% (Institutional website, n.d.). Although this institution did not specifically track the number of foreign-born students by nativity, it tracked races as a demographic factor. According to the institution, in 2012-2013, 9% Asians, 11% Blacks/African Americans, 8% Hispanics, 49% Whites, 1% two or more races, and 21% unknown enrolled in the graduate programs (Institutional website, n.d.).

Additionally, the institution was classified as having a moderate research activity based on Carnegie Classification. The institution's academic excellence had been noted for its distinction by The Princeton Review, U.S. News & World Report, and Bloomberg Businessweek (Institutional website, n.d.). Relative to Carnegie peers, this institution exceeded in student/faculty interaction and enriching educational experience—61% to 45% (Carnegie Basic as cited in Institutional website, n.d.;). The institution had nine schools and colleges; within these schools and colleges, the College of Education and Human Services was selected for the purpose of attaining a sample of diverse student population based on gender, race/ethnicity, nativity, socioeconomic class, education and family background, and immigration status. Previous studies on doctoral persistence have found it is important to attain a diverse participant sample to capture a broad spectrum of different motivating factors toward degree completion (Vansteenkiste et al., 2004; Vaquera, 2007).

Therefore, this researcher identified four doctoral (EdD and Ph.D.) academic programs classified under the College of Education and Human Services (EdD in education leadership management and policy, EdD in education leadership management and policy [executive], EdD in higher education, and Ph.D. in higher education) within the selected institution. The selection of College of Education and Human Services was based on two factors: the general notion that

the field of education is experiencing a significant decline in doctoral degree production and prolonged time-to-degree (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; de Valero, 2001; D'Andrea, 2002; Hoffer, Hess, Welch, & Williams, 2007; Kim & Otts, 2010; Malone, Nelson, & Van Nelson, 2004; National Science Foundation, 2014; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). Also, this researcher chose the field of education to determine from those who had already earned their doctorate, the factors that influenced them to pursue and persist toward the completion of their degrees. Table 5 shows data from American Humanitarian University Office of Graduate Enrollment in the field of education.

Table 5

Graduate Enrollment and Completion in the Field of Education, from 2007-2016

Year	Gender		Enrollment	Citizenship				Programs			Degree Completion		Registration	
Year	M	F	Total enroll. for each year	US	NR	PR	U	EdD ELMP	EdD ELMP exec.	EdD HE	PhD HE	Completed	Not Completed	Not registered as of 2015
2007	8	6	14	11	—	—	3	5	—	2	3	10	4	2
2008	25	43	68	56	4	—	8	7	16	5	4	32	36	25
2009	29	31	60	55	2	1	2	5	23	1	6	35	25	16
2010	44	26	70	66	4	—	—	11	17	1	7	36	34	20
2011	36	38	74	68	1	5	—	2	17	—	5	24	50	24
2012	40	29	69	63	1	2	3	6	12	—	4	22	47	23
2013	14	32	46	45	1	—	—	3	5	—	1	9	37	15
2014	21	34	55	54	1	—	—	—	2	—	—	2	53	7
2015	32	41	73	67	2	1	3	—	1	—	—	1	72	8
2016	37	50	87	85	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	286	330	616	503	18	9	19	39	93	9	30	171	358	140

Note: US—U.S. citizen; NR—Non-resident; PR—Permanent resident; U—Unspecified. Total doctoral enrollment between 2007-2016 = 616.

Between 2007 and 2016, approximately, 616 doctoral students enrolled in the field of education. At the time of enrollment, 18 were non-residents, and 9 were permanent residents. Of the 616 who enrolled into the program, 171 completed their programs (i.e., EdD in ELMP, 39; EdD in ELMP executive, 93; EdD in HE 9; and PhD in HE 30) whereas; 358 had not completed their programs, and 140 had not reregistered as of the time of this study.

Sampling and Participant Selection

Criterion sampling was employed to select participants for the study. The criteria established “directly reflected the purpose of the study and guided in the identification of information-rich cases” (Merriam, 2009, p. 78). The criterion sampling approach requires all participants meet specific characteristics to participate (Patton, 2002). Twenty participants who met the following criteria participated in the study: (a) those who identified as foreign-born; that is, non-residents, permanent residents, and naturalized citizens, (b) those who have received their doctorate in the field of education between 2006 and 2016, and (c) must have completed their doctoral degree from American Humanitarian University. Also, I considered the demographic diversity of the sample in terms of gender, nativity/nationality, and type of doctoral degree (i.e., PhD and EdD). The reason both PhD and EdD recipients were included in the sample was to have varied perspectives about their experience in their respective doctoral programs.

Participants from this study came from the 171 doctorate recipients who had successfully completed their doctoral program in the field of education between 2006 and 2016. The participants of this study were foreign-born doctoral recipients who willingly shared their stories about their experience and the factors motivating them to pursue and persist toward successful completion of their doctoral degree in the field of education. Participants were contacted through Alumni Relations during the fall of 2016 semester. A letter of solicitation for study participants (see Appendix B) was sent to prospective participants through the department email listservs two

times and once by the program director during the course of six months. The solicitation letter described the purpose and goals of the study as well as the possible application of the results. Thirty-two doctoral recipients expressed interest in participating in the study. However, only 20 respondents (see Table 6 below) met the criteria after completing the institutional review board approved consent form (Appendix C) and brief demographic questionnaire (Appendix D). The demographic questionnaire was used to collect data on gender, race, ethnicity, age, immigration status, nativity, education programs, the year the program was started and completed, how the program was funded, and other pertinent information that helped to produce a balanced sample.

Saturation was sought through repetitions in responses before data collection ended. Once saturation was reached, interviewing stopped. Saturation is usually reached when a researcher believes there is no more new information to be learned by interviewing additional participants or relevant data seem to emerge regarding categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The interviews occurred over a period of six months.

Table 6

Demographic Profile for 20 Participants

Pseudonym*	Gender	Region	Race/ Ethnicity	Status	Age	Degree	Funds**	Started	Ended	Time-to- Degree
Peace	M	Africa	Black	F/T	42	Ph.D.	T.R	2011	2016	5 Yrs.
John	M	Hispanic	Latina	P/T	34	Ph.D.	None	2012	2016	4 Yrs.
Walter C.	M	South America	Black	F/T	57	EdD	None	2006	2009	3 Yrs.
Theckla	F	Africa	Black	F/T	46	Ph.D.	T.R	2007	2011	4 Yrs.
Kenny	M	Africa	Black	P/T	44	EdD	None	2008	2013	5 Yrs.
Bolack	M	Africa	Black	P/T	45	Ph.D.	None	2009	2015	6 Yrs.
Jenny	F	Europe	White	F/T	33	Ph.D.	GA	2009	2016	7 Yrs.
Farrah	F	Asia	Arab	F/T	33	Ph.D.	Schlp.	2013	2016	3 Yrs.
Lauren	F	Asia	White	F/T	33	Ph.D.	GA	2008	2014	6 Yrs.
Larry	M	Africa	Black	F/T	39	Ph.D.	GA	2009	2013	4 Yrs.
Molly	F	South America	Black	F/T	—	EdD	None	2006	2009	3 Yrs.
Bajajah	M	Asia	Mongoloid	P/T	38	Ph.D.	None	2008	2013	5 Yrs.
Wen	M	Asia	Mongoloid	P/T	40	Ph.D.	None	2008	2013	5 Yrs.
Steve	M	Asia	Mongoloid	F/T	43	EdD	None	2009	2014	5 Yrs.
Raja	F	Europe	White	F/T	35	Ph.D.	T.R.M	2008	2013	5 Yrs.
Jessica	F	Asia	Mongoloid	F/T	33	Ph.D.	Schlp.	2011	2014	3 Yrs.
Sandy	F	Africa	Mongoloid	P/T	48	EdD	None	2009	2016	7 Yrs.
Chin	F	Asia	Mongoloid	F/T	35	Ph.D.	GA	2012	2015	3 Yrs.
Vera	F	Asia	Mongoloid	F/T	43	Ph.D.	None	2008	2011	3 Yrs.
Myriam	F	Hispanic	Latina	F/T	38	EdD	None	2008	2011	3 Yrs.

Notes. *These are pseudonyms used to protect the confidentiality of participants. **These are how doctorate recipients funded the doctoral education: TR = Tuition reduction, GA = Graduate assistantship, Schlp. = Scholarship, T.R.M. = Tuition remission, None = No fund.

Twenty foreign-born doctoral recipients participated in this study, all of whom graduated from one institution in the northeastern United States. Each of the participants earned either a doctor of philosophy (PhD) or a doctor of education (EdD) in the field of education. Fourteen participants earned PhDs while 6 earned EdDs. Time-to-degree for the 20 participants ranged from 3 to 7 years, which is lower than the national norm (National Science Foundation, 2015). The average and median time-to-degree were both four and half years, and the mode was three years. Of 20 participants, 14 were enrolled as full-time students, while 6 were enrolled as part-time students. Nine participants altogether received financial support during their program: 4 had graduate assistantships, 2 received scholarships from the government of their country, 1 received tuition remission from her employer, and 2 received 50% discount from the institution while the remaining 11 self-funded their program. Age at doctoral completion ranged from 33 years to 57 years. The average age for participants was 40 years, the median was 39, and the mode was 33. One participant did not indicate the age at the time of completion. Ten participants completed their doctoral degree in their 30s, which is the highest number of participants in the study. Eight participants finished their degree while in their 40s. One participant finished his degree while in his 50s. All of the participants successfully completed a doctoral degree within a 10-year period from 2006-2016.

Data Collection

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Creswell, 2009, p. 16). Since a qualitative research design of narrative analysis was used, in-depth semi-structured interviews with foreign-born doctoral recipients in the field of education were conducted to answer the research questions. This method is used when the researcher seeks to capture meanings and perspectives of participants and other information not typically available through other research techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007;

Patton, 2002). Moreover, interviews increase the opportunity for accurate communication of ideas in their entirety between the researcher and the participants (Creswell & Miller, 2002). Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to guide the outcome of the interview. Probing and follow-up questions were also used to provide focus and flexibility during the interview process. This allowed this researcher to gather all the necessary information needed to make meaning of the factors that motivated foreign-born doctoral students to pursue and persist toward the completion of their program (Patton, 2002). Furthermore, open-ended questions enabled participants to share their experiences in their own words about the factors that motivated them to complete their degrees.

Participants were solicited through email, which explained the purpose and significance of the study, the importance of their participation, anticipated length of the interview, how the results would be reported, and the researcher's contact information. This email assured participants that confidentiality would be maintained throughout the process. This researcher was flexible in terms of participants choosing the date and time of the interview. When possible, efforts were made to conduct the interview in person at a location chosen by the participants. However, due to distance and financial constraints, six interviews were conducted using Skype whereas the remaining 14 interviews were conducted face-to-face. Video conferencing allowed for a more personalized interview experience as participants and the researcher were able to see each other, observe and/or respond to physical reactions. Also, each interview was digitally recorded with participants' permission. Demographic information was obtained through a brief demographic pre-interview survey sent through email prior to the interviews. The informed consent form was signed by participants prior to the in-depth interviews, which lasted between 40 and 120 minutes.

At the beginning of the interview, this researcher provided participants an overview of the study, addressed any questions or concerns they had; and requested their permission to record the interview. Allowing participants to ask questions and voice their concern provided a calm and comfortable atmosphere. This researcher indicated recording would be stopped at their request or if they became uncomfortable. The interview protocol (see Appendix E) included open-ended questions as well as probes, which provided flexibility for a thorough exploration of certain topics or components (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 1994). The use of the interview protocol facilitated the interview process and led both the participants and researcher into potentially interesting and pertinent areas regarding their motivation toward doctoral degree completion. Various types of motivating factors toward degree completion unfolded throughout the interview with the use of this approach. The protocol was designed to elicit responses of the relevant variables related to expectancy-value theory such as: (a) expectancy of being successful in a task, (b) value for engaging in a task, (c) cost of engaging in an activity (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), and (d) how interaction with institutional structures, faculty, and peers (Bragg, 1976) contributed to their persistence.

Interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder; and occasionally, brief notations were made as a reminder to follow up with a response. Using a voice recorder enabled the researcher to capture subtle nuances as participants responded to interview questions. To ensure protection and confidentiality, participants' names and the name of the institution were not used in this study. A pseudonym was assigned to each participant and the name of the institution. Digital audio files of each interview were stored on a password-protected USB memory device in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home. All digital audio files, demographic questionnaires, interview transcripts, and field notes were safely stored and will be retained for at

least three years in compliance with IRB guidelines after which they will be destroyed once it is determined that no further analysis is needed.

Data Analysis

Data analysis involves organizing and interpreting what the researcher has seen, heard, and read to make sense of what has been learned (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Glesne, 2006). To ensure a structured method of analyzing the data, data analysis began after each interview was conducted and transcribed; analysis was guided by Miles and Huberman (1994) interactive model for data analysis. Data analysis was comprised of three stages that connect with one another: (a) data reduction, (b) data display, and (c) conclusion drawing and verification. Also, coding applied Saldaña's (2013) first and second cycle coding method to "summarize segments of data and grouping those summaries into a smaller number of categories, themes, and constructs" respectively (Saldaña, as cited in Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 73).

During the data analysis process, the coding procedure was used to reduce information gathered from participants into themes or categories (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). These themes were generated from existing literature on doctoral persistence that was relatable to the constructs of expectancy-value theory and socialization theory, which were embedded in instruments and research questions. These codes were: ability belief, expectancy belief, attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value, cost, mitigation strategies, interaction with institutional structure, relationship with faculty, and relationship with peers.

Following the reflection and coding of data, information was reduced and summarized for the second-stage data display, which allowed for more focused interpretation of data. After assigning the initial coding to the entire interview transcript, this researcher reviewed marginal notes and codes and was able to group certain codes into pattern codes (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). These pattern codes were used to generate themes. Conclusions were drawn

after interpretations of analyzed data were revisited and their implications for the research question posed.

Below is the step-by-step process involved in the analysis of interviews, field notes, and other pertinent documents. The process was both deductive and inductive.

Step-by-Step Process for Analyzing Data

First, field notes and memos were written after each interview. These memos enabled the researcher to make connections to previous interviews and to focus on certain questions that should be asked in upcoming interviews. Bogdan and Biklen's (2007) suggestions for data analysis included: fine-tuning interview questions, planning leads to pursue in the next interview session based on a review of the field notes and writing memos to prompt critical thinking and to begin formulating codes and eventual themes.

Next, this researcher transcribed the interviews verbatim; and then listened to the audio-recordings and read the transcripts once without coding. The data reduction process began by rereading the interview data along with the audio-recordings while clustering relevant segments under each predetermined code from the initial list based on existing literature. This process helped in making the large volume of data manageable. In the next step, the data were sorted by source (Creswell, 2013) and then read and reflected on the extracted segments of data in their entirety while making notes in the margin of recurring ideas in the data that seemed "interesting, potentially relevant, or important" (Merriam, 2009, p. 178) to answering research questions. This process of reading and annotation led to inductive identification of additional codes through the coding process from the initial list (Saldaña, 2013).

Coding

First Cycle Coding

Saldaña (2009) defined a code as “a researcher-generated construct that symbolizes and thus attributes interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, theory-building, and other analytic process” (p. 4). Furthermore, according to Charmaz and Mitchell (2001), coding links data to its interpreted meaning. This idea reinforces the thinking of Miles et al. (2014) who noted, “coding is analysis . . . deep reflection about and thus, deep analysis and interpretations of the data’s meanings” (p. 72).

Saldaña (2009) identified two stages of coding—first and second cycle coding. First cycle coding or initial coding is a straightforward labeling of data, and second cycle coding or pattern coding is a more complex analytical process involving skills such as prioritizing, integrating, and synthesizing the first cycle codes.

As stated above, first cycle coding is the straightforward labeling of data (Saldaña, 2009). This researcher began the process by developing an initial list of codes deductively based on the literature, conceptual frameworks, and research questions (Miles et al., 2014). Some examples of the codes on the initial list were:

- ability belief,
- expectancy belief,
- attainment values,
- interest value,
- utility value,
- cost,
- mitigation strategies,

- interaction with institutional structure,
- relationship with faculty, and
- relationship with peers.

Also, this researcher incorporated several different types of codes in data analysis, such as:

- descriptive—assigns labels to data to summarize in a word or short phrase the basic topic of a passage of qualitative data,
- emotion—labels emotions recalled by participants,
- in vivo codes—utilizes the participants’ own words,
- process—uses the gerunds “ing”, and
- value code—reflects participants’ value, attitude, and beliefs representing one’s perspectives or worldviews (Miles et al., 2014).

Next, the researcher compiled the initial list of codes into a codebook (Boyatzis, 1998) to ensure consistency in the application of the codes through the initial coding process. A codebook serves as a “frame or boundary that the analyst constructs in order to systematically map the information terrain of the text . . . [and] always reflects the analyst’s implicit or explicit research questions” (MacQueen, McLellan, Kay, & Milstein, 1998, p. 33). Although the use of a codebook is often applied to team coding in qualitative analysis, it can also be applied to serve as a guide to frame the thinking of a researcher during the first cycle of coding large volumes of data. The codebook included a description for each code along with criteria for inclusion. See excerpts from the codebook in Table 7.

Table 7

Excerpt from Codebook

Codes	Description	Criteria for Inclusion
Ability and expectancy beliefs	Individual's belief and expectations for success in a given task	Any mention of the ability to succeed to completion and expectations for success.
Task values	Values that motivate foreign-born students to pursue and persist toward doctoral degree completion	When participants mention the values, they have for pursuing and completing a doctorate.
Cost	Challenges encountered while pursuing the doctorate degree	When participants mention any feelings of anxiety related to failure, struggles, and sacrifices related to money, and struggles or challenges related to system of education.
Mitigation strategies	Strategies used by foreign-born to cope with challenges	When participants mention any method used to alleviate the challenges experienced
Interaction with program structure	Utilizing resources and services available for a smooth and success completion of program	When participants indicate that utilizing some available resources, services, and opportunities helped or did not help in their integration or persistence to completion.
Interaction/relationship with faculty	Positive or negative relationship with faculty	When participants indicate that their relationship with faculty-led to or did not lead to their persistence
Interaction/relationship with peers in the same program	Positive or negative relationship with peers in the same program	When participants indicate that interaction/positive relationship with peers in the same program led to or did not lead to their persistence

Second Cycle Coding

After the development of an initial list, the construction of a codebook, and the first cycle coding, this researcher began looking for patterns and themes. Many of the same codes were used repeatedly throughout the data. As Saldaña (2009) put it, “they are both natural and deliberate.” This researcher’s goal was to find repetitive patterns of action and consistencies in human affairs as documented in the data (Grbich, 2007, p. 21). As already stated, coding is part of analysis; it is not just labeling; it is linking; “it leads you from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea” (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 137). Using Microsoft Word features, the researcher reassembled the codes into a matrix used to search for patterns in the data. Also, this researcher thoroughly studied the matrix, which enabled identification of common trends among the codes and grouping them into pattern codes (Merriam, 2009). See Table 8 for excerpts concerning the development of initial and pattern codes.

Table 8

Excerpt of Initial and Pattern Codes

First Cycle/Initial Coding	Second Cycle/Pattern Coding
Self-concept	Ability and expectancy belief
Self-efficacy	
Self-determination	
Self-confidence	
Prior education background	
Course progression	
Motivation to accomplish	
Doctorate is key	Attainment value
Personal growth	
Enact change	
Give people hope	
Impact knowledge	
Intrinsic interest in research	Interest value
Intrinsic interest in teaching	
Interest in impacting others' lives	
Career advancement	Utility value
Academic ambition	
Social recognition	
Upward mobility	
High utility value of U.S. degree	
Fears of exams	Emotional cost
Anxiety	
Low self-esteem	
Expensive program	Financial cost
Worked two jobs	
Financing program was tough	
Oral presentations	Intellectual cost
Too much reading and writing	
Inability to analyze data	
Program structure	Institutional structure
Advisement	
Opportunity for first drafts	
Graduate assistantship positions	
Interactions with faculty	Relationship with faculty
Working closely with faculty	
Mentoring	
Peer interaction	Interaction with peers
Peer support	
Informal study groups	

Pattern codes may reflect commonalities according to categories of information, causes, or explanations, interpersonal relationships, or emerging theories (Miles et al., 2014). For example, in this study, I grouped the initial codes based on their relationships with each other such as intrinsic interest in research, intrinsic interest in teaching, and impacting others' lives under "interest value." Pattern coding process allowed this researcher to condense a large

number of codes into fewer meta-codes for analysis while also developing schema for a better understanding of the topic under study (Miles et al., 2014). From the patterns, categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007) emerged, which were used to generate themes.

Theming

The purpose of theming was to extract meaning from the data as a result of the coding and recording process. DeSantis and Ugarizza (2000) explained, “a theme is an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to recurrent experience and its variant manifestations. As such, a theme captures and unifies that nature or basis of the experience into meaningful whole” (p. 362). While themes often begin to develop during the initial cycle of coding, they typically evolve and become interwoven as the analysis progresses, expressing tensions, rationale, or emerging conclusions (Rubin & Rubin, 2011).

As this researcher examined the data in this study, looking for relationships among pattern codes as well as commonalities, several themes emerged. These themes helped to make meaning of participants’ experiences in the doctoral program, and it provided answers to the research questions (Maxwell, 2004; Miles et al., 2014). As the study progressed, a more coherent map of the emerging themes was developed, as shown in the excerpts in Figure 2 based on Saldaña’s code-to-theory model (2013).

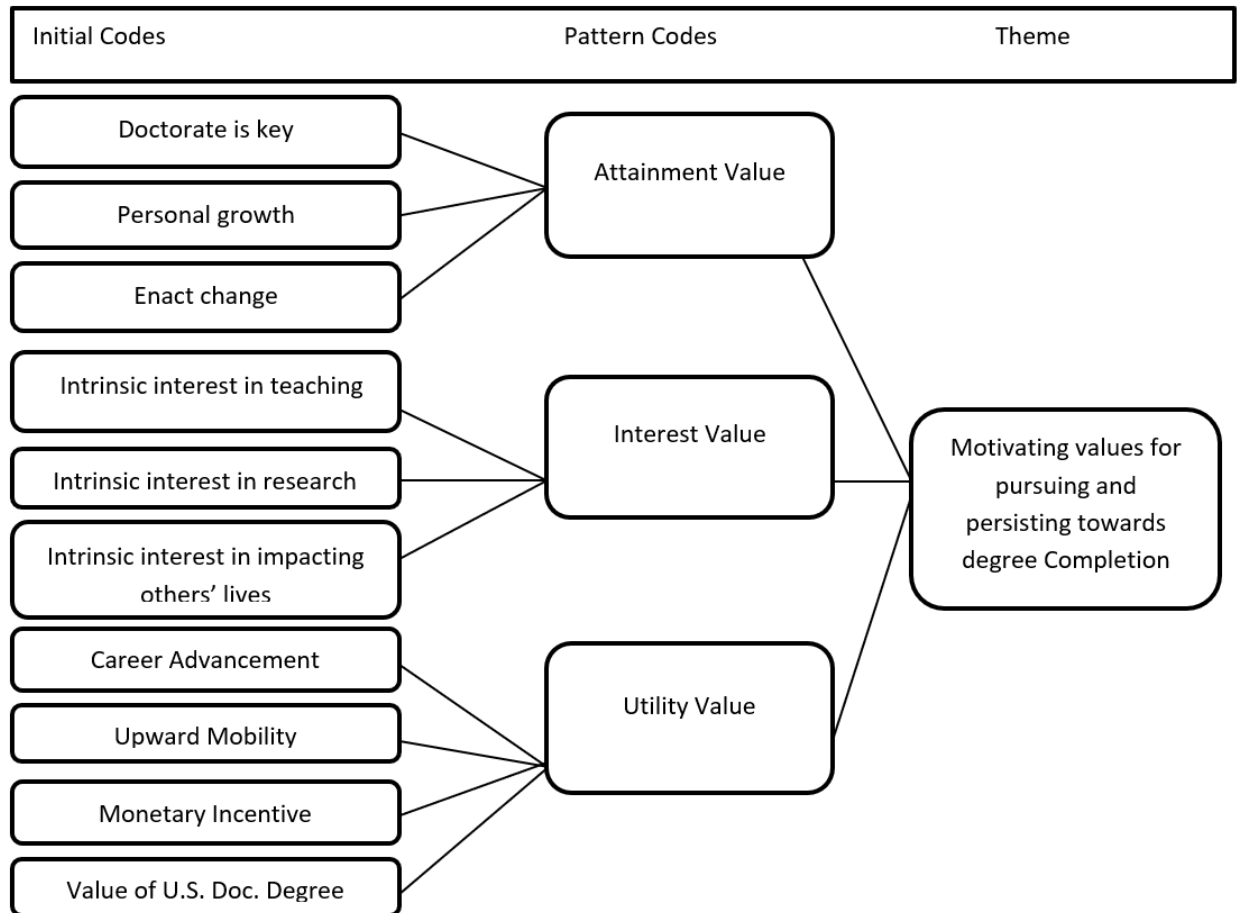


Figure 2. Excerpt of how emerging themes were developed.

The four themes that emerged from the analysis, which is described in detail in Chapter IV, show the factors that motivated foreign-born doctorate recipients to pursue and persist toward completing their doctoral degrees in the field of education and pointed to opportunities for improving their doctoral experience in American higher education.

In sum, following the clustering of relevant segments, reflection, and initial codes, the information was reduced and summarized for the second stage of data analysis—data display, which allowed for a more focused interpretation of data. After assigning the initial codes, this researcher reviewed marginal notes and codes and was able to group those initial codes into pattern codes (Miles et al., 2014) and categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007), which in turn, generated themes about factors that motivate foreign-born students to pursue and persist toward

attaining their doctorates. Finally, conclusions were drawn after interpretations of analyzed data were revisited and their implications for the research questions posed.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) maintained, “The basic issue in relation to trustworthiness is simple: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the findings of inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?” (p. 290). Within the perimeters of a qualitative researcher, trustworthiness is the degree to which a study has reliability, validity, and credibility. This study used varied strategies to ensure trustworthiness of findings. Detailed records were kept to ensure methods used to interpret data were consistent. Because this researcher was also foreign-born, she made every effort to keep her experiences out of this study and focused only on participants. The researcher maintained an open, curious, objective attitude so that participants were given the opportunity to tell their stories without interruption and coercion. Also, various experiences as a foreign-born doctoral student and personal bias that may have influenced findings were acknowledged in reflective memos. This type of reflection was crucial to separate the researcher’s experiences and not assume shared experiences with those of foreign-born doctoral recipients in the study when interpreting the data. Member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and respondents’ validation were accomplished by sending transcribed interviews to participants prior to analyzing data to ensure they were well represented. This was done to decrease the likeliness of researcher bias or misinterpretation of data (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006). Participants were involved throughout the analytic process.

Role of the Researcher

The goal of qualitative research is to create and provide meaning to the lived experiences of participants in a research study (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Qualitative researchers “stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what

is studied and the situational constraints that shape inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 10). McMillan and Schumacher (2001) concurred, stating, “qualitative researcher becomes immersed in the situation and the phenomenon being studied,” (p. 16) especially in studies where interviews are the source of data collection. As a result of the intense connection between the qualitative researcher and research, openness about the researcher is required.

The researcher was a foreign-born female pursuing a PhD degree in higher education leadership management and policy at a private university located in a suburban area. Research interests began at the commencement of the doctoral program. While reading literature on doctoral education, this researcher realized the growth in the enrollment and degree production of foreign-born students in U.S. higher education; yet, a paucity of studies on this group and the predominant use of socialization framework in understanding persistence toward doctoral degree completion. Interests and questions about the reasons foreign-born students pursue and persist toward degree completion despite well-documented challenges in American higher education prompted the researcher to pursue this study.

Despite the times when this researcher felt like withdrawing from the doctoral program, value for education, self-concept, self-efficacy, resilience attitude, thought of making a difference in peoples’ lives, the acquisition of knowledge, and scholarly profession had always been key motivators to persisting toward completing the degree. Experience as a foreign-born doctoral student provided a connection between participants and the researcher. Also, awareness of the demanding and unique nature of doctoral study contributed to the realization of this study. Coming from a different culture and system of education made it difficult to be fully immersed in what American education offers. This researcher had to contend all the challenges associated with being foreign-born just like every other foreign-born student on U.S. campuses. I barely

contributed to classroom or group discussions because our system of education did not encourage collaborative learning. Also, I thought other students did not understand me due to my accent. As a result, I was withdrawn and did not bother contributing to class discussions or joining any study group consisting of American students. I associated better with my co-nationals because we understood each other's' challenges and helped each other succeed academically. Furthermore, being far from our families and friends, we provided social support for each other by eating out once in a while and going out to movies.

While I relate my experiences and how I overcame my challenges, which had sustained me thus far, I sought to know how my experience was different from or similar to other foreign-born doctoral students. I wished to know the factors motivating foreign-born doctoral recipients to persist to the end despite all the challenges they encountered. Being a foreign-born doctoral student gave me an insider perspective on providing some background on developing semi-structured questions. However, generating the questions from my experience would probably introduce bias. Therefore, I considered the concept of reflexivity as an essential component to ensure the integrity of the study. Reflexivity is defined as the researcher's ability to "keep track of one's influence on a setting, to bracket one's biases, and to monitor one's emotional responses" (Hatch, 2002, p. 10).

One approach to phenomenological data analysis requires what is called *Epoche* (Moustakas, 1994), which stems from a Greek word meaning, "stay away or abstain from." Staying away, abstaining from, or setting my own biases, preconceived ideas, or preconceptions about things was in alignment with the suggestions of Moustakas (1994). Ongoing communication and meetings with my mentor during the study was one way of refraining from imposing my view on the study. This was accomplished by sharing the interviews and transcripts

with my mentor to make sure I had captured verbatim what participants shared. Also, I used the frameworks in this study to closely analyze the data and avoid subjectivity that can come at the expense of data integrity thereby skewing the results.

My position as a foreign-born doctoral student who has experienced the phenomenon under study was a great asset. Some of the advantages of an insider participant/researcher came from the fact that I was already an insider. This gave me the opportunity to combine my personal experiences and the passion for this study with that of my study participants to yield rich, deeper, and diverse data. It did not only grant me easy access to these participants, but it encouraged these participants to talk, especially concerning sensitive areas they may not have spoken about if the researcher was an outsider. According to Denscombe (2007), “the sex, the age, and the ethnic origins of the interviewer have a bearing on the amount of information people are willing to divulge and honesty about what they reveal” (p. 184). Being a foreign-born doctoral student and my knowledge of cultural awareness as well as pertinent skills in engaging participants was a great asset concerning how to create and facilitate a welcoming space for stories shared, thereby minimizing the possibility of victimizing participants as they shared their experiences.

Limitation of the Study

The study had several limitations because it was only a portion of the field of education and a small sample size. Participants’ voices did not represent the stories of all foreign-born doctoral recipients’ academic experiences.

Additionally, differences among ethnicities and countries of origin may have accounted for differences in personal and academic experiences.

A majority of participants in this study were full time (14/20). Experiences of full-time students could have varied from those who were part-time and working full-time positions. Also,

those who were full time and worked full time may have varied experiences during their program as well.

Five of 20 participants had graduate assistantship positions, the opportunity for professional growth (going to and presenting at conferences), and worked closely with faculty during their program. Therefore, their experiences may be different from those who did not have a graduate assistantship and/or other opportunities for professional growth.

The sample in this study included only those foreign-born, who had earned their doctoral degree in one department, thereby, excluding recipients of other departments, which is a limitation because it does not provide varied experiences of doctoral recipients in other academic disciplines.

Therefore, the findings of this study may not provide rich, contextualized understanding of some aspects of foreign-born doctoral recipients' experiences regarding the factors they attribute to their persistence toward the successful completion of their doctoral degree(s) in different types of institutions (e.g., research-intensive institution). Also, the conclusions reached may not be applicable to the experiences of those who did not participate in this study, especially non-persisters and currently enrolled doctoral students who could give another view to understanding doctoral experience and persistence. Finally, interviewing each participant once is a limitation because participants may not be able to summarize and recollect their doctoral experiences in a single interview.

Finally, while being a foreign-born doctoral student may have provided me with unique access to participants' experiences and feelings, there was a chance it might have unintentionally biased the interpretation of responses. To prevent this, I continually made myself aware of my own stance and bias through reflective memos and discussions with my mentor, which assisted

me with separating my feelings and effectively turning them into ways I could question participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

Summary

Chapter III describes the methodology used in this study, including the rationale for choosing a qualitative study and research design approach, institution selection, the role of researcher, an overview of how participants were recruited, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, trustworthiness, and limitations of the study. As previously described, this study outlined important variables found to influence foreign-born doctoral students to pursue and persist toward doctoral degree completion.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors identified as key to foreign-born doctoral recipients' persistence in their doctoral studies in the field of education with particular focus on the expectancies and values related to motivating factors of doctoral degree completion. Based on the data analysis of semi-structured interviews and a demographic questionnaire with 20 participants from PhD and EdD programs in the northwestern United States, this study illustrates how the socialization components may have contributed to their persistence toward degree completion. The subsidiary research questions that guided this study were as follows:

1. What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion?
2. What values do foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to pursuing and earning a degree in the field of education?
3. What costs do foreign-born doctoral recipients experience while pursuing a doctoral degree and what strategies do they use to mitigate the costs of persistence?
4. How do foreign-born doctoral recipients' interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?

In the following section of this chapter, I present the first three prevalent themes and related subthemes that emerged from the data analysis: (a) expectancies for success, (b) values of getting a doctoral degree, and (c) costs of getting a doctoral degree. In addition to the third theme, participants articulated coping strategies they used to mitigate those costs. Therefore, the coping strategies are discussed after the costs, which are followed by the last theme, (d)

satisfied/dissatisfied with doctoral socialization components. The first three themes and subthemes are represented in Table 9.

Table 9

Emergent Themes and Subthemes Using Expectancy-Value Theory

Themes	Subthemes
Expectancies for success	Self-confidence High expectations for success
Motivating values for pursuing and persisting toward degree completion	Earning a doctoral degree is important to a long-term career goal Interest in teaching and impacting others' lives Doctoral degree is a means to an end
Costs of getting a doctoral degree	Emotional cost Financial cost Intellectual cost

To understand the experiences of the participants in this study during the doctoral program, it is important to explore how these participants made sense of their lived experiences during the course of their study. Participants' responses were analyzed using expectancy-value theory and socialization theory components respectively while recognizing foreign-born doctoral recipients may have had different motivating factors for pursuing and persisting toward completing and earning their doctorate degrees.

Expectancies for Success

This theme focuses on the first subsidiary research question: What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion? In response to this question, two subthemes emerged during the analysis: self-confidence and great expectation for success.

Self-Confidence

In response to participants' ability to pursue and persist to completion, all participants were self-confident that they would successfully complete and earn their doctoral degree despite challenges they faced during their study. Their confidence toward completing their doctorate was

continually reassured by their academic competence. Research has shown individuals who exhibit competence are able to learn new skills and knowledge and have the confidence to participate in classroom interactions and projects (Vedder & Horenczyk, 2006). For example, John, a Hispanic doctorate recipient, did not want to be a “perennial ABD.” He was aware that 50% of students who began their doctoral degrees never finished their studies. For him, “the goal was pretty clear,” and he worked toward that goal. John further commented setting a clear goal and having a positive sense of self to achieve the goal was key to completing his doctoral study. Another participant, Bolack from Africa, spoke about his self-confidence stating people who know him would attest he believed so much in himself. Studies have found students who demonstrate independence have a personal drive to overcome obstacles (Palfreyman, 2003), and this was evident in Bolack’s assertion. According to him, when he encountered barriers, he got through it even if he failed to succeed the first time. He said, “I am just that type when I set my mind to do something, if I decide that I will do it, I will do it regardless of the obstacles in the way.” Although failure could lessen students’ motivation to succeed, Bolack was not afraid to fail, nor did failing deter him from trying (Hau & Ho, 2010). Bolack had a high level of self-confidence and perseverance in his ability to complete his terminal degree.

Furthermore, participants’ self-confidence grew as they progressed through the program by successfully completing doctoral-level courses. Peace affirmed:

You know as I progressed, I said I have done some courses. Since I was able to do those courses; I can also do these other courses that are still ahead. I think that really motivated me. So, there was no reason I shouldn’t complete especially, as I progressed in the program. I said, “Oh, I did it already this semester successfully, so I should continue.”

Walter, who came from South America, echoed the same sentiment stating he made his way through the first set of courses, which made him feel confident, “Once I’m finished with the first two that was it. I did not have to worry too much. Were there challenges? Yes. Progression is the ability to move forward.” Making adequate progress helped these participants boost their self-confidence into believing in their ability to succeed. Also, participants shared having high expectations for success as a result of their prior educational background and faculty guidance, which are discussed in the next section.

High Expectation for Success

Participants’ expectations for success were influenced by prior educational background in pursuing and persisting toward degree completion. Peace indicated earning a master’s degree in education administration prepared him for his doctoral studies; therefore, he expected to succeed in the program. John initially expected he would do well academically because he had “a very strong education background.” John’s performance in a previous education program, which was both rigorous and demanding, was also a source of assurance that he would be successful in the doctoral program.

Similarly, Sandy and Jenny, who completed both their undergraduate and graduate programs in the United States shared they felt “very comfortable with the system,” which gave them an advantage of understanding how the educational system works in the United States compared to international students such as Lauren who felt challenged when she first came to the United States for her master’s degree. However, by the time she started her doctoral program, she was “already used to the pace and volume” of the work associated with earning a doctoral degree. Molly, who came from South America and was working as a literacy coach in a school district, explained she was well prepared because some of the work she had to do in the doctoral program was already covered in her bachelor’s degree back in her country. Although Molly was

foreign-born, she did not face challenges like Lauren. She affirmed, “The experiences I had during my program, I had already gone through when I was doing bachelor’s degree in Guyana. So, I knew I was prepared for it. It really had me fitted well for what I was about to do.” These participants described their prior education background as important to the completion of their doctoral degrees.

Some other participants expected successful degree completion would lead them to obtain faculty positions in the United States. Kenny and Walter explained their expectation for earning the doctoral degree was a “ticket to securing a faculty position” and working with students at the college level. However, their career aspirations have not been realized; they have been working in different fields since graduation. Walter, for example, worked and retired as a grade school teacher and never had the opportunity to teach at the college level. Also, Farrah, who was working as a consultant in her country, expected earning a doctorate would open more doors and more opportunities once she had a PhD, especially from the United States. Larry was the only participant who was working as a professor in his country. He said, “My expectation was to pursue a degree, go back home, and teach in the university. And that’s what I am doing.”

For many other participants; including Wen, Bajajah, and Bolack; what earning a doctorate meant to them was partly shaped by prior education background and their professors’ guidance through the doctoral process. Unfortunately, they “received nothing but disappointment.” An example is Wen who was from Asia and was working as a consultant in a private company. Wen bitterly complained his advisor was hardly available to provide him with assistance or feedback on his dissertation. He said, “I basically worked independently without much guidance from my mentor. . . . He refused to commit to a timeline for my completion, which stretched my time in the program.” Apparently, these participants set goals to achieve with

expectations of completing their program within a certain period based on incomplete information about the doctoral program and attainment of a doctoral degree (Fryer & Elliot, 2007). This lack of understanding could result in dissatisfaction or sometimes dropout (Golde, 2005). Interestingly, despite the disappointment shared by these participants, they persisted to completion.

Motivating Values for Pursuing and Persisting Toward Degree Completion

This section focuses on the theme and subthemes that emerged about the values that motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue and earn their doctoral degree as well as answers the second subsidiary research question. These values are identified as attainment value (i.e., the importance of doing well on a given task), interest value (i.e., inherent enjoyment one gains from doing a task), and utility value (i.e., the usefulness of the task). I will discuss the evidence of these values and participants' decisions to pursue and earn doctorates with illustrative interview excerpts.

The data analysis revealed participants were motivated by a combination (more than one) of values to pursue and persist toward completing their degrees. This section is organized into subthemes: (a) earning a doctoral degree is important to a long-term career goal, (b) intrinsic interest in teaching and impacting lives, and (c) doctoral degree is a means to an end.

Earning a Doctorate is Important to Long-Term Career Goal

Eight participants explicitly identified their pursuit of a doctoral degree in the field of education as important to their long-term career goal. These participants acknowledged being in the position they were in would not have been possible without a doctoral degree. While admitting this zeal, John who was promoted to a vice-president position at UBA University, described how his title changed immediately when he received his doctorate. John knew completing his doctorate program was “key;” so he worked hard toward earning it. As a result,

he became one of those at his institution who made the policies that impact the lives of many. John stressed to have his “ideas enacted as opposed to others’ ideas,” he needed to complete his doctoral degree. He said, “Getting a doctorate would contribute to my long-term career goals.” That was basically the reason John pursued the degree in the first place. He added, “I do a couple of things that wouldn’t have happened . . . , but neither would be career advancement.” John’s success was an example of how attainment value was a deciding factor in doctoral degree completion.

Also, Bolack’s desire to be a leader someday showed attainment value was a factor in his pursuit of a doctorate. He revealed, in the absence of the doctorate, his dreams would never materialize. According to Bolack, while going through the program plan prior to enrolling in the doctorate program, he realized earning a doctoral degree would give him the opportunity to educate others about the importance of education. The experiences Bolack gained during the program gave him “broader knowledge and a better qualification” as an educated, experienced person who had the capability of making a change. Bolack passionately recounted:

It became very obvious to me that education is a very key way to go. And when I look at . . . given where I come from, I have read a lot of report out there that you can get people out of poverty if you give them education. So, these combined, I just had that desire to get into education.

For other participants, intellectual growth and transmitting that same knowledge to others was an important factor in pursuing the doctorate. As a professor in a university in his country, Larry asserted earning a doctorate is important because with the degree one has the ability to impact the knowledge to others “on what you yourself have gotten.” In the case of Molly, she wanted to share her “knowledge with anyone who has to impart learning.” Molly was motivated

to grow professionally by learning new things and transmitting that knowledge to others. Steve, who was from Asia, asserted that earning a doctorate is important because, with the degree, one has the ability to impart knowledge to others. Raja, who is currently a vice principal of a charter school with other participants including John, Bolack, and Larry, affirmed attainment value is a factor in her pursuit and persistence toward completing her doctorate. According to Raja:

The reason I pursued a doctoral degree was to move-up to a VP or principal position someday. And the current position I am in today would not have come to fruition without the terminal degree. Do you know why I said that? . . . Regardless of the fact that I had taught for 20 years prior to earning my doctorate, no one considered me for upper-level administrative position. So, I realized that going in for my doctorate might make a difference. And I was right. I was promoted to a VP the next week. Who knows what comes next?

Similarly, Kenny recounted how important it was for him to pursue and persist to doctoral degree completion. He wanted to enhance his education and skills. Kenny's main goal was to broaden his knowledge base; in that way, he would be "well equipped to impact others." In as much as Kenny wanted to make a difference in people's lives, if that knowledge was lacking in him, "everything would be effortless and fruitless." He added there was a saying in his culture, "a blind person cannot lead a fellow blind person." Therefore, accumulating knowledge by earning a doctoral degree comes first, and then other things can follow. These findings show earning a doctoral degree for the participants in this study was of the utmost importance because it was a source of laying the foundation for their future career goals.

Intrinsic Interest in Teaching and Impacting Others' Lives

Participants in this study shared their pursuit of a doctoral degree in the field of education was mostly influenced by their intrinsic interest in teaching and making an impact in people's

lives. Walter expressed his interest in teaching as being shaped after reading the book, “Gifted Hands,” given to him by his daughter, and his wife who also has a doctoral degree in education. Walter saw the experiences of students in public schools, which motivated him “to jump into education” and make a difference in students’ lives. Walter’s desire was so natural it gave him “a fulfilling experience,” especially seeing how appreciative his students were through their approach toward him each time they met at a gathering. Walter recounted getting an email from a student who said, “It is because of you that I am in college.” It was such a fulfilling experience for him. The recognition Walter gained from teaching helped him to achieve a sense of self-worth, which in turn, reinforced his passion for teaching at the college level (Covington, 1992). Walter ascertained, “My desire, my ultimate goal is to . . . work with college students—students at the college level.”

Similarly, Theckla, who was a principal at a private elementary school during her program, was “anxious to finish her doctorate;” stating she had a strong desire to impact students’ lives just like her professors impacted her life during her undergraduate degree program. She recounted:

My interest in teaching can be related as far back as when I was in grade school, but my main purpose for pursuing and ultimately completing a doctoral program was to teach students in the college level . . . because I wanted to make impact in their lives, just like my professors made impact in my life during my undergraduate studies. I just love making a difference. It is part of who I am.

What is unique about this participant was her passion for teaching. Prior to her doctorate degree, she had taught at different levels except college level.

For another participant, his interest in pursuing and earning a doctoral degree was because he “loved teaching and has a passion for teaching.” Larry, who is currently a professor in his country, indicated he wanted to be in the classroom teaching because it has been his desire “Way back as far as . . . It is something inherent in me.” Larry went further to confirm even though he did not make enough money as a professor, he was “certainly fulfilled.” Research has found interest in teaching is a key element that fuels individuals to desire to pursue an academic career. Also, people who are motivated by interest value in teaching felt enjoyment and satisfaction when interacting with students, which in turn, sustained their interest in teaching (Lindholm, 2004).

Jenny, Lauren, and Myriam were also motivated to pursue the doctoral degree because of their interest in impacting the lives of college students as student affairs professionals. While Jenny was in her graduate program, she worked with undergraduate students, which she “enjoyed the interaction with the students.” As a result, she decided to become a student affairs professional. Also, Lauren shared her interest in running operations at institutions in student affairs or administrative operations because she enjoyed it very much. According to Lauren, she thought the doctoral degree had given her an “advantage to pursue high-level positions in terms of education operations management.” In sum, interest value can be seen as an important outcome for participants to pursue and persist toward degree completion. Thus, they exhibited a well-developed interest in teaching and impacting others’ lives.

Doctoral Degree is a Means to an End

All participants in this study expressed great evidence of utility value. When participants were asked what earning a doctoral degree meant to them, all 20 participants echoed it meant “possibility, a means to an end, and money.” Additionally, participants added earning a doctoral degree in the United States would give them “more advantage in the global labor market” over

those who did not have a doctoral degree. With a doctoral degree, participants were sure doors would open for many opportunities in their careers, such as a presidentship or principalship. John, whose title changed when he earned his doctorate, acknowledged earning a doctoral degree meant something abstract previously. However, now it meant something more concrete—because he was able to give his kids what he never had. He put it simply that a doctorate has a monetary value, especially “if you are in the top of the top; it means possibility.” Wen indicated earning a doctoral degree made a difference in his position as a consultant with a private company asserting he would not have been in that position if not for his doctoral degree.

Although some of the participants had not actually explored all the options since earning their doctorates, they mentioned it meant a lot “even the non-significant value that one gets from just being called a ‘doctor’.” Wen did not care much about getting a job in his area of interest (professor). He was satisfied as a consultant “as far as people remember to add those three letters” after his name, he was fulfilled.

Furthermore, Walter, Lauren, Farrah, and Jenny shared the same sentiment of the high utility value of earning a doctoral degree in the United States, which included the perceived high quality of a U.S. doctoral education and positive career aspect in the United States or back in their countries. According to these participants, “it carries a lot of weight.” Jenny recounted, “It says a lot, not only being able to speak English fluently but having a terminal degree in higher education.” She went further to comment how earning a doctorate from the United States was a guarantee to secure a job in her country. “I think it will make it having any job, a distinguished job—something that is very important to me.” Farrah also noted, “it is known around the world that getting a degree from the U.S. is more credible than a lot of countries.” Lauren, who during her program had an F1 visa, had a slight variation from Walter, Farrah, and Jenny regarding her

utility value. Lauren’s main purpose for pursuing her doctorate was to maintain her legal status in the United States because her immigration status was at stake. Therefore, she made a conscious decision to enroll in the doctoral program because she believed it to be the “safest at that time.”

Aside from the high utility value of earning a U.S. doctoral degree, some other participants shared that earning a doctorate meant financial security—a way to better their lives and that of their family. Jenny added:

Obviously, there is a monetary aspect of it; like you have a job that you can get because you have a PhD; it is a lot better paying job than a job without it especially if you are in the higher education—I feel like it is getting really competitive.

Just like Jenny, Farrah added that earning her doctorate would provide her the “opportunity of getting a job and not just any job; like a well-paid job. And having that is a sort of security—financial security. Something that can make you live more comfortably.”

Several participants related earning a doctoral degree to a utilitarian perspective among other things such as career advancement, career mobility, or financial security. Although no participant was motivated by only one value, participants’ decisions to pursue and persist toward completion were influenced by a combination of values.

Costs of Getting a Doctoral Degree

Earning a Doctorate Comes with Costs

Bearing the third research sub-question that involved costs in mind, this theme details the costs foreign-born doctoral recipients experienced while pursuing their doctorate. These costs were identified as struggles, sacrifices, losses, challenges, or penalties incurred in gaining something; the amount of money spent or something equivalent paid or charged for earning their doctoral degree. Shown in Table 10, these costs were described as emotional, financial, and

intellectual, and participants faced several components of each cost over the course of their doctoral studies.

Table 10

Cost Categories

Costs	Description	Components
Emotional	Feelings of anxiety, fear, loneliness, and low self-esteem related to program requirements and missing family and friend	Anxiety from coursework Being far away from families and friends Negative comments from others Other commitments
Financial	Struggles and sacrifices related to paying tuition, accepting big financial offers, and the inability to secure graduate assistantships and scholarships	Cost of paying tuition Making little money from work Inability to secure graduate assistantships/scholarships Loss of income
Intellectual	Struggles and challenges related to the system of education and analytical skills	Language proficiency Difficulty doing oral presentations Difficulty writing papers Classroom participation Multiple-choice format Volume of writing assignments

Emotional Cost

The emotional cost experienced by participants while in their doctoral program affected them to a greater or lesser extent. This cost includes the anxiety as a result of the enormity of work involved, fear of exams such as qualifying and comprehensive exams, feelings of low self-esteem as a result of negative feedback from professors, and being overwhelmed due to other external activities such as personal, church, and community activities. Some participants were concerned about not completing the doctoral program and how dropping out of the program would negatively affect their sense of confidence. While this study population has not been extensively studied in the literature, shame of failure is common among doctoral students (Golde, 2005; Lovitts, 2008). Most participants entered the program with lack of understanding of what was expected of them to meet the program requirements.

For example, Peace, who underestimated the workload associated with a doctoral program, indicated his main fear was the enormity of work involved. Prior to starting the

doctoral program, Peace met with his advisor who walked him through the overall process of the doctoral program. After gaining an understanding of how much work was required for the doctoral program including the number of required credits, he felt overwhelmed and asked himself, “Oh my God, when am I going to finish this?” He was worried it was going to take a lot more work and time to complete the program. Also, Molly commented she was overwhelmed with the workload, “At some point, when you study, it takes so much out of you that there was little time left for other things.” Several participants described the process of matriculation as a difficult rite of passage such as preparation for examinations. Walter, another participant, specifically commented he preferred to write papers and defend them as opposed to taking exams. He noted his fear when he first started the program was about taking exams and knew that at some point during the program, he had to take those exams. Walter said, “One of my fears had to do with the . . . you know after your first six courses you had to do qualifying exam, and based on talking to some people, it was a little tough.” One of Walter’s fears was getting ready at some point to prepare for the qualifying exam.

Some other participants also noted their involvement in too many community and job-related activities while in the program “drained” them. Theckla, who was a school administrator, plainly remarked that as an administrator in a school district, at some point she felt “emotionally drained” due to many responsibilities at her job and her community. Bajajah echoed Theckla’s account of “doing different things at the same time.” As a result; it became very difficult to manage his activities and to be fully engaged in his doctoral program. Another participant, Bolack, stated he was overwhelmed as a result of being ill-prepared at the beginning of his program coupled with too many other church and community activities, which posed a lot of emotional challenge for him, and he did not know whether to continue the program. Also,

Lauren, who had some interruptions during her program due to some personal issues, had a “pause” when she was in the dissertation phase. Although she completed her coursework on time, it took her an extra two years to complete and defend her dissertation.

A few other participants attributed their emotional cost to the treatment or responses received from their professors. Jenny, who came from southeastern Europe, described her encounter with one of the professors who was not gentle with his critique of her paper. According to Jenny, the professor told her that her writing “was not sophisticated,” which made her “not to feel good” about herself. She thought she did everything she was supposed to do, but then received her paper with “really harsh criticism.” However, Jenny later realized the professor’s feedback was meant to improve her work. Also, Jenny pointed to another emotional cost of being pressured to prove her competence and not to disappoint her family and her advisor who had invested in her success. Jenny said:

I could not afford to disappoint my mentor or my mother; because my mentor had invested a lot of time and confidence in me; neither could I disappoint my mother who was so proud that I was part of the doctoral program.

Such feeling from Jenny was particularly evident among foreign-born students who usually carry with them a heavy burden of bringing pride to their families at the expense of their sacrifices (Le & Gardner, 2010; Yan & Berliner, 2013).

Although the fear of failure gave participants strength to beat the odds of quitting, persistence under such conditions seemed devastating to some. An example was Sandy who thought people might see her as a failure; therefore, she had to continue to complete her program. She said:

When I indicated to . . . that I had enrolled in the doctoral program, some of them insinuated that I was not going to complete the program [due to reasons best known to them] . . . I took that comment as a big challenge.

Similarly, Molly, who some of her peers thought was “out of place,” had to “push her way up in order to shine;” not because she did not have the ability to be successful but because she felt compelled to prove to others who thought she “did not belong or is out of place” that she could earn a doctorate. It is evident the emotional cost many participants experienced led to the feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, and/or shame. These feelings led to low self-esteem, which may negatively impact or slow doctoral progress (Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2000, 2005; González, 2006; Lovitts, 2008).

Financial Cost

All participants agreed the doctoral program was very expensive, and they barely paid their tuition each semester because they had to pay their tuition fees and support their families as well. For example, Kenny, whose family was back in his country, had to send money to them for their upkeep. Prior to enrolling in the doctoral program, “life went smoothly without many struggles.” Most often, Kenny went on vacations and cruises with his friends. However, he started to experience some financial difficulty when he enrolled in the doctoral program as a result of his lifestyle. As Kenny struggled to pay his tuition and still sent money to his family, he realized he could not meet every demand and thought about quitting the program. Kenny said:

You know how it is for us foreigners whose families are back home. I had to struggle to pay my tuition, and at the same time, take care of my children and wife in Africa.

Sometimes, it was hard for them to understand that we have financial struggles here in the U.S.

Several other participants had a sense of frustration that the tuition rate was too high and that they almost dropped out of the program due, in large part, to the cost. Bolack started his program several years ago, but due to some personal issues, had to leave the program temporarily. When he returned to the program, he could not afford to pay tuition. Although he applied for a graduate assistantship position, he was unable to secure one. According to Bolack, he almost quit the program, but being a persistent individual who did not give up easily, he found “another way out” to pay his tuition to continue in the program. Bolack further indicated he had no choice but to take out a loan even though he had to pay the loan after his graduation. He said, “At least, I was able to focus and complete my doctorate.”

Like John, when several others were asked about the cost of doctoral education while in the program, participants often referred to financing their doctoral education as the most challenging experience. According to John, “It was the toughest thing going through the doctoral program,” and he did not want to take out loans. As a union member in the institution where he worked, he could not get the money available because they were working without a state contract. As a result, the provision went away. John had to pay for everything out of pocket even though he was making very little money. He plainly remarked, “Money, money . . . was the toughest thing for me. And when you make little money, you have to pay those massive amounts. It’s tough.” John further commented:

I can’t emphasize it enough. You know, I mean American Humanitarian University [AHU] is an expensive program. I was making little money. I mean, just . . . for the sakes of . . . just so you can have an idea. I was making about . . . a year. That is before taxes and any other fees. So, you can imagine, 60% of it is what you take home, and from there

you have to pay AHU. I had to pay rent, food, gas, you know things like that. So, I was basically living under water.

In addition to tuition costs, a few participants cited financial cost as the loss of income while in pursuit of their doctorate. An example was Sandy, who discussed despite that she did not make enough money, she still had to pay her tuition and in the process of paying tuition, “I spent more than half of my income and did not have enough to foot other bills . . . but now look at me. I have my doctorate” Despite financial costs being a concern to all participants, they did not regret persisting to completion because of the value they placed on earning a doctorate.

Intellectual Cost

Transitioning and integrating into a different or new educational system can often be overwhelming posing many challenges. Such challenges may be embedded in differences from participants’ previous learning experiences, their approach to learning, and the willingness or unwillingness of the host institution to help integrate them into the new educational system (Lee & Rice, 2007). Despite the new opportunities that participants believed the American education system presented, learning something new may at times present additional challenges for foreign-born participants. In this study, intellectual costs are the struggles and challenges the participants experienced as a result of differences in the systems of education such as, oral presentation/public speaking, and classroom participation through discussions, which many of the participants expressed their discomfort with using multiple-choice format, challenges in analyzing data, the volume of writing assignments, and working alone during the dissertation phase.

Language proficiency issues were the most salient challenge identified by the participants. These participants found public speaking both overwhelming and challenging. This challenge was most evident for participants who came from cultures where they were expected to

respect authority and not to ask questions or challenge the professor but to sit in class and listen to them teach. Chin, who was in the program with a F1 visa (temporary student visa) commented that the level of classroom interaction expected of doctoral students was a great challenge for her. She said, “We were not encouraged to participate in class discussions back in my country as it is encouraged here. We go to class, listen to the professor deliver his/her lecture. And that was it. They were regarded as the experts.” Apparently, classroom participation was not encouraged in some participants’ country of origin, which posed a tremendous burden to them during their program.

Vera, who came from Africa, felt embarrassed because she did not quite understand the American accent at the beginning of her doctoral studies. She said, “when it came to their accent, it was something totally different; I did not understand one thing they said at the beginning neither did they understand mine. It was really frustrating.” Theckla, who although completed both her undergraduate and graduate programs in the United States, affirmed that she never got used to public speaking. She added that she was not used to oral presentations in her country and never liked presenting before people, especially when she was compelled to do so. Theckla ascertained:

Besides not being used to oral presentation at my country, doing all those oral presentations was not my thing. I was always a nervous wreck. It’s not that I could not retain materials or didn’t know what was expected of me, but for some reason(s) I forget things especially when I am in front of the classroom, and everyone is staring at me. . . . It was a very big challenge for me.

Dealing with language barriers at the beginning was a struggle for the participants, especially those who were in the program with F1 visas (temporary visas) and had not been in the U.S. for a long time.

When many participants entered the dissertation phase, they experienced intellectual costs associated with a lack of ability to analyze data. Walter was one example of this. Walter stated after collecting data for his dissertation, he thought “how on earth am I going to analyze these data?” Walter was overwhelmed because he realized his analytic skills were insufficient. As for other participants, it was lack of other competent skills such as the volume of reading and papers to write. Several of the participants shared they were not used to doing such an enormous amount of reading. In some doctoral coursework, they were able to finish their readings, and in others, they were unable to complete them. According to Peace, “The voluminous readings were the major costs experienced. I was never used to doing so much reading in my life.” This became a significant burden for Peace, who was unable to complete his readings before classes because that was something new to him—a skill he never learned prior to starting his doctoral program.

Similarly, Lauren felt the pressure with the volume of work when she first started the program—the reading, writing, and research, which were not the skills she used at work in terms of using the English language. This shift in the system was both exciting and challenging for Lauren. It motivated her; but she needed additional time doing her assignments, which was an intellectual cost for her. Lauren confirmed, “There was definitely that adjustment period in times of coping with the academic assignments at the level.” Furthermore, while on an F1 visa (temporary visa) during her program, Farrah described the U.S. system of education, especially the dissertation phase, as “you are all by yourself; you have to rely on yourself.” She added, “the

faculty is just there to be a guide on the side.” According to Farrah, she was not used to the system.

This section details a description of varied intellectual costs experienced by participants in this study. Evidently, participating in class discussions was a great intellectual cost for some participants due to the language barrier or language proficiency and, as a result, it reduced classroom interaction and participation, which invariably affected their self-esteem. Foreign-born students’ interaction and participation in the classroom have been widely documented by previous studies, particularly, those students who are from collectivist culture (Andrade, 2006; Chamberlain, 2005; Hofstede, 1980; Wu & Rubin, 2000; Yang, Noels, & Saumure, 2006; Zhang, 2010). While these differences in educational systems and structures posed great challenges to participants, they persisted to degree completion by earning their doctorates.

In sum, all of the costs were important to the participants in this study, even though they weighed more on certain costs than others. Emotional and intellectual costs were the most cited costs by participants in this study. The majority of the participants indicated the emotional and intellectual costs endured during their program were a result of studying in a different educational environment. With regard to financial costs experienced, it is a known phenomenon among every doctoral student. However, there were very few participants who did not experience financial costs or struggles with paying tuition because they had graduate assistantships while few others had scholarships from the governments of their countries.

Cost Mitigation Strategies

This section details the strategies used by participants to mitigate the costs they experienced in the pursuit of their doctoral degrees. Some of these mitigation strategies parallel their cost categories and are represented in Table 11.

Table 11

Costs and Mitigation Strategies

Cost Categories	Mitigation Subthemes	Mitigation Strategies
Emotional cost	Having an attitude of persistence	Other doctoral students' experience and success in the doctoral program Talking to other doctoral students who made the doctoral program milestones (e.g., qualifying exams) Getting materials from doctoral students who had already taken the exams and preparing for the exams Making time to do doctoral work Focusing on the end result Prioritizing activities Making conscientious decisions
Financial cost	Finding a way out	Accepting additional responsibilities at work Seeking tuition remission Securing a second job Applying for graduate assistantship, scholarships, tuition reduction Cutting back on expenses Taking few courses per semester
Intellectual cost	Figuring it out and seeking help from others	Seeking help from professors and peers Listening to news and television programs Interacting with U.S.-born peers Practicing public speaking

Strategies to Mitigate Emotional Cost

Having an attitude of persistence. While many of the participants indicated they had feelings of anxiety related to workload, fear of exams, the loneliness of being away from family and friends during their doctoral study, and low self-esteem, they found means to overcome their emotions, which helped them to remain persistent and motivated. This is evident in many participants including Peace, who stated the major thing that helped him to overcome his anxiety because of a large amount of work was what other people did before him—those who had already earned their doctorates. He added those doctorate holders experienced the same challenges as he was experiencing but still surmounted all obstacles and graduated. Peace said, “I can also do it.” Such an attitude helped him to overcome all the challenges he encountered. Even though those challenges were obvious, he was still motivated by others’ success. Walter was able to alleviate his fears of taking the doctoral exams by talking to students who had completed their own doctoral exams, and he was able to get encouragement in terms of getting materials to

prepare for those exams. According to Walter, “after the qualifying exam, it was like I would say that the doctoral program was a piece of cake.”

Several participants who felt overwhelmed with workload strategically set aside certain days to complete their school work. Molly revealed on Saturdays throughout her program, her family knew where she was. “I checked in at the library from nine am to seven pm.” Molly’s commitment to doing her academic work on the weekends became habitual. She went to the library and completed her assignments. Similarly, Lauren routinized her work schedule to handle the enormity of work. After taking a break from her dissertation for a year or two, Lauren decided to set goals for herself to complete her doctoral program. She regarded her dissertation phase “as a job” that she got for a year. According to Lauren, every morning she got up and dressed as if going to work and sat there from nine am to four pm for three days per week and did whatever she had planned for that day. She gradually filled in those “pieces of the big puzzle,” and that was how she completed the program after she disengaged with her doctoral program for two years due to some personal issues. These participants made up their mind that it was only a part of their life, “five-year span at most.” It took that kind of commitment from them to mitigate their emotional cost. Other participants who endured harsh criticisms from professors about their writing focused on the end product. This is true of Jenny, who had to “keep her eyes on the price” and kept reminding herself to “look at the big picture and the end product.” She understood it was normal and she would “still finish and will produce work” of which she was proud. She said, “You really have to have certain personality to do that; you have to take criticism very well and persist.” Jenny understood her professors did not mean to hurt her but to help her improve the quality of her work.

Other participants indicated prioritizing their activities to limit the stress from doing many things at the same time. Theckla noted, “I had to prioritize my activities. . . . That was the only way I could attend to each one of them.” Bajju limited his involvement in other external activities through scheduling, “from this time to this time, this is what I should be doing. . . .” In another case, a participant used a “self-advice” technique” whereby, his philosophy was that he “did not believe in failure and will not be associated with failure.” According to Bolack, each time he got overwhelmed and frustrated with his coursework to the point of quitting, his philosophy would serve as a continual reminder not to give up, which helped him to persist to the end. Additionally, Sandy shared that her attitude of persistent each time she felt overwhelmed was her constant recollection of what her colleagues told her at the beginning of her program. She recounted:

Each time I felt frustrated to the point of taking a break or calling it a quit, I would remember what my . . . said, and I will stay focused in order to take it to the end. I did not want to be labeled “a failure.” I saw it as a challenge, and I refused to be a public spectacle . . . to be made fun of . . . No.

Participants were convinced the emotional cost experienced while in the doctoral program was part of the normative doctoral journey that would only last for the duration of their program. Some indicated challenges and struggles were expected, and the absence of these challenges and struggles demeaned the vigorous process of doctoral education, which made it easy for anyone to earn a doctorate. Despite the costs experienced, participants had their focus on the end result, which was doctoral completion.

Strategies to Mitigate Financial Cost

Finding a way out. With financial costs come a doctoral degree, and at the same time, incurring some financial losses while in pursuit of the degree they seek. The same was true for all participants in this study, especially those who indicated they did not make enough money and struggled with providing financial support for their families as well. These participants sought financial resources. They secured second jobs, received tuition remission, took on additional responsibilities with their employers, or applied for graduate assistantships through their program department. John, who was an administrator at his institution, took on additional responsibilities by teaching one or two courses depending on how many courses he took at AHU. John pointed out:

So, the way I overcame the financial cost was that I would take the courses (at AHU) as far as I am teaching classes (at his institution). So, it was almost like having a part-time job aside from my full-time job. So, if I taught a class, I took a course; and if I took two courses, I taught two classes.

Steve echoed, “I had to secure a second job to allow me to pay my tuition and, at the same time, provide financial support for my family.”

Also, several participants sought graduate assistantship positions for teaching or research, which helped them tremendously to focus and complete their program. Lauren shared, “I was able to complete my doctorate through the generous offer of the program department.” She added, “I do not know what I would have done without that offer. I remain grateful.” On the contrary, there were several others who were unsuccessful in securing graduate assistantship positions, and they applied for loans to complete their program. However, they had to pay back the loan at the completion of their program. For some other participants, they reduced their living

expenses to pay their tuition. According to them, the things they were used to afford prior to pursuing their doctorate, such as family vacations, were halted. Kenny commented:

I used to go on cruises with my friends to the Caribbean We spent money and had fun, but I had to trash that lifestyle. I recall one of these summer vacations when some of my friends reminded me that it was time to start booking and making reservations. I told them that I would rather use that money towards my tuitions.

Similarly, other participants who had loss of income during their doctoral program found ways to balance their expenses and still pay tuition. An example was Sandy who moved to a more affordable apartment to mitigate her loss of income. Participants sought several ways to pay their education to complete their programs. For several participants who were unable to find some form of funding to pay for their program, they had to pay tuition out of pocket and time-to-degree became increasingly longer because they had to reduce the number of courses they would take per semester to minimize the impact of spending too much money per semester on their doctoral education.

Strategies to Mitigate Intellectual Cost

Figuring it out and seeking help from others. While some participants felt “alone or isolated” during their dissertation phase, they were able to determine how to succeed. One main concern was how to navigate through the dissertation phase, which they never experienced until they started the process. For example, going through this process was a significant issue for Farrah until she was able to “figure it out” herself. She sought help from her professors who were readily available to assist in coping with her challenges. Likewise, Vera, who had issues with understanding the American accent; and being understood, determined listening to the news, watching television programs, and interacting with domestic peers were ways to help her mitigate her intellectual cost. She said, “Listening to the news and interacting with my peers

from the U.S. really helped me master the American accent . . . at least to some extent, which helped me during classes.”

While other participants struggled with analyzing data, some determined reaching out to their peers who were more knowledgeable about statistics and analyzing data was key to their success. For example, Walter approached another student who “worked the magic.” He was not shy to approach a fellow student to assist him in analyzing his data. Walter said, “This student was a wiz in terms of SPSS, and he worked all the magic in that program, put my data in it, and then explained it all.”

Also, some participants found it difficult to complete the assignments; at some point, they procrastinated. At some point, Peace decided he could not continue to procrastinate if he wanted to complete his program. He determined a strategy that would help him cope with the readings and writing. He noted, “I had to start on time and start writing. I just started doing something.” By the time Peace knew it; he started turning in his papers on time and completed his reading assignments before class. As for Lauren, she did not give up; rather, she made some adjustments and coped with the new system. Theckla asserted she limited her nervousness during oral presentations by practicing before her friends and not looking at “anyone’s face” during her presentations.

In sum, participants ascertained both their professors and peers were great resources to mitigating their intellectual costs.

Socialization

Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with Socialization Elements

This theme focused on the fourth and last subsidiary research question: How do foreign-born doctoral recipients’ interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?

In general, socialization experiences in the doctoral program varied among participants from different regions, those who had graduate assistantship positions, and those who did not. Nonetheless, the majority of the participants were satisfied with the program structure. Regarding their experiences with faculty members in the program, more than half of the participants shared having a positive experience with faculty in general; whereas less than half of the participants had a negative experience with faculty. When participants were asked about their relationship with their academic advisors, few participants felt connected with their academic advisors while the majority of the participants did not feel connected with them, in part due to different research interests. As a result, these participants chose different faculty as their dissertation chairs because their research interests were more aligned with selected faculty members ones than those of their assigned academic advisors. Also, a few other participants indicated they retained their advisors as their mentors because of their positive relationship with them. Although more than half of the participants had an overall positive relationship with faculty members, only one-quarter indicated those relationships contributed to their persistence. Inasmuch as inadequate socialization through interaction with faculty/advisors has been found to negatively affect doctoral students' sense of self-efficacy and their intent to persist (Golde, 2000, 2005; Lovitts, 2008), students with a positive view of the doctoral process and strong sense of ability most often sustain motivation, which is the case for all participants in this study. Regarding interactions with peers in the program, almost all participants acknowledged positive interaction with peers in the program contributed to their persistence.

In the following section, I present three themes related to doctoral socialization: (a) integrated/unintegrated into program structure, (b) positive/negative relationships with faculty, and (c) peers as an instrument of persistence/negative experience with domestic peers.

Interaction with institutional structure: Integrated/lack of integration into institutional/program structure. The 13 participants, who expressed satisfaction with the program structure, attributed their satisfaction to (a) the program plan, which includes office hours, faculty accessibility, non-cohort-based program, and size of program; (b) availability of courses; (c) diversity of student body and viewpoints; (d) financial aid/graduate assistantship; and (e) opportunity for professional growth.

Program plan. Participants in this study shared how their advisors guided them through the planning of their program prior to taking classes. These advisors walked them through the courses they were required to take and when to take them. This was evident in Peace's assertion, "I already knew from the beginning, which courses to take." Peace's advisor ensured he was on track with the program requirements. Aside from program plan, faculty members had office hours that gave students the opportunity to discuss their academic progress and other issues that arose. Molly liked the idea the professors' doors were open; and shared she always went to their offices and sought help whenever she needed it. She said, "I never met a professor at [sic] my department who said 'no more way. I cannot help you.'" Similarly, Bajajah stated having office hours helped him seek help from his advisor. He said:

You know they have office hours, and they encouraged students to come. I utilized those office hours to talk to them about any problem I had or difficulty or challenges. The accessibility was there either by email or just going up to them talking and chatting about some ideas.

Lauren put it succinctly:

The professors were so open, so accessible. . . . They will just always say ‘okay that’s good; you are on the right track. Why don’t you look at this; why don’t you look at that?’

There was always that constructive feedback available.

Also, participants commended the fact that professors gave them deadlines for paper assignments and the opportunity to submit first drafts to receive feedback allowed them to improve their writing. John shared that the program was good overall because it had its strong suits; as a result, he was satisfied. Walter recounted, “I think I was reasonably satisfied with the program because of all the professors that I dealt with.”

John, Bajajah, Raja, Myriam, and Sandy spoke about the fact that the program was not “cohort-based.” These participants stated, “there was something to be said about going through the traditional doctoral program.” According to John, “if you want to graduate, you graduate. And if you don’t you don’t; that’s on you.” This indicates the non-cohort-based was a system to help doctoral students to study and complete their program at their own pace, so they did not necessarily need to wait for other students in the program. For four other participants, the size of the program was a factor in terms of building relationships with faculty. Lauren said there was a time she thought she was the only student in the program, “it was that kind of community.” She further explained there was “that kind of one-on-one interaction” not just with her advisor but with all other professors. These participants reiterated they never felt they were on “an island” where they would get lost because of the size of the program or where the advisors could hardly remember their names.

Availability of courses. Availability of courses was also echoed by the majority of the participants who shared there were “myriads of classes available, which were very well taught.” Jenny responded she was able to take courses she was directly interested in, as she aspired to be

a student affairs professional. She added those courses were “directly aligned” with her research interest. Jenny immensely enjoyed the research methods courses such as qualitative research design even though her dissertation was quantitative. In addition to the availability of courses, participants pointed to the quality of instruction. For instance, John acknowledged:

I really don't remember one class when I sat there (breathed), and I said, 'this is a waste of my time.' The faculty overall were pretty outstanding. . . . And there is something to be said about that . . . I don't think there was one faculty member in one class I have taken where I haven't gotten something out of it. . . . Anything that has to do with lack of satisfaction is not because of the program itself.

Bolack echoed the same sentiment about the program in general. He shared there were some areas that were total satisfaction because of the wide array of courses. Participants gained knowledge from every possible area, which included institutional research, organization, finance, etc. Bolack further affirmed, “Diverse issues discussed; I mean you name it in the program; the courses available is something that one cannot get away from. It prepares you to be well rounded.”

Diversity in student body and viewpoint. All 20 participants commented on the diversity of the doctoral program at AHU in terms of student body and viewpoints. Participants shared the one thing they loved about doing their degree was the diversity of the student body, which broadened their acceptance of different nationalities and religions. Farrah, who is Arabian, was explicit with her views regarding the student body. She reiterated she never thought she would have friends from different religions and from different countries around the world. According to Farrah, that relationship she had with other students gave her “the value of power and acceptance,” which she really appreciated. Because she had an F1 visa (temporary visa) during

her program and had returned to her country, she commented on the program because of the great impact it made on her while she wished to have the same for her children:

I wish to have that here in my country, and it was number one priority for me to put my kids in school where they experience diversity and have friends from different backgrounds and different cultures because having this cultural diversity was the best and I enjoyed it.

Farrah went further to affirm this diversity was not just within the student body but was extended to the faculty, and that she was very inspired by them. Farrah highlighted:

Seeing Dr. . . ., how she started and all the way became a professor and Dr. . . . came all the way from . . . and she was not a native English speaker and now look at her, and look at Dr. . . . they are in the university and the department itself; knowing the background of these professors and how it is possible to be there one day; that was actually inspiring.

Bolack and Myriam concurred with Farrah adding the one thing they enjoyed most about the program was “that diversity of opinion, the diversity of people.” This diversity in opinion and diverse intake of students in the program was something most participants liked because that gave them the opportunity to learn from different contexts—the opportunity to learn from a very diverse group of foreign students and to “voice their ideas in class without fear.” As such, Jenny echoed she was fascinated by the number of intellectually stimulating peers in her program. Participants agreed the diverse group of doctoral students brought another set of knowledge and experience to class discussions, which enriched their learning experience.

Financial aid/graduate assistantship. Six participants who received some form of financial aid (graduate assistantship and tuition discount) indicated they benefited extensively from their institution during their doctoral studies. These participants shared how they were

assisted in securing graduate assistantships and how these aids contributed to a “stress-free program” and their ultimate persistence toward degree completion. Larry spoke of a faculty who helped him to secure a graduate assistantship position, “he was like a father to me.” The graduate assistantship positions served as a source of monthly income and tuition waiver to these participants. The participants in this study affirmed persistence toward completion would never have been possible without the generous offer from their institution/program department; it helped them to concentrate on their studies. Lauren stated, “The generous offer by my institution helped me to make through the program without worrying about paying tuitions and fees.” These offers helped them to avoid the burden of having an outside job. Jenny and Chin added the graduate assistantship actually contributed to the success of their doctoral persistence with a reasonable time-to-degree.

Students such as Theckla and Peace, who did not receive graduate assistantship positions but received some form of a tuition discount, noted without the discount given to them by the institution they would have withdrawn from the program. Theckla affirmed, “I received 50% discount, which was a tremendous help; but believe me it was not easy paying the balance. I wonder what would have happened if I did not receive the discount.”

Opportunity for professional growth. Several participants discussed how they had the opportunity for hands-on experience and professional growth during their program. Specifically, four participants indicated they felt integrated into the program with the help of graduate assistantship positions and having worked under a professor or mentor in their department. Additionally, despite not holding graduate assistantships, having the opportunity to work closely with their advisors/mentors; played a role in their doctoral students’ integration into the program.

Also, the mentoring support these participants received from their supervisors/mentors was instrumental to their academic success, as is evident in their responses below.

Jenny highlighted she had opportunities for professional growth by attending professional conferences. Also, she was involved in student life activities, which gave her a “hands-on experience” in the student affairs office. Other participants shared they had the opportunity to present at conferences and publish papers alongside their mentors. An example was Farrah; even though she was not a graduate assistant but worked closely with her mentor commented, “It was an enjoyable and enriching experience.” Similarly, Lauren was sure those opportunities would not have been possible if she was not in the program and had access to people like her mentor who actually proposed the opportunity and put in the application for her and four of her peers. Larry, who was the only male who had a graduate assistantship position among the participants in this study strongly affirmed, “Whatever I am doing now in my career, I learned from the mentor whom I worked under as a research fellow.” Larry added, “My mentor was everything to me.” The opportunity provided to these participants through hands-on experience during the program did not only make them feel integrated, but it also prepared them for their future careers.

Table 12

Socialization Components, Themes, and Subthemes that Contributed to Persistence

Socialization Elements	Themes	subthemes
Interaction with institutional/ program structure	Integrated into institutional/program structure	Program plan Availability of courses Diversity of student body and viewpoints Financial aid/GA Opportunity for professional growth
Interaction with faculty	Positive relationship with members of the faculty	Positive relationship with faculty Positive relationship with advisor Positive relationship with mentor
Interaction among peers in the same program	Peers as instrument of persistence	Positive Interaction with peers Peers vs. professors Peer-established support group Peer motivation

Lack of integration into institutional/program structure. Several other participants in this study had varied perspectives regarding their socialization experience. They shared they did not feel integrated into the program structure. This lack of integration is as a result of (a) inadequate advisement and lack of depth of course content, (b) lack of racial/ethnic diversity of faculty, (c) lack of professional growth opportunities, (d) inequity in graduate assistantship position(s), and (e) faculty workload, which led to their dissatisfaction.

Inadequate advisement and lack of depth of course content. Unlike participants who shared they met with their advisors prior to commencing their coursework to review the program plan, a few participants shared they did not have the same type of opportunity with their advisors. Steve recalled that during his first meeting with his advisor, he was given the catalog to “go over it to see the courses” he would like to register “and then register for them.” Steve added his advisor also informed him not to register for any other courses until he had finished with the six courses required before taking the qualifying exam. According to Steve, “that was it.” Unfortunately for Steve, he registered for the courses that did not count toward the degree requirement, which led him to feel frustrated. Steve insisted even though he knew he was not

supposed to be “hand-held” as a doctoral student, he “wasn’t used to the system; and had just started the program.” Steve thought there was no adequate advisement. As a result, he requested for another advisor who walked him through the entire process “just like starting life all over again.”

A few other participants shared they felt demoralized and discriminated against due to some inconsistencies observed in their program department. They recalled they were not allowed to move forward just like their “domestic peers.” Bajajah, who came from Asia and was a high school teacher at the time he was in the program, shared his disappointment regarding the inconsistency in the doctoral program process. Bajajah highlighted that during his program he was informed doctoral students would have to go through certain stages or processes before engaging in their dissertation project. When Bajajah completed his comprehensive exams, he approached his mentor “so as to speed things up.” Bajajah was informed he needed to complete his dissertation seminars before writing his proposal. However, to his “greatest surprise,” two other classmates defended their dissertation proposal while they were still in dissertation seminar one, and invariably, skipped dissertation seminar two. Bajajah “felt betrayed and discriminated against.” He said, “If the program requirement is to complete both dissertation seminars before defending a proposal, it has to be emphasized and the same across the board regardless of whom you are.” Bajajah indicated after that incident, he “lost every enthusiasm.” Bajajah continued:

You know what? I have my degree, and I do not hold any grudge against anybody. At the same time, this is something AHU needs to correct; otherwise, respect for faculty and the quality of the program will be on the line.

Five participants relayed even though the program had its strong suits, other areas needed some improvement such as lecture style on the part of some professors. Several participants

including Molly, Myriam, Vera, Jessica, and Sandy shared that although they enjoyed their time in the program, they think “some of the courses could need some more in-depth information to send us out there.” These participants added there were a couple of courses that “were too surface because they were not actually taught.” Molly shared:

You need to get more information; like I remember talking about projections; so, districts will project how many students were coming into the district, so they know how many schools they need; how many classes they need; so, things like those that we needed a broader background. In my class, we had principals who were aware of things like those because they were principals but then it wasn't . . . You had to learn from them instead of it being actually taught as a course. I don't know if the purpose was to make you learn from each other.

Participants acknowledged the benefits of open-discussions in the class; however, they thought core courses were very crucial for professors to “actually lecture” them rather than have a few students join in a discussion while others sat quietly and listened because they lacked knowledge of the topic.

Lack of racial/ethnic diversity of faculty: Varied socialization experiences of participants from different regions. Although the majority of participants appreciated the diversity of the student body, five participants from different regions specifically pointed out a lack of racial/ethnic diversity among faculty in the program attributed to their varied socialization experiences. These participants mentioned as much as it appeared the racial makeup of faculty seemed diverse, when one looked closely, the racial/ethnic diversity of faculty within the department was incompatible to the racial and ethnic diversity of students, and lack of effort

to diversify faculty was detrimental to fostering interactions/relationships with foreign-born students.

Theckla, who came from Africa, emphasized a good portion of doctoral students in the department came from Africa and yet, “there is no faculty from that region.” As a result, she did not feel integrated because she did not have a faculty member on whom she relied when seeking any form of support. Theckla further explained she felt none of the faculty members knew she was enrolled in the program (almost invisible), “They did not understand me nor did they care to know my needs or provide me with the opportunities to mature as a doctoral student.” Theckla “felt lonely and alone.” She attributed these feelings as a disadvantage of not having “professors or faculty that look like me or speak like me” in terms of cultural and ethnic background. At some point, Theckla felt humiliated when she was told by a faculty member that he could not understand her accent, which caused her to “shut down completely from participating in class discussions.”

Similarly, other participants shared that most of the faculty members in their program did not quite understand their needs because they came from different cultural and academic backgrounds, adding that the professors seemed to hold the view “it was a one size fits all sort of thing.” Based on their responses, participants were more comfortable feeling isolated by faculty than being misconstrued because of cultural differences. As a result, participants kept to themselves and shared their challenges only with their foreign-born peers who actually “had limited resources” to assist them in navigating through the program. Sandy, who also came from Africa, affirmed she “would have felt better and empowered” if she had a faculty member who was from her country or at least from her region, someone “I could have trust in—that spoke my language.” She continued:

Do you know how lucky some of the . . . students were? They had Dr. . . . and Dr. . . . , but we did not have anyone. AHU needs to look into that and ensure that there is a balance here.

By contrast, Vera, Jessica, and Chin who came from Asia had different perceptions about their doctoral experiences. Chin shared that prior to her entry into the program she “had this nervousness” she “will be all alone,” but fortunately there were other doctoral students from her country including a faculty member, which was a significant relief. Chin confirmed, “I went to them each time I had any problem.” Several others commented, however, even the faculty members, who seemed to be of the same race had limited interactions and support for students from the same race during their time in the program. Molly, who came from South America, made this comment about a faculty member who was of the same race/ethnicity, “Do you know what? Dr. . . . was in my committee. ‘Is that not strange?’ . . . never told me how to go about it; never directed me on anything.” Although sharing the same background in terms of their origin mattered, it seemed students expected faculty who came from the same region to make connection instantaneously. Foreign-born students needed to actively seek support from other faculty members. Nonetheless, the above comments illustrate the varied experiences of the participants from different regions in their program department, depending on faculty members’ racial and cultural backgrounds (or lack thereof). In all, participants who had faculty of the same race or ethnicity fared better than those who did not because they were able to seek more academic and social support, and were more integrated into the program.

Lack of opportunity for professional growth. The majority of participants in this study discussed lack of opportunity for professional growth such as, co-authoring articles or book chapter with professors and presenting papers at outside conferences. Specifically, 15

participants asserted the department did not provide them with a structured opportunity for “first-hand experience” while others indicated the department did not properly disseminate information or create awareness regarding opportunities for professional development. John, who had always wanted to grow professionally in his career, when asked about his opportunity for professional growth, indicated he did not have the opportunity. When asked the reason for not participating in professional growth, John confirmed there was no proper dissemination of information pertaining to professional growth. He further distinguished between “putting something out there and sending out an email and encouraging students to participate” in those professional growth. John shared this observation:

There is a difference between sending an email out and putting it out on the higher education bulletin saying, “Hey if you are interested send us email” vs. if . . . approaches you and says, “We are thinking it will be great if you attended.”

Participants expected a more systematic approach to providing doctoral students the opportunity for professional development.

Participants indicated contrary to their lack of opportunity for professional growth experience, there were other doctoral students who had the opportunity to present at conferences and worked closely with faculty members. These participants highlighted that faculty members personally identified students with whom they would like to work. John revealed, “I know certain faculty who worked with certain students exclusively one or two.” He further stated, “These students perhaps helped faculty with their own research. So that’s their kind of way of doing reciprocity.”

Likewise, Molly shared she never had the opportunity to participate in professional development and confirmed it was something she would have loved to do but never had the

opportunity, neither did anyone approach her for any form of publication. Participants commented the department did not properly publicize those opportunities, even though they were greatly needed. Because participants were unaware of these opportunities, they only focused on completing their dissertations. Molly interjected:

It is not just to create a hard-bound book that you keep; you know the purpose of dissertation is that you can use it to further yourself; and no one ever said that to me 'you are working on dissertation, and you can use this part;' no one ever said that.

Molly further shared her sense of frustration:

You just come to school; you pay all this money. Excited little me I am so happy to get a doctoral degree, and I leave. And nobody does anything. There are things that could have been done. There are things that could have been done (shaking her head).

These participants felt being “left out and cheated” with regard to the lack of professional development opportunity “as did not belong to a particular group.” Kenny lamented, “There were people who made you feel that you should not be there [program]. You know you shouldn't be here.” Aside from a lack of availability of information and having the opportunity for professional growth, few other participants shared they were “not very much pushed into participating or encouraged to participate.” Bolack shared his dissatisfaction about how he approached several faculty members who he knew had similar research interests but was never given the opportunity. Bolack said:

I approached some professors and told them that I wanted to join them if they were doing any project; that I would like to get involved, but I didn't have that opportunity. Did I make that expression known to them? I did. I showed them that desire that I really wanted to have worked with somebody . . . but nothing came out of those conversations.

Nothing (shakes his head). But again, I saw other faculty members doing it, working with students.

Participants thought their institution did not help them to become competent professionally. Some of them even felt frustrated because they had not been able to secure jobs in the areas of their degree attainment due to lack of experience.

Inequity in graduate assistantship positions. While graduate assistantship positions were available to some participants, five participants specifically indicated their inability to secure graduate assistantship positions even though they desperately needed it and they thought they qualified for the positions. Graduate assistantships are organized in such a way that they provide on-campus part-time jobs for graduates or doctoral students. These students assist professors with instructional responsibilities as teaching or research assistants. The graduate assistantship program provides much-needed experience for doctoral students, which increases their future employment options. Additionally, graduate assistantships are compensated through tuition waiver and a small stipend. This stipend allows graduate assistants to focus on their studies instead of working a full-time job. Several participants, including Steve, Wen, Bajajah, Sandy, and Bolack, reported although they “requested, knocked on doors, and went to places in order to secure these positions,” all effort was to no avail. These participants mentioned they worked two jobs, sometimes three jobs, to pay their tuition fees; as a result, it took them a longer time than they had anticipated completing their doctorates. Sandy, who completed her doctorate in seven years, asserted “it was a burden as well as stressful to have to work two jobs while doing a doctorate.” When participants were asked whether they qualified or met the criteria for a graduate assistantship position, Bolack, who left the program temporarily due to some personal issues, recounted:

In as much as they say that you don't qualify, it's who you know. You know what, that's the excuse they often told that you didn't meet the criteria; but given the wealth of experience that I had, I don't think . . . if I were to compare myself with most of the people—the GAs . . ., you know what, I would have been among the top three or top five out there with a wealth of experience.

These participants stated they met every criterion very well with their exposure and experience, not just in “running both minor and big offices but based on GPA and financial needs.” Some participants had no choice but to quit their second jobs and took out loans to concentrate on finishing their program since they were unable to secure graduate assistantship positions.

Faculty workload. Twelve participants commented on faculty workload while discussing its negative impact on both professors and doctoral students' quality of work. These participants shared faculty advised a certain number of students and taught classes; sometimes, it was difficult to give students timely feedback. Jenny noted, “it is a lot of work for faculty to teach, advise students, do research and conference” all at once. Jessica concurred because faculty members had too many responsibilities, “students invariably were frustrated because they did not receive timely feedback” from their professors. Raja also concurred sometimes, students' quality of work was not at the level it was supposed to be because “faculty members were involved in other things, and did not devote as much time as they should in reviewing students' work.”

Similarly, Steve shared his concern about faculty workload, especially those who served as advisors. He stated because of other responsibilities or engagements, his advisor barely communicated with him, which made him feel neglected. Steve pointed out:

My advisor only reached out when I reached out. If I did not go to his office or give him a call, he did not bother. He was always super-busy, and that wasn't good for someone in a doctoral program. I think AHU should change that approach.

Some other participants added it took them a longer time than usual to complete their doctorate degree because their mentors did not respond in a timely manner largely because of their workload. Kenny was very emotional when he shared his experience. In as much as he was "deeply disappointed" it took him a longer time to graduate than anticipated, he also felt for his mentor who was "overloaded with work." According to Kenny, he hoped sharing his experience would help AHU improve their doctoral programs in general. Kenny stated it took him more than two years to finish his dissertation and a total of five years to complete his doctorate not because he wanted it that way, but simply because his "mentor did not give him a timely feedback." Wen echoed the same sentiment stating, for some reason, he had the notion his mentor "did not care." He said:

You can imagine how I felt when it took my mentor several months to give me feedbacks on the materials that I sent him at a very critical moment in my life. I almost lost my sanity seeing my peers graduate I, later on, found out that my mentor had a lot of responsibilities going out of state and out of country for one conference or the other. I hope there has been an improvement regarding faculty workload.

While these participants may have shared their concerns or disappointments for not receiving timely feedback from their professors, which stretched their time in the doctoral program, they acknowledged their professors were overloaded with many responsibilities.

Interaction with faculty in the program: Positive relationship with faculty members/dissatisfied with faculty. Participants in this study shared both positive and negative experiences with faculty as well as their mentors and advisors.

Positive relationship with faculty. Having positive relationships with the faculty was echoed by several of the participants in this study. Three participants indicated they had good interactions and relationships with the faculty and were encouraged by the support and guidance they received from them, which led to their persistence in the program. Jenny, who initially worked as a graduate assistant before securing a full-time job, felt close and connected with the professors because they invested in her success. According to Jenny, some professors “were really interested in how I was doing with the program.” Also, Jenny revealed the relationship she had with some professors helped her grow professionally. She added, “One of the professors showed me the difference between writing a dissertation and writing an article; the different people that are involved, and the different phases of the article...” This really made a difference for Jenny. Walter also noted the faculty members were very helpful and if he needed any kind of assistance he always went to them and “they responded very positively” even “if you were not doing their course.” Walter acknowledged:

If I had a problem, I could have gone to the chairperson of the department and asked some questions or asked questions of any one of the professors. Even though . . . A matter of fact, I could have talked to anyone of the professors whether the fact is, I was doing a course with them or not. They were always assessable.

Larry described some of the faculty as “caring,” especially the faculty he worked under as a graduate assistant. Larry recalled two faculty members he regarded as “a father and mother” to him. Larry affirmed the female faculty member was “everything to me” because she helped

him exercise linking theory to practice. He concluded, “She was just too good.” Also, Larry commended another faculty member who he said provided him with a graduate assistantship when he told him about his financial challenges. Since then, Larry has regarded the faculty member as a “wonderful father.”

Some participants, although they shared they had very supportive and positive relationships with faculty, indicated those relationships did not contribute to their persistence. Molly was one of the participants who had a good relationship with faculty members but did not think it contributed to her persistence. She said, “All I knew was that once I started, I was not going to stop.” However, Molly confirmed her experience was enjoyable and would not have come to classes if she had a sad experience with any faculty. Likewise, Bolack had mixed feelings in terms of his relationship with faculty; some he had a positive relationship with while he did not relate well to others. When asked if his relationship with some of the faculty contributed to his persistence, he noted, “as far as my persistence is concerned, that is my personal choice. I don’t think the school or the faculty did anything to help me with persistence. . . . My persistence is something that is inborn in me.” A positive relationship with faculty was instrumental in some participants’ persistence. However, only a limited number of the participants greatly benefited from faculty with whom they cultivated personal relationships, as was illustrated in Larry’s account, which in turn, was attributable to their persistence.

Positive relationship with advisor. Six participants shared they benefited extensively from their academic advisors who they had a very positive relationship with, which helped them wrestle with their academic challenges. Peace shared how he reviewed his program plan with his advisor prior to starting classes, which helped him to have a clear idea of “what classes to take, when to take them, how long I was expected to complete the courses and graduate.” Peace

commended his advisor saying he was “very good and very helpful.” Jessica and Myriam also indicated their advisors were always there for them, reaching out to them to ensure they were choosing the right courses. Jessica mostly liked that her “advisor’s door was always open” and walked in at any time she needed any form of assistance or advice. Kenny indicated he always “bugged” his advisor, but his advisor “always remained supportive.” Kenny recounted, “He was such a nice, seasoned individual; a role model.”

Similarly, Lauren had a very positive relationship with her advisor; even when she had a “long pause” from the program, her advisor reached out to her to “know what was going on.” Lauren’s advisor gave her the opportunity for professional growth by encouraging her to present papers at conferences. Above all, most of the participants reported they had a positive relationship with their advisors, “it took a caring individual to push you to reach your fullest potential even when we think we cannot continue.” These participants felt connected with their advisors.

Positive relationship with mentor. Eight participants in this study felt connected with their mentors. In addition, five indicated the relationship they had with their mentors contributed to their persistence. These close personal relationships with mentors were greatly valued as is evident in participants’ responses. Walter described his mentor as “very influential” with working on his program, and shared that his mentor made his dissertation process very easy. Prior to choosing his advisor as his mentor, Walter was informed by other students he would never have him because he was too tough and expected high-quality work from students. Walter said of his mentor, “he is that kind of person, if you wrote something, you better be sure it’s right because he is going to find the article and give it to you.” Walter enjoyed working with his mentor because he forced him to make sure the quality of his work was good at all times.

According to Walter, his mentor helped him “to refine his approach. . . And he was there very meticulous, very articulate in terms of his examination, and that is what is good.” Similarly, Farrah, whose advisor also became her mentor, reported her mentor made a great impact during her program. Farrah further shared the opportunity given to her by her mentor to produce research papers contributed to a wonderful experience during her program. They collaborated on many research papers for journal publications, which gave her application skills. Farrah commended her mentor, “I worked with Dr. . . . who is really really a great mentor. We had a great relationship working together.”

For other participants, although they described their relationship with their mentors as positive, they did not perceive their relationship with them as leading to their persistence. However, they agreed it facilitated their dissertation process, which in turn, reduced stress and frustration. John, whose mentor was different from his advisor, could not say enough of good things about his mentor. John stated, “He was an absolute machine, and went above and beyond to make sure I finished my dissertation.” When asked if his mentor contributed to his persistence, John affirmed it contributed to his ability to finish his dissertation quickly without any frustration and did not know how that would have played out if he did not have his mentor. John went on to say, “It contributed to the fact that I defended in the timing that I did. It contributed to having lack of frustration. I was never at any point frustrated during my dissertation.” Having a supportive mentor is very crucial to academic survival, especially during the dissertation phase, which leads to successful completion of the doctoral program. Participants acknowledged the significant role their mentors played in guiding them through the entire doctoral dissertation process.

Dissatisfied with Faculty

Negative relationship with faculty. Inasmuch as the majority of participants in this study indicated having a positive relationship with faculty, two participants shared negative experiences with some faculty. Larry mentioned having a strong challenge with a faculty member “who tried to make life unbearable” for him. According to Larry, the faculty member exhibited an attitude of racism and a strongly biased attitude against him and other students from his geographic region. Larry recounted, “She was heartless, very racist in nature.” Interestingly, Larry also indicated the faculty member was not like that prior to receiving her tenure, and she “became something else afterwards.” Also, Bolack shared he had a very negative experience with few faculty members stating he came into the program with “very high expectation” of some faculty, but it was a “big disappointment.” The negative perceptions participants had about some faculty members show a lack of cultural understanding may have influenced the type of relationships that existed among them.

Negative relationship with advisor. Specifically, two participants felt discontented with their experiences with their advisor. They intentionally did not choose them as their mentors (dissertation chairs). These participants indicated they did not reach out to them; they only communicated to them when they (participants) reached out to them. John expressed even though he did not expect to be held by the hand; his advisor should have at least shown concern for him. John noted:

I didn't have a relationship with my advisor where he would call me and say “hey, how are things going? Are you thinking about your dissertation topic?” You know, how life is; no, not at all. If I reached out, he was there. If I didn't reach out, no big deal; we didn't really have a relationship. If we see each other; we are more than pleasant; it's great, “how are you? Perfect.”

Equally, Theckla complained her advisor did not know when she defended her proposal. Her advisor “actually became aware of the stage” she was in after reading it from the department bulletin. Theckla continued, “As if I knew he did not care; that was the reason I chose someone else as my mentor.” Theckla remembered, “I do not know what really transpired. If I could recall, he seemed pleasant three times we met at his office during the course of my program. The only advice I received from him was just to get a pin number for registration.” Unfortunately, John and Theckla lacked both support and advice during their doctoral programs. Nonetheless, they were receptive to those challenges, which they interpreted as inevitable. They added, “those were necessary experiences associated with pursuing doctorate degree.” In sum, the inability for some of these participants to form a positive or meaningful relationship with their advisor(s) could have created barriers that would have eventually impacted the quality of their academic work, but they persisted to the end through personal commitment and value for the degree, which they sought.

Interaction with Peers in the Same Program: Peers as Instrument of Persistence/Negative Experience with Domestic Peers

Positive interaction with peers. Of the 20 participants in this study, all expressed satisfaction with their peers in the doctoral program, particularly those from the same geographic region. While 19 of the 20 indicated their interactions with their peers contributed to their persistence toward earning their doctoral degrees, one participant commented the nature of the doctoral program and his job made it difficult to socialize with his peers in the doctoral program. John noted most doctoral students had jobs, and they “came to classes after a long day, sat in the rooms two or four hours for those hitting back to back classes.” Jenny concurred with John adding it was difficult to socialize with peers outside of classes because most doctoral students worked and came to classes from work.

Peers vs. professors. Several of the participants reported their classmates were very supportive and encouraging, and they learned better when their classmates or peers explained materials to them compared to their professors. For instance, Peace shared it had always been his learning style since high school to learn better from his peers. Peace added anything he learned from his peers stuck against hearing it from his professors, “Anything I hear from my course mates, I always remember. I do not forget anything I hear from them.” Jenny said, “I learned so much not only from my professors but also from my classmates as well.” Steve echoed his “peers were very instrumental” to his persistence because they provided him with guidance when he struggled with assignments. According to Steve, “I preferred going to my peers for help than going to my professors because sometimes I did not understand them; to be honest.” Steve further stressed his peers’ ears were readily available to him and they always had the patience to explain things to him no matter how often he asked for help. He forcefully declared, “My peers helped me a lot to mitigate some of the challenges that I was faced with. I couldn’t have made it without them (nodding).”

In his interactions with his peers, Bolack pointed out there were two things that helped him in many ways: a few friends that he looked up to—those who were doing well, he made sure he “caught up with them,” and those who were making some decisions that he “found out will derail them.” He learned from those decisions they made. Additionally, Bolack emphasized, “either way whether you have succeeded or you have not succeeded, I have something to gain from it.” In effect, Bolack learned both from his peers’ failures and successes. He looked at his peers who were doing well and caught up to them, and for those who made mistakes, he tried not to make the same mistakes they made. Bolack affirmed, “While in the program, I learned from

my peers and all my peers contributed to my persistence—my progress . . . directly or indirectly; they may not have realized it.”

Peer-established support group. Peer support groups are informal support groups formed to provide academic and social support for each other during the doctoral program. Eight participants shared their group was their motivation toward the successful completion of their degree. Participants were aware the doctoral program was difficult, and they were working people. Therefore, they “teamed up and worked together.” According to Walter, about six of them were foreign-born, all teachers, who met regularly in the library to discuss materials in preparation for their exams. Walter explained:

It was that nucleus . . . to me when I was here, it was that nucleus of foreign-born . . . because we were not many. We were sprinkling—we were in different levels in terms of years in the program. And it was always a welcome thing to see a face like yours. So that was our motivation.

Wen added, on a few occasions, he and his group had tutorials where they studied together and asked each other questions and explained certain topics. Molly explained doctoral students needed someone other than themselves who would help them give a “different perspective” to their work. Molly added it was helpful to have heard other people’s perspectives and compared them to hers to strike a balance. She confirmed, “She may be right, you may be right, but there is always in-betweens.” Molly worked collaboratively with a peer who she regarded as “my person.” Molly and her friend were “extremely supportive” of each other in the sense that both of their dissertations focused on school children—special education and general education students. Similarly, Lauren had her support group of five friends who were all international students. They went through the program at the same time, and had a lot of “commonalities to share the

common struggles.” During their meetings, they sat down together and chatted about their challenges; sometimes they went out for dinners and social gatherings. According to Lauren, “having people in your friendship circle aside from the faculty that you can talk to about your research; that really carries a lot of weight.” For participants, the peer support group did not only provide academic support, but it also provided opportunities for socialization outside academic settings as well as a sense of community and sense of belonging, which is evident in Lauren’s statement above.

Peer motivation. In addition to learning from each other through peer support groups, participants also found strength from their peers when they became demotivated to continue their program. Jenny stated when it became obvious that her peers were working hard and finishing, she knew “it was time to sit down and get the dissertation done.” Although it seemed like a competition, Jenny “felt it was like a friendly competition” and did not feel anyone was trying to beat her over something that was not available to her. That was really encouraging for Jenny. Several other participants related part of their success was because their peers were cheering them on. Raja and Chin indicated their peers reached out to them each time they went to the library even though they were not ready to study on a particular day. The constant phone calls and reminders to go to the library to study with their peers helped them to persist. Raja exclaimed, “It was a great motivation to keep going. That definitely contributed to my persistence towards completion.” Also, Farrah, who found great relationships with her peers whom she collaborated and published with, shared, “having someone send you an email and say ‘hey . . . I made this progress on that part of the paper. How about you?’” For her, that seemed “like a buddy system.” Peers reaching out to Farrah and checking on her academic progress made a great impact. Farrah said, “I never knew I would make so many friends from different

countries and religions. . . .” Participants’ accounts spoke volumes about the instrumental role peers play in doctoral persistence. Peers represent a source of companionship, academic, and social support.

Negative Experience with Domestic Peers

Culture shock. It is worth noting only a few participants brought up a significant problem with domestic American peers. Larry, for example, shared an encounter with a domestic counterpart, which he labeled “My first culture shock.” Although Larry was one of the participants who shared he was generally satisfied with peers, especially fellow foreign-born students, he had a negative encounter with a native-born peer. Larry alleged there was no cordial relationship among classmates, adding it was one of the major problems experienced in the doctoral program. From the time Larry was in the program to the moment he was an alum, he was close to none of his classmates aside from those from his geographic region. He stated, “They don’t have a cordial relationship; I think their relationship with us their foreign-born counterparts is too poor. Let me use that word. No relationship among peers or course-mates.” When asked what had transpired between him and his domestic peer, Larry shared when he first started his program in the summer, the students struggled with statistics. So, he teamed up with a domestic peer who he worked very closely within completing assignments, writing exams together, and doing other things together. However, during the fall semester, he reached out to the student, and the student pretended not to know who he was. According to Larry, the student needed him “for business, and the business was done.” As a result of this shock, Larry became close only with peers from his continent. He added, “Domestic students don’t have good relationship; it is poor. It’s below average. I think the faculty should work towards cultural relationship.” Larry was unhappy with his domestic peer’s behavior, which tainted the relationship they had cultivated at the beginning of their program. Such treatments are difficult to

forget when cultural differences are not addressed adequately by faculty. Table 13 shows the socialization elements with which participants were dissatisfied.

Table 13

Dissatisfaction with Socialization Elements

Socialization Components	Themes	Subthemes
Interaction with program structure	Lack of integration into institutional/program structure	Inadequate advisement and lack of depth of course content Lack of racial/ethnic diversity of faculty: Varied socialization experience of participants from different regions Lack of opportunity for professional growth Inequity in graduate assistantship position Faculty workload
Interaction between faculty and students	Dissatisfied with faculty	Negative relationship with faculty Negative relationship with advisor
Interaction among peers in the same program	Negative experience with domestic peers	Culture shock

This section describes how foreign-born doctoral recipients’ experience with socialization components contributed to their persistence toward the completion of their doctorates. Their responses revealed both positive and negative interactions with program structure, faculty, and peers in the same program. Most importantly, responses shed light on the approaches participants used to break their social and academic barriers—peer support group. They relied on professors and their peers for academic and emotional support, but mostly on their peers. Although several participants related positively with these three socialization components, only interactions with peers were found to be important to their persistence.

Summary

This chapter presents a comprehensive analysis of the motivating factors that contributed to the persistence of foreign-born doctoral recipients in the field of education. Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of expectancy-value theory and socialization theory, the findings were divided into four categories: (a) expectancies, which encompass ability and expectancy beliefs, (b) values, which encompass attainment value, interest value, and utility value, (c) costs, including the coping strategies used to mitigate those costs of persisting to completion, and (d)

socialization components, which include interaction of students with the structure of academic setting, interaction between students and faculty members, and interaction among students in the program. Participants were both satisfied and dissatisfied with some elements of socialization while pursuing their doctoral degree.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION

Chapter V provides a brief summary of the purpose of the study, research questions, theoretical frameworks, and methodology. It then focuses on a discussion of research findings, a critique of the frameworks used, and implications for practice. Finally, this chapter concludes with recommendations for future research.

Overview of the Study

As persistence/degree completion and time-to-degree remain a continuing problem in U.S. doctoral education, a substantial number of studies have focused on various aspects of doctoral education including departmental culture (Gardner, 2010a, 2010b; Golde, 2004; Jones, 2013; Nerad & Stewart, 1991), attrition rates (Ali, Kohun, & Levy, 2007; Bair & Haworth, 2004; Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2000, 2005; Lovitts & Nelson, 2000; Lovitts, 2001; Smith, Maroney, Nelson, & Abel, 2006), and time-to-degree (Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; de Valero, 2001; D'Andrea, 2002; Hoffer, Hess, Welch, & Williams, 2007; Kim & Otts, 2010; Malone, Nelson, & Van Nelson, 2004; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011). Despite growing enrollment and doctoral degree production of foreign-born doctoral students in U.S. higher education, there is a scarcity of research that has explored the doctoral process of foreign-born students. When foreign-born students are included in the samples, researchers use a theoretical framework that does not give a comprehensive understanding of doctoral experiences of foreign-born students (Antony, 2002; Gopaul, 2011; Zhou, 2015), thereby ignoring the salient differences between them and their American counterparts (Zhou, 2015). Although scholars have recognized the link between doctoral persistence and socialization (Ellis, 2001; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Gardner, 2007; Golde, 2000), using only socialization theory to study foreign-born students is deemed inadequate to understanding the experiences of diverse student populations in terms of

motivational factors and challenges in the program because it does not give a complete view of their experiences, which makes it difficult for U.S. graduate schools to respond to and identify the distinctive needs of this growing group of doctoral students (Austin, 2002; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; Gopaul, 2011; Sweitzer, 2009; Zhou, 2015). In addition, time-to-degree in the field of education has remained a concern. According to the *National Science Foundation*, the median time-to-degree from initial enrollment and completing graduate school in the field of education in 2014 was 11.7 years compared to 7.3 years in all fields (NSF, 2015).

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors that motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue and persist toward completing their doctorates in the field of education. This study centered on how expectancies and values placed on earning a doctorate motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue their doctoral degrees and the strategies they used to mitigate the costs they experienced in the doctoral program. Additionally, this study illuminated how socialization elements may have contributed to their persistence toward degree completion. The research questions that guided this study are as follows: (a) What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion? (b) What values do foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to pursuing and earning a degree in the field of education? (c) What costs do foreign-born doctoral recipients experience while pursuing a doctoral degree and what strategies do they use to mitigate the costs of persistence? (d) How do foreign-born doctoral recipients' interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?

Theoretical Frameworks

This study was based on two theoretical perspectives expectancy-value theory and socialization theory. These theories were used as an analytic frame to uncover the doctoral

process of foreign-born doctoral recipients in this study and their motivational factors for pursuing and persisting toward degree completion. The underlying assumption of expectancy-value theory was that individual choice, persistence, and performance could be explained by one's beliefs about how well one will do in an activity and the extent to which one values the activity (Atkinson, 1957; Eccles et al., 1983). The constructs of expectancy-value theory are: (1) expectancy for success—individuals' ability and expectancy beliefs about how well they will perform a given task, that is, individuals' perceptions of current or future competence at a given activity, (2) subjective task values, which deals with the perceived significance of a task or belief about the reason one engages in a particular task. The task values have four components: (a) attainment value, which is the importance of doing well on a given task, (b) intrinsic/interest value—enjoyment one gains from doing a task, (c) utility/extrinsic value—usefulness of the task (how a task fits into an individual's future plans), and (d) cost, which has to do with the struggles and challenges of engaging in an activity. Cost is further divided into three sub-components:

- perceived effort—the amount of effort needed to be successful,
- loss of valued effort—time lost to engage in other valued activities, and
- psychological loss of failure—the anxiety related to the potential of failure in the task

(Eccles et al., 1983; see Figure 1).

According to expectancy-value theory, motivation depends on an individual's retention of positive expectancies and values (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000).

There is great emphasis placed on the value of education by foreign-born students and their families. They acknowledge education is “an investment in the family's human capital with the expected result in increasing net family earning” (Arthur, 2000, p. 22). Higher education has proven to be the means for both social and economic mobility, especially if the degree is

conferred by a U.S. institution (Irungu, 2013). As such, foreign-born students view pursuing a doctoral degree in U.S. higher education as an opportunity to make a positive difference in knowledge capital and access to the scholarly profession (Irungu, 2013).

Given the link between doctoral persistence and socialization (Golde, 2000), socialization theory was used to account for how the socialization elements may have contributed to participants' persistence. Socialization is "a learning process through which the individual acquires the knowledge and skills, the values and attitudes, and the habits and modes of thought of the society to which he/she belongs" (Bragg, 1976, p. 3). The socialization process for doctoral students focuses on three interactive domains: students and educational structures, student and faculty, and peer groups within a doctoral program (Bragg, 1976). Within each of the interactive domains of socialization, students learn the attitudes, norms, and values of the profession within the American context. Studies indicate foreign-born students' interactions with faculty and peers have been emphasized as an important structure to organize practices and processes of doctoral education (Bragg, 1976; Gardner, 2008b, 2009, 2010b; Golde, 2000).

Method

Twenty foreign-born doctoral recipients were interviewed for this study using criterion sampling (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). In terms of sampling criteria for this study, participants self-identified as foreign-born and have completed a doctoral degree in the field of education from American Humanitarian University between 2006 and 2016.

Data were collected through a demographic questionnaire and in-depth semi-structured interviews ranging from 45 minutes to approximately 2 hours describing their backgrounds, expectancies, values, and socialization experiences leading to their persistence and ultimate completion of their doctoral degree. Field notes and memos were written following each interview. After listening to the audio-recordings and reading interviews once without coding,

data were analyzed. First and second cycle coding were conducted to investigate what terms, patterns, and themes emerged for each interview. An initial list of codes based on themes from existing literature was used and vetted against new codes that emerged from the data. Initial or first cycle codes were grouped into pattern codes, which were used to generate themes. While some themes corresponded with those found in the previous literature on doctoral persistence in general, others were new to the discussion.

Summary and Discussion of Findings

The following section provides a summary of findings and discusses findings of this study within the context of existing literature on doctoral persistence. Since research on foreign-born doctoral recipients is sparse, findings at times, were compared to research that explored doctoral student persistence. This study endeavored to expand on the different factors that motivate foreign-born doctoral students to pursue and persist to doctorate completion as well as the socialization elements that may have contributed to their persistence. While several themes that emerged from this study aligned with those found in previous research on doctoral persistence, findings in this study add to existing literature with respect to foreign-born doctoral recipients' expectancies for success, values for pursuing and persisting, including costs they experienced and strategies used to mitigate the costs associated with earning a doctoral degree. This study also discusses challenges they encountered with some socialization elements during their program.

Expectancies for Success

In response to research question one, "What ability and expectancy beliefs do foreign-born doctoral recipients have for pursuing and persisting toward doctoral degree completion?" participants in this study had little doubt about their ability; they expected they would complete their doctorate in a "matter of time." They were self-confident, and this confidence toward

completing their doctorate was continually reassured by their prior educational background and academic progress. Several participants attested they would not have pursued a doctorate if they did not have confidence in their ability to pursue and earn their degree. This attestation was evident in a study by Matusovich et al. (2010) whose participants' expectancy played a significant role in their decision to pursue and complete their program. While two participants shared having had thoughts of quitting and taking a break from the program, it was not as a result of inability, but rather it was whether earning a doctorate was really worth the effort. Also, the majority of participants had a different type of expectation for success. They expected their professors to assist them throughout the doctoral process. Also, they thought successful completion of their doctorate would be a "ticket to securing a faculty position" and working with students at the college level. This finding is similar to the findings of Zhou (2014) that participants have a desire for faculty positions in the United States, which would give them a degree of stability, autonomy, high social status, and decent pay. However, the expectations of these participants were "overly broad" (p. 181) based, in part, on incomplete information about the doctoral program and attainment of a doctorate (Fryer & Elliot, 2007). Although the participants were disappointed that they did not receive the amount of support they expected, this expectation was not detrimental to their decision to pursue and earn a doctorate. Participants' decisions to pursue and complete their doctorates could be seen mostly as a function of their expected outcome—the value of earning a terminal degree.

Motivating Values for Pursuing and Persisting Toward Degree Completion

With respect to research question two, "What values do foreign-born doctoral recipients attribute to pursuing and earning a degree in the field of education?", this study found participants were motivated by a combination of values to pursue and complete their doctorate. No particular value influenced participants to pursue and persist. Participants in the study

discussed earning a doctoral degree was essential in achieving their long-term career goal. Expectancy-value theorists conceptualize attainment value as the personal importance of doing well on a task and that it is linked to the relevance of an individual engaging in a task (Eccles et al., 1983). Earning a doctorate was part of what participants in this study wanted to be in life, which is key and important to actualizing their long-term career goal. This finding is similar to a study of undergraduate students by Matusovich et al. (2010), whereby, attainment value was also found to be of great importance to the participants. On the contrary, Peters and Daly (2013) found attainment value played the least important role for returning engineer students in their study.

Interest value in research has been found to be an important motivator toward pursuing and earning a doctorate, especially for foreign-born students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields (Gardner, 2009; Lindholm, 2004; Zhou, 2014, 2015). However, in this present study, the interest value for participants slightly differed in that they were more motivated by their intrinsic interest in teaching and impacting others' lives than their interest in research. Only two participants mentioned their interest in research, but it was not a motivating factor on its own to pursue a doctorate in the field of education. The majority of participants were largely motivated by their intrinsic interest in teaching and impacting others' lives because of their passion for teaching and how they were influenced by their professors. Participants' accounts demonstrate how past experiences and family background has an influence on individuals' decisions to pursue careers in academia (Le & Gardner, 2010; Lindholm, 2004). In contrast, Zhou (2014, 2015) did not find interest value in teaching was a motivator for participants to pursue and earn their doctorates. The findings from this study show

participants' interest in achieving a goal or a task contribute to their future careers (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010).

In this study, utility value was also found to be a source of motivation toward pursuing and completing a doctoral degree. Participants had a direct application for utilizing their degree including earning the credential and gaining the knowledge through the entire doctoral process. Consequently, the finding revealed different types of utility value, including monetary value, social status, immigration status, and career advancement. The monetary value of earning a doctorate specifically sustained several participants' motivation. Participants were motivated to pursue and earn a doctorate with the intent to secure high-paying jobs that would enable them not only to provide basic needs for their families but also to live comfortably. For several participants, "it was a means to an end; and it meant money." Also, some other participants were motivated because they enjoyed the social standing of being recognized as a "doctor" to be respected in the society. For many participants, doctorate meant "possibility" because the degree would help them advance in their careers and "secure any type of job" they wanted. As noted in other studies (Zhou, 2014, 2015), it is evident U.S. doctorates are highly rated by foreign-born students; foreign-born students have high utility value for American doctoral education because of its attractiveness and reputation (Yan & Berliner, 2013; Zhou, 2014). Interestingly, the role of utility value in pursuing and earning a doctorate in this study is not as rated in the literature (Zhou, 2014, 2015) because it is not in itself a motivating factor to pursue and persist. Combinations of values motivated participants to pursue doctorates.

Another form of utility value shared by participants was immigration status. Two participants stated their only option to remain in the United States legally was to remain enrolled in school. This finding is similar to Zhou's (2014) finding whereby his participants decided to

pursue a doctorate to get a green card and remain in the U.S. Maintaining legal status as an international student is usually a major issue that affects foreign-born students' career decisions (Yan & Berliner, 2013). They are required to enroll continuously full time in the doctoral program.

In essence, no single value by itself motivated foreign-born doctorate recipients to pursue and persist toward completing their doctoral degree in this study— a combination of values motivated them to pursue and persist.

Costs of Getting a Doctoral Degree

With regard to research question three, “What costs do foreign-born doctoral recipients experience while pursuing a doctoral degree and what strategies do they use to mitigate the costs of persistence?”, participants shared they experienced certain costs while pursuing their doctoral degree. These costs—emotional, financial, and intellectual—influenced foreign-born doctorate recipients' decisions whether to continue, especially those who came to the United States as international students on F-1 visas as opposed to those who did their undergraduate and/or master's degrees in the United States and were permanent residents. While these costs differed in severity from one participant to another, the emotional cost experienced due to anxiety, workload, harsh criticisms from faculty, stress associated with involvement in different activities, and shame of quitting the program, several of the participants were mostly concerned about not completing the doctoral program and how dropping out of the program would reflect on their sense of self. Participants could not afford to disappoint their families and their mentors who “invested a lot of time and confidence” in them.

Such feelings were evident among foreign-born students who felt a burden of bringing pride to their families at the expense of their sacrifices (Le & Gardner, 2010; Yan & Berliner,

2013). This finding also supports that shame of failure is common among doctoral students in the literature (Golde, 2005; Lovitts, 2008).

Financially, participants echoed the expensiveness of the doctoral program as challenging even to the point of quitting because it was difficult to pay tuition and provide basic needs for their families back in their countries. Also, intellectual cost affected several participants due, in part, to previous learning experience and different systems of education such as, oral presentation, public speaking, classroom participation through discussions, which participants expressed their discomfort. A few participants had difficulties analyzing data and working alone during the dissertation phase. Language proficiency was the most salient challenge for participants. As such, language proficiency through classroom interaction and participation in class discussion has been widely documented in previous studies on foreign-born students, particularly those who come from collectivist cultures (Andrade, 2006; Chamberlain, 2005; Hofstede, 1980; Wu & Rubin, 2000; Yang, Noels, & Saumure, 2006; Zhang, 2010).

Although participants experienced these costs, they accepted these challenges as necessary steps toward success. Participants believed getting a doctorate was not easy. Otherwise, everyone could get it. This was similar to participants in Zhou's (2014) study who were receptive to the difficulties in earning a doctorate. Participants believed the costs they experienced were temporary; and hard work, sacrifices, and persistence would lead to the successful completion of their degrees. Overall, emotional and intellectual costs were most salient among participants in this study. Although financial cost was a great challenge for the majority of participants, there were some who did not experience financial costs because they were fortunate to have received some form of financial assistance either from the institution or from the government of their country.

Strategies Used to Mitigate Costs

Regardless of the costs experienced during their doctoral program, participants' strategies to mitigate the costs of earning a doctorate highlighted the importance of motivation. To mitigate the emotional cost due to anxiety, workload, harsh criticism from faculty, stress associated with involvement in different activities, and quitting the program participants relied on other doctoral students' experience and success in the doctoral program as their model. They spoke to other doctoral students who made the doctoral program milestones (e.g., the qualifying exams), got materials from doctoral students who had already taken the exams and prepared for the exams. Also, they made the time commitment to do their doctoral work. Participants prioritized their activities and made a conscientious decision on how to complete their program successfully.

Financially, participants found a way to be able to pay their tuition and fees during their program. A few participants accepted additional responsibilities at their job, sought tuition remission, and secured second jobs. Some participants decided to cut back on expenses while others took fewer courses per semester to minimize the impact of paying too much per semester. Several participants applied for graduate assistantships, scholarships, and tuition reduction to remain in the program until completion. These strategies allowed participants to finish their program and not drop out due to the cost of doctoral education. Financial support is crucial to the successful completion of a doctoral degree (Bair & Haworth, 1999; Border & Barba, 1998; Bowen & Rudenstine, 1992; Girves & Wemmerus, 1998; Nettles & Millet, 2006).

Participants who experienced intellectual cost as a result of different structures of doctoral education such as oral presentation/public speaking and classroom participation through discussions due to lack of language proficiency, using a multiple-choice format, volumes of writing assignments, working alone during the dissertation phase, and analyzing data figured it out and sought help from professors and peers. They sought various possible ways to help them

become acclimatized into the system to succeed in their program. They listened to news and television programs; interacted with U.S.-born peers and practiced public speaking. This finding confirmed what was already known about how foreign-born students used different strategies and support systems to mitigate their challenges. Various studies (Atri, et al., 2007; Dao et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2008; Mittal & Wieling, 2006; Sumer et al., 2008; Ye, 2006) have documented foreign-born students rely on support systems such as their peers and faculty to help in alleviating their challenges. Participants in this study not only noted using some personal strategies to mitigate the costs experienced, but they also sought help from peers and faculty to help them mitigate their costs. Despite all the costs experienced during their doctoral education, these mitigation strategies were critical to participants' success and showed the value they placed on completing their doctorate was imminent.

Satisfaction/Dissatisfaction with Socialization Elements

Satisfaction with socialization elements. Participants' satisfaction stemmed from (a) integration into institutional/program structure, (b) positive relationship with faculty, and (c) peers as an instrument of persistence.

In response to research question four, "How do foreign-born doctoral recipients' interactions with educational structures and relationships with faculty and peers in the doctoral program contribute to their persistence toward degree completion?", participants shared both their satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the socialization elements. Although participants indicated their satisfaction with the program structure due to program plan, availability of courses, diversity of student body and viewpoints, availability of graduate assistantships and opportunity for professional growth, they were not motivating factors toward the persistence of the majority of the participants. However, they appreciated the diversity of the student body in the doctoral program, providing them with the opportunity to learn from each other, mirroring

the fact that foreign-born students bring economic benefits and cultural diversity to American higher education (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004). Also, participants who had graduate assistantship positions were given the opportunity to co-author articles and present at conferences, which helped them to feel integrated into the program.

Furthermore, studies have found establishing positive relationships with faculty and mentors contribute significantly to success and persistence (Gardner, 2008a; Golde, 2005; Lovitts, 2001). Several participants in this study indicated having positive relationships with their advisors and mentors describing these relationships as contributors to their persistence. Positive relationships with mentors were found to be essential in coping with the academic and social challenges participants experienced during their doctoral program. Participants shared the importance of having mentors who they could relate to and help them navigate the doctoral process. The findings of this study show participants whose advisors and mentors invested time in and supported academically, professionally, and personally successfully completed their program. This finding mirrors Golde's (2000) findings, which indicated a positive relationship between students and the faculty is a key predictor of successful degree completion.

Additionally, a majority of the participants in this study relied on their informal peer support to help them cope with academic challenges in the doctoral program. Participants indicated when their classmates explained materials to them, it was more helpful than their professors. Also, they utilized each other's skills and expertise during the course of their studies. As a result, participants attributed their persistence to those informal support groups. This finding points to the importance of interacting with peers in the doctoral program (Bair & Haworth, 1999). Also, as found in other studies on doctoral students, establishing a support network or group of peers (Espino, 2014; Flores-Scott & Nerad, 2012; Gardner, 2010a; Golde,

2005; González et al., 2001; González, 2007; Weidman et al., 2001) provides opportunity for doctoral students, especially foreign-born students to share their stories and challenges that tend to impede their persistence (Ellis, 2001; Flores & García, 2009; González, 2007; Gildersleeve et al., 2011; Johnson-Bailey, 2004; Truong & Museus, 2012). These support groups are avenues for doctoral students to share their experiences, give and receive advice and resources, as well as socialize with each other in and outside the classroom.

Dissatisfaction with socialization elements. Participants' dissatisfaction stemmed from multiple sources, including (a) lack of integration into institutional/program structure, (b) dissatisfaction with faculty, and (c) negative experience with domestic peers. This study found more than half of the participants lacked integration into the institutional/program structure due to inadequate advisement and lack of depth of course content, racial/ethnic diversity of faculty, professional development opportunities, inequality in assigning graduate assistantship positions, and faculty workload due to added responsibilities. As a result of the aforementioned dissatisfaction with socialization elements, participants thought they did not belong or "fit in" the program. "Fitting into the mold" has often been documented in the literature (Gardner, 2008a; Schilling, 2008; Strutz et al., 2011), and it has been argued (Antony, 2002) that the traditional socialization model homogenizes the doctoral experience and excludes individuals who do not fit into a particular mold. According to Gardner (2008a), the experience of underrepresented students in graduate education and "its normative socialization patterns may not fit their lifestyle and the diversity of their background" (p. 135). Most of the participants struggled to fit into the program and were disgruntled about the way the doctoral program was structured for not giving everyone the adequate opportunity to gain needed experience.

Several participants did not have the opportunity for professional growth or the opportunity to work closely with a faculty member. For some, they found out about professional growth opportunities such as presenting at conferences and co-authoring articles with faculty after they had left the program. As a result, they thought they did not gain adequate experience to prepare them for a career in academia. This finding confirms Turner and Thompson (1993) that one of the major barriers for underrepresented groups in doctoral education (Antony 2002; Antony & Taylor, 2004) is that they have fewer opportunities for professional socialization experiences than their peers. Also, this study found inconsistencies with the program structure regarding what courses to take prior to defending their dissertation proposal. Participants felt “cheated” when certain rules did not apply to everyone. Sometimes, lack of consistency might lead to poor program quality. This study also found faculty members were given an excessive workload in terms of added responsibilities, which has a negative impact on their well-being and their ability to provide students adequate feedback regarding their dissertation. As a result, it affected doctoral students’ quality of work.

Furthermore, this study found participants did not relate well with some faculty because some faculty members exhibited attitudes of racism and biased attitudes toward doctoral students from a particular geographic region, which “made life unbearable” for these students. Studies have found added stress, and negative feelings that occur with this type of treatment places doctoral students’ persistence to degree completion in jeopardy (Milner, 2004). Some participants came into the program with a “very high expectation” of some faculty but had a “big disappointment.” Furthermore, several participants did not have meaningful relationships with their advisors; as a result, it was difficult to open up to them regarding challenges they were experiencing in the program. These participants were skeptical about being honest with their

assigned advisors because they did not really understand their plight as a result of being from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Participants wished they had advisors from the same race as theirs. This finding supported Ellis' (2001) research on Black and White doctoral students that race was a salient factor in mentoring and advisement.

Also, this study found instances of culture shock experienced by domestic peers. According to participants, there were no cordial relationships that existed between foreign-born and native-born peers; their relationships were seen as poor and below average. Participants were left wondering how their peers could act as if they never met before after working closely on assignments and preparing for exams together. Participants felt isolated as if their domestic peers treated them as if they "did not belong." As a result, some of the participants "pushed themselves to excel" and made decisions to relate only to peers from their geographic region while self-segregating from their domestic peers. This feeling of isolation from their domestic peers influenced participants' sense of belonging in their doctoral programs (Lewis et al., 2004; Mansfield et al., 2010). The value of multiracialism was not appreciated by faculty and the institution, which led foreign-born students to believe they do not belong or "fit in" (Gardner, 2008a).

Finally, lack of understanding of the doctoral process could be seen as a major source of challenges and dissatisfaction among participants in this study. It has been documented that lack of understanding of the nature of the graduate school is a common reason for students' dissatisfaction and attrition (Golde, 2000, 2005). Lack of accurate information on the doctoral process is a serious problem for foreign-born students since they had an "overly broad and optimistic expectation," which limited their understanding of U.S. doctoral education (Zhou, 2015, p. 184).

Critiquing the Frameworks for the Present Study

The expectancy-value theory stems from the assumption that people are most likely to do things at which they think they can succeed and the things that are of value to them. They draw from their own experience about what they enjoy doing, which is also grounded in what people tell them about what is appropriate for people like them to be interested in doing (Bembenutty, 2008). I utilized expectancy-value theory as a theoretical lens to better understand how foreign-born students' expectancies for success and values motivated them to pursue and complete a doctoral program in the field of education. Using the concept of expectancy and value was appropriate for including the wider sets of questions that were relevant in understanding the values foreign-born doctoral recipients placed in earning a doctorate.

Although socialization theory has been most commonly used as a conceptual framework to study the complexity of the doctoral student experience and persistence (Austin, 2002; Clark & Corcoran, 1986; Ellis, 2001; Gardner & Barnes, 2007; González, 2006; Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001), it posed some challenges in studying foreign-born doctoral students' process of learning expectations, roles, and values of graduate experiences. Even though interactions with faculty and peers have been emphasized as important structures to organize the practices and processes of doctoral education, some scholars have argued due to differences in disciplines, doctoral students interact differently because those in the sciences and engineering fields often worked and conducted research collaboratively whereas, those students in the humanities, education, and social science fields conducted their studies in isolation (Baird, 1993; Mendoza, 2007; Smallwood, 2004). As a result, this type of interaction often influenced both the quality and quantity of the student socialization process with faculty and peers (Gopaul, 2011). Additionally, using socialization theory to understand the experiences of the foreign-born in this study was challenging because the socialization elements were not indicated as motivating

factors to pursue or persist toward completion of the doctorate. Foreign-born doctoral students were more motivated by their expectancies and values, which were distinct to their culture and need. They focused more on their academics than socialization because they had goals to earn their degrees and to return to their country of origin or invariably stay in the U.S. to establish themselves in the profession (Gribble, 2008).

The aspect of socialization theory that may have contributed to participants' motivation toward degree completion was their interaction with peers. Participants indicated having a positive relationship with their peers because they shared resources and helped each other to tackle the academic challenges experienced, which they also attributed to their persistence. Pertinent to their interactions with program structure and relationships with faculty, most participants did not feel adequately integrated into learning the expectations, roles, and values of graduate experiences—they lacked the opportunity of being involved in co-curricular activities during their program. As a result, very few participants attributed the two socialization elements as motivating factors to persist toward doctoral completion. This is a call for scholars to establish a more appropriate framework to understanding foreign-born doctoral students' holistic experience in the doctoral program and what actually motivates them to pursue and persist in earning their doctorates.

Implication for Practice

Findings from this study provide several implications for how faculty, administrators, and institutions can increase their understanding of foreign-born doctoral students' experiences and create support and services to meet the unique needs of foreign-born doctoral students.

Recruitment. The experiences of foreign-born doctoral recipients in this study could shape the reputation of the department. Experience with many challenges and little support influence the ways in which foreign-born doctoral recipients recommend the program and

department for prospective foreign-born students. Therefore, potential foreign-born doctoral students may decide otherwise on the basis of the experience and advice of their co-nationals who had already completed their program. Recruiting potential foreign-born doctoral students means supporting current foreign-born doctoral students. The impact of the challenges experienced or the lack of integration may vary by foreign-born doctoral students. Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, and Hutchings (2008) described ways to reconsider graduate programming by redefining goals and then aligning assessments and education experiences to meet these goals. In some cases, foreign-born doctoral students can have the same positive experiences as do their native-born counterparts and other foreign-born students who have graduate assistantship positions or the opportunity to work closely with faculty. To support the positive experience of foreign-born doctoral students, adjustments need to be made regarding their full integration into the doctoral program by providing them opportunities to grow professionally.

Integration into the American system of education. Most foreign-born doctoral students come from countries where their system of education differs from the U.S. system of education. As a result, they do not possess some of the classroom skills often used in U.S. classrooms such as writing method, classroom discussion, multiple-choice format, data analysis, and oral presentations. Institutions should recognize foreign-born doctoral students need extra support in the form of orientation regarding the American system of education to reduce the amount of stress and frustration experienced in the program. Also, disseminating proper information to foreign-born doctoral students regarding support services available within the institution is paramount to their success. This information should come through their academic advisors since they have a significant impact on the graduate student experience (Lovitts, 2001).

Additionally, institutions could pair potential foreign-born doctoral students with foreign-born doctoral students who are currently in the program and have been successful; in that way, they will share their experiences and the strategies used to succeed

Integration of foreign-born doctoral students into the doctoral program. The perceived high quality of higher education, availability of a broad range of areas of study, and established academic and student support services are major reasons for foreign-born students' choices of the United States as a destination (Institute of International Education, 2015). Foreign-born doctoral students endure many academic struggles in the doctoral program. Faculty members should recognize these students come from different environments, cultures, and education systems. The majority of participants shared not being integrated into the doctoral program due to lack of opportunities to grow professionally. Faculty should endeavor to provide foreign-born doctoral students with the opportunity to grow professionally by advertising opportunities through email, bulletin boards, and announcing them during class meetings. If possible, academic advisors should reach out to their advisees regarding such opportunities.

Educating new foreign-born students on the doctoral process. This study provides several possible implications for improving foreign-born students' experience in American higher education. Accurate information and adequate orientation should be given to new doctoral students regarding the nature of U.S. doctoral education prior to beginning the program. Participants' in this study had high expectations of American higher education based on incomplete information about the doctoral program. They expected to complete the doctoral program based on a timeline they set for themselves, to immediately secure faculty jobs in the United States after graduation, to gain a stable career, and decent pay (Zhou, 2015). Increasing the understanding of foreign-born doctoral students about the doctoral process and the amount of

time required to complete a doctorate better prepares them to navigate the graduate process. They should be cognizant of the amount of time needed to complete the program as well as the availability of graduate assistantship opportunities (Astin, 1975, 1984; Fryer & Elliot, 2007; Lindholm, 2004). Also, before working on a dissertation, faculty (mentors and advisors) should clearly explain the purpose of the dissertation. “It is not just to create a hard-bound book that students keep.” The process of the dissertation should be communicated to students, and that one’s dissertation could be used to further the person’s career regarding publications. Students should be aware they can convert their doctoral dissertation into books and other working materials for publication.

Tracking foreign-born alumni. Some foreign-born doctoral recipients have not been able to utilize their degrees after graduation. It has been difficult for some to secure jobs in academia because they lacked experience in teaching college while they were in the doctoral program. Departments should be able to track their alumni, see what they are doing, and provide assistance for them to be able to use some of the skills and knowledge gained from the graduate program. The institution and program departments could also hire these alumni on a part-time basis as advisors or to supervise undergraduate student teachers who are in the fields. This could reduce faculty workload.

Opportunity for professional development and a graduate assistantship. Many doctoral students do not have the opportunity to secure a graduate assistantship position. The program department should make it a requirement for doctoral students to work closely with a faculty member and be given the opportunity to publish an article with a faculty member prior to completion of the program; in that way, students have first-hand experience with publication. Additionally, program departments should establish clear criteria for graduate assistantship

positions; in that way, those who do not secure a graduate assistantship position will not feel left out although there are limited posts.

Recognizing and addressing racial/ethnic biases. Institutional racism does exist, and colleges and universities must acknowledge its existence and create strategies to eliminate it. Racism plays a major role in the negative experiences of foreign-born doctoral students and can cause both emotional and psychological pain and distress (Sue et al., 2007; Truong & Museus, 2012). Racism should be addressed at institutional and departmental levels by organizing awareness workshops, “which must include majority privilege, institutional racism, and multicultural awareness” (Arocho, 2017, p. 125). The goal of such workshops is to provide an understanding, sensitivity, and appreciation of a rich, diverse student body. As such, this value on diversity is not mere words but in practice. This will enable both faculty and native-born students to gain greater awareness of others, develop better interaction and interpersonal communication skills, and be able to control biases. Also, departments should hire racially diverse faculty. Course evaluations should include departmental behaviors and attitudes, racial diversity, and experiences with racism within the department. Additionally, these evaluations should be discussed at departmental meetings, and an action plan should be drawn up to inform and change negative departmental practices.

Advisement. Several participants did not have positive relationships with their advisors because they were not readily available to give them advice they needed. Advisors should be evaluated on the quality of their advisement by asking advisees to complete questionnaires at the end of every semester. The program director or department chair should discuss a summary of responses with advisors that perform poorly or minimally. Also, there should be a number of interactions between advisors and advisees per month with a guide created by the university or

program department that includes topics and issues such as availability of the advisor, respect, time management, professionalism, challenges and conflicts, and best practices for successfully completing the milestone exams and the proposal and dissertation defense. Unmatched expectations between students and advisors are a well-established cause for attrition for doctoral students in general (Gardner, 2009; Golde, 2000, 2005; Lovitts, 2008). The quality of the student-advisor relationship is one of the most crucial factors for doctoral students' persistence, development, and satisfaction (Green & Kim, 2005; Lovitts, 2001, 2008). Lacking advice and support are detrimental, and demotivate and demoralize doctoral students as well as undermine intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Faculty workload. Faculty workloads, as well as additional responsibilities, were found to delay mentors' feedback to mentees; as a result, it extended the time-to-degree. It is probably infeasible and expensive for institutions to have faculty members whose responsibility is solely to advise and mentor doctoral students. Institutions may consider reducing faculty members' workload to ensure that mentors receive a certain number of doctoral students to mentor, and/or relieve them of other administrative responsibilities.

Increasing interactions between foreign-born and native-born students. Findings show most foreign-born and native-born students did not have cordial relationships. Granted that institutions celebrate cultural diversity and organize gatherings during the holiday season, it is imperative the Office of International Program should provide opportunities for foreign-born students to celebrate their culture and traditions in various venues. Also, there should be orientations for native-born students whereby, they are educated about other cultures and the importance of diversity and respect for others from different races/ethnicities.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study examined how expectancies and values motivated foreign-born doctoral recipients to pursue doctoral degrees in the field of education. The study also examined the costs experienced as well as the strategies used to mitigate those costs. Additionally, the study investigated how socialization elements may have contributed to foreign-born doctoral recipients' persistence toward degree completion. More research is needed to further understand foreign-born doctoral students' experiences and how they can fully be integrated into their doctoral programs like their native-born counterparts. Recommendations for future research are as follows:

- Few studies incorporate expectancy-value and socialization to examine foreign-born students' doctoral experience. Additional research is needed to extend the utility of expectancy-value and socialization theories, especially within foreign-born student doctoral education.
- Aggregating foreign-born doctoral students as a homogenous group of international students overlook nuanced experiences of foreign-born students. Future research is needed to focus on specific regions where these students come from to better address their unique challenges.
- In this study, foreign-born doctoral recipients with graduate assistantship positions were found to be more integrated than those who did not have the opportunity to work as graduate assistants or work closely with faculty members. Therefore, research should focus specifically on comparing the experiences of native-born doctoral students with a graduate assistantship and those without a graduate assistantship to further examine how

the doctoral experiences with graduate assistantship are qualitatively different from those without, providing insight into additional means to improve the doctoral experience.

- This study focused on the experiences and the persistence motivation of foreign-born doctoral recipients. Future research should explore the experiences of foreign-born doctoral students who did not complete their doctoral program (non-persisters). It would shed light on their experiences and challenges that may have led to their attrition.
- Time-to-degree has been found to be high in the field of education (6 to 12 years). Findings from this study indicated faculty workload might attribute to prolonged time-to-degree. Future research should focus on faculty perspective on how program departments and institutions could reduce faculty workload, especially for those who serve as mentors (dissertation chairs), to provide timely and quality feedback to doctoral students.
- Additional persistence studies should be conducted by including the perspectives of advisors and faculty members. A positive relationship with advisors and faculty has been linked to doctoral students' success. Incorporating their viewpoint would add insight into the approaches they use to support students' persistence in the doctoral program.
- Participants in this study were from one mid-sized private university and one program department, and the findings were limited and could not be generalized to other institutions or program departments. Therefore, additional studies that include more universities, program departments, and disciplines from more states are recommended.
- A study should be conducted that examines the factors contributing to the persistence of foreign-born doctoral students who attended a public university. This study should explore if these students experienced challenges similar to the participants in this present study.

- A study should be conducted by comparing the experiences of foreign-born students who have completed doctorates in various academic disciplines. This study should focus on the factors that contribute to doctoral student success and explore the impediments to success.
- Future studies should be conducted in other types of institutions such as research institutions. The findings from these studies should be analyzed to explore the variation of the factors of persistence and the impediments to persistence for foreign-born students.

Conclusion

This study adds to the current body of literature focusing on foreign-born doctoral recipients' expectancies and values that motivated them to pursue their doctorates as well as the strategies used to mitigate the costs experienced while in the program. This study also reaffirms and identifies socialization elements that facilitated foreign-born participants' degree completion. It was not uncommon for participants to feel a lack of integration and dissatisfaction in their doctoral journey. Faculty, administrators, and policymakers should be sensitive to foreign-born students' socialization experiences and provide means to assist them in integrating into the doctoral process. This study sought to explore foreign-born doctoral recipients' motivating factors for pursuing and persisting to doctorate completion and to understand better the ways in which foreign-born doctoral students interact with faculty and native-born peers in American higher education. It calls for inclusion, consistency in the doctoral process across various stages in the doctoral program, and fairness in opportunities for professional development and institutional practices to ensure academic success and fulfillment of career goals of foreign-born doctoral students in American graduate education.

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Appendices

**Appendix A:
IRB Approval Letter**



November 10, 2016

Sr. Maurice Liguori Okoroji

Dear Sr. Liguori Okoroji,

The Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board has reviewed the information you have submitted addressing the concerns for your proposal entitled "Persistence Motivation of Foreign-Born Doctoral Recipients in the Field of Education". Your research protocol is hereby approved as revised through expedited review. The IRB reserves the right to recall the proposal at any time for full review.

Enclosed for your records are the signed Request for Approval form and the stamped original Consent Form. Make copies only of this stamped form.

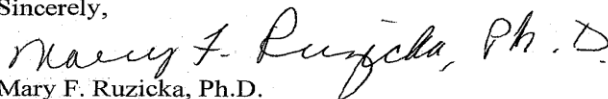
The Institutional Review Board approval of your research is valid for a one-year period from the date of this letter. During this time, any changes to the research protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to their implementation.

According to federal regulations, continuing review of already approved research is mandated to take place at least 12 months after this initial approval. You will receive communication from the IRB Office for this several months before the anniversary date of your initial approval.

Thank you for your cooperation.

In harmony with federal regulations, none of the investigators or research staff involved in the study took part in the final decision.

Sincerely,



Mary F. Ruzicka, Ph.D.
Professor
Director, Institutional Review Board

cc: Dr. Eunyoung Kim

Office of Institutional Review Board

Presidents Hall · 400 South Orange Avenue · South Orange, New Jersey 07079 · Tel: 973.313.6314 · Fax: 973.275.2361 · www.shu.edu

A HOME FOR THE MIND, THE HEART AND THE SPIRIT

Appendix B: Letter of Solicitation

My name is Maurice Liguori Okoroji. I am a doctoral student in education leadership, management, and policy at Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey. I am conducting a doctoral dissertation, and it is my hope that you would agree to participate in my dissertation study on doctoral student persistence.

With the high attrition rate and no demonstrable decline in time-to-degree in doctoral education, it has become imperative to explore and understand from those students who have successfully completed their doctoral degrees, the factors that motivated them to persist toward degree completion.

I will conduct interviews with foreign-born doctoral recipients who have successfully completed their doctoral degrees in the field of education. The potential results of the study will help to further improve the quality of doctoral programs and to better support the needs of doctoral students particularly foreign-born students in U.S. higher education.

If you are a foreign-born who have completed your doctoral degree within the last 5 years (2011-2016) from a traditional on-campus doctoral degree program in the field of education, you are eligible to participate in this study.

The interview will be conducted at a place and time that is convenient for you between October 2016 and October 2017. During the interview, I will ask you questions about:

- your belief in your ability to pursue a doctoral degree,
- things that shaped your views about your abilities to complete your doctoral degree,
- why you decided to earn a doctoral degree,
- what you enjoyed most about your doctoral program,
- your opportunity to work closely with faculty in your department,
- how your interactions with peers contributed to your persistence toward attaining your doctoral degree, and
- some of the strategies you used to mitigate some challenges.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and greatly appreciated. With your permission, the interview will be recorded with a digital voice recorder. Information from this research will be used solely for the purpose of this study and any publications that may result from this study. All conversations will remain confidential; your name and other identifying characteristics will not be used in reports or presentation.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and sincerely hope you will grant your consent to participate in this important study. If you have any questions or would like to participate, please contact me as soon as possible at Maurice.okoroji@shu.student.edu or at 973-280-3190.

I look forward to learning about how you persisted through the doctoral program!

Sincerely,

Maurice Liguori Okoroji

Doctoral Candidate

Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership, Management, and Policy

Seton Hall University College of Education and Human Services

Appendix C: Informed Consent Form

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

NOV 10 2016

Approval Date



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
AND HUMAN SERVICES

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Expiration Date

NOV 10 2017

Research Participant Consent Form

Researcher's Affiliation: The researcher for this study is Maurice Liguori Okoroji. She is conducting this research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. in Higher Education Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University located in South Orange, New Jersey.

Purpose of Study/Research: The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that motivate foreign-born students to pursue and persist towards attaining their doctoral degree in the field of education.

Research Procedure: Participation in the study entails completion of a demographic survey, and one in-depth, open-ended, semi-structured interview. Interview will be conducted face-to-face and online (Skype) with the researcher, Maurice Liguori Okoroji. Respondents are however cautioned about the possibility of hacking if Skype is the choice of the method of interview. Participants will be asked to participate in an interview that lasts between 60 and 90 minutes with interview questions focusing on experiences in their doctoral program; expectations and values as they shape their ability to pursue and complete a doctoral degree, and the costs that may have contributed to their persistence towards completing their degree; interactions with faculty, peers, and institutional structures. The interviews will take place at a location that a participant and the researcher agree to such as a private room in a library or an office.

Interview Protocol: The demographic questions include age, nationality/nativity, race/ethnicity, gender, education level, year program was started, and year program was completed. Sample questions that will be asked of each participant during interview protocol include:

- What is your belief in your ability to pursue a doctoral degree?
- Why did you decide to earn a doctoral degree?
- What did you enjoy most about your doctoral program?
- Considering your present career, was pursuing a doctoral degree in the field of education worth the effort?
- How did your interaction with faculty contribute to your persistence and attainment of your doctoral degree?
- Describe your experience working with a faculty in your department.
- How did your interactions with peers contribute to your persistence towards attaining your doctoral degree?
- What strategies did you use to overcome your challenges towards your degree completion?

Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy
Jubilee Hall • 400 South Orange Avenue • South Orange, NJ 07079 • Tel: 973.761.9397 • Fax: 973.275.2847 • www.shu.edu

A H O M E F O R T H E M I N D . T H E H E A R T A N D T H E S P I R I T

Voluntary Nature of Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants may stop participation at any time without penalty. Participants may also have the option to reschedule the interview for another time or skip any questions they are not comfortable answering during the interview without any negative consequences.

Anonymity: Anonymity is not possible for this study because the researcher knows the participants. However, confidentiality will be ensured by using a pseudonym for the institution and for the participants by not providing any identifying information in reports.

Storage of Data: If the participants agree to have their interviews to be digitally recorded, the data file will be stored on a password protected USB flash drive in a locked file cabinet at the researcher's home. The researcher will personally transcribe all the interviews, and will not identify the participants by name; only by assigned pseudonyms. The electronic copies of the interview transcript material will be stored along with the audio file on a password protected USB memory device. Names and identification numbers will be redacted from all print materials accessed during the study, including the demographic questionnaire and enrollment data. These data will also be categorized under the assigned pseudonym and stored in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home. After the research is completed, the audio files, transcripts, and print materials will be destroyed.

Confidentiality: Responses during the interview will remain confidential. All participants' identities will be protected in final and preliminary reports and published materials by using pseudonyms. During the study, only the dissertation mentor and committee members will have access to the coded information.

Access to Record: Only the researcher will have access to the records associated with this study. The dissertation mentor and committee members will also have the right to view the records of the study. The research participants will also be given access to their respective data upon request.

Anticipated Risks: There are no anticipated risks involved with taking part in this research, including potential physical or emotional stress or discomfort.

Benefits: Your participation in this study will help to further improve the quality of doctoral programs and to better support the needs of doctoral students particularly foreign-born students in U.S. higher education.

Participant Compensation: There will not be monetary compensation provided to participants for this study.

Contact Information: If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation in this study, you may contact Maurice Liguori Okoroji, the researcher for this study at: mauriceliguori.okoroji@student.shu.edu or by phone 973-280-3190. The Dissertation Mentor,

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

NOV 10 2016

Approval Date

Expiration Date

NOV 10 2017

Dr. Eunyoung Kim can also be reached at eunyoung.kim@shu.edu or by phone 973-275-2156 in the Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University, 400 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079. If there are questions about participants' right or if you believe a participant has been placed at risk, contact Dr. Mary F. Ruzicka, Director of Seton Hall University IRB for Human Subjects Research at irb@shu.edu or by phone 973-313-6314. Results of the study may be presented at conferences or published at the discretion of the researcher. Again, actual names will not be used in any presentation or publication. If you would like a copy of the results, you may contact the researcher, Maurice Liguori Okoroji, to receive a copy after the completion of the study.

Copy of Consent Form: You are asked to sign two copies of this form. The researcher will keep one on file, stored in a locked file to which only the researcher has access. The form will be held separately from audio files and records to protect participants' privacy. One of the signed copies will be for participants to keep in case they have any questions about the study. Participants will be provided with a copy of the Informed Consent Forms prior to beginning the interview process.

Permission to Audiotape: I agree to have the interview digitally recorded for transcription. I understand that these audio files will not be presented. I also, understand that I have the right to review all or any portion of the audio file and request that it be destroyed.

(Please circle one)

Yes

No

I have read the material above, and any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this study realizing that I may withdraw without penalty at any time.

Thank you for your participation in this study. Please sign and date both copies of this Informed Consent Form and return one to the researcher in the stamped self-addressed envelope at 522 Orange Street, Newark, NJ 07107 for those who choose to be interviewed via Skype. The other is for your records.

Participant's Name (Please Print)

Participant's Signature

Date

Seton Hall University
Institutional Review Board

NOV 10 2016

Approval Date

Expiration Date

NOV 10 2017

**Appendix D:
Demographic Information Questionnaire**

1. Name: _____
2. Phone: _____
3. Email Address: _____
4. Gender: Female _____ Male _____ Other _____
5. Age: _____
6. Ethnicity: _____
7. Race: _____

Immigration Status

8. What is your immigration status? Please check one:

I am an international student (with F1 visa) _____

I am a permanent resident _____

I am a naturalized U.S. citizen _____

9. What year did you receive your citizenship?

Academic Information

10. Name of doctoral degree program: _____ Education administration _____ Education
research, _____ Teacher education _____ Teaching field _____ Counseling
Psychology

(Please check one).

11. Year of Enrollment into doctoral degree Program: _____
12. Year doctoral degree program was completed: _____
13. Master's Degree Institution: _____
14. Major in Master's Degree: _____

15. Year of Graduation of Master's Degree: _____

16. Undergraduate Institution: _____

17. Major in Bachelor's Degree: _____

18. Year of Graduation of Bachelor's Degree: _____

Career Plans

19. Briefly explain long-term career goal:

Background Information

20. Married _____ Single _____ Divorced _____

21. Level of Father's Education: _____

22. Father's Occupation: _____

23. Level of Mother's Education: _____

24. Mother's Occupation: _____

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire.

Appendix E: Interview Protocol

Process: Data will be collected by using semi-structured interviews organized by key components to be discussed in the interview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The interview will begin by explaining the logistics of the interview protocol and gathering of background information about participants' demographics—name, gender, age, field of study, year participants started a doctoral program and year participants completed their doctoral program. Next, the questions will focus on key components of the Expectancy-Value Theory that motivated participants to pursue a doctoral degree in the field of education and persist toward attaining their degree. The remainder of the questions will focus on participants' description of their experiences while in the doctoral program, which will include questions about their socialization while in the doctoral program; and how socialization with faculty and peers, and institutional structures contributed to their persistence toward degree completion. Since questions will be semi-structured, there will be follow-up questions to clarify information, request further descriptions, and probe more deeply into participants' perspectives on their experiences.

The table below shows an overview of the flow and key components of the interview, with sample questions included. Interviews will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. It will be audio recorded and transcribed after each interview.

Interview Session Protocol: After obtaining a signed consent form, a brief demographic questionnaire will be sent to participants to complete and return before the scheduled interview.

Interview Script:

“Thank you for your participation today. My name is Maurice Liguori Okoroji, and I am a doctoral candidate in higher education leadership, management, and policy program at Seton Hall University. You were invited to participate in this study because you shared on your

questionnaire that you identify as a foreign-born doctoral recipient in the field of education in the past 10 years. During this 60 to 90 minutes interview, I will ask you questions about your background, academic experiences and how your expectations, values, interactions with faculty, peers, and institutional structure have impacted or motivated you to persist toward completing your doctoral degree.

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors that motivate foreign-born doctoral recipients to persist toward completing and earning their doctoral degree in the field of education. The title of this study is: Persistence Motivation of Foreign-Born Doctoral Recipients in the Field of Education.

As stated in the consent form that you signed, your participation in this study is voluntary, and the interview will be recorded with a digital recorder, so that I may accurately document your responses. If at any time during the interview you wish to discontinue the use of the recorder or the interview, please feel free to let me know. Information from this research will be used solely for the purpose of this study and any presentations or publications that may result from this study. All conversations will remain confidential; your name and other identifying characteristics will not be used. Thank you in advance for your time and being part of this study.”

Interview Guide:

Participant’s Interview Number: _____ Pseudonym: _____

Institution Pseudonym: _____

Date of Interview: _____ Start Time: _____ Location: _____

Protocol Outline of Key Components

	Questions to establish background and ensure eligibility in addition to questions asked in a demographic questionnaire.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about yourself, your family, where you come from originally, and where you grew up. 2. Did any of your parents attend college? If yes, where? 3. When and why did you decide to pursue a doctoral degree in the U.S.?
	Components of Expectancy-Value Theory	Sub-Components of Expectancy-Value Theory	Interview Questions
1.	Expectancy (Having expectancy of being successful in a task)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectancy for success (individuals' beliefs about how well they will perform in an upcoming task) • Ability beliefs (individuals' perception of his or her present competence at a given activity) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tell me about your belief in your ability to pursue a Ph.D. degree b. What shaped your views about your abilities to complete your Ph.D.? c. What kind of advice did you receive about your decision to pursue a Ph.D., if any? d. How hard did you have to study in order to pass both your qualifying and comprehensive exams? e. Compared to your colleagues in the doctoral program, how long did it take you to complete your dissertation?
2.	Task Values (Having a value for engaging in a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment value (importance of doing well on a given task) • Intrinsic/interest value (joy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Why did you decide to earn a Ph.D.? b. What did you enjoy

	task)	<p>derived from engaging in a task)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extrinsic/utility value (usefulness of completing a task) 	<p>most about your doctoral program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Why did you choose education as a major field of study? d. What values did you have about earning a Ph.D.? e. Why did you decide to pursue your Ph.D. in the United States?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost (cost of engaging in an activity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceived effort (amount of effort needed to be successful) ▪ Loss of valued alternatives (time lost to engage in other valued activities) ▪ Psychological cost of failure (the anxiety related to the potential of failure at the task) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Considering your present career, was pursuing a PhD in the field of education worth the effort? b. Reflecting on the rigorous process in the doctoral program, tell me if it is worthwhile earning a PhD at all? c. Walk me through the sacrifices you made in order to complete and earn your PhD. d. How much did the amount of time you spent in the program keep you from engaging in other valued activities? e. Was there a time you thought of quitting the doctoral program? If yes, what made you persist toward completing and attaining your degree? f. How worried were you about persisting to completion of?
<p><i>Source:</i> Parsons et al., (1980) and Peters, D. L., & Daly, S. R. (2011).</p>			

	Socialization Theory Domains	Descriptions	Questions
1.	Interaction of students & educational structures	Description of interaction with educational/institutional structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Walk me through your opportunities for professional growth in your program department b. Tell me about your participation in any professional conference attended
2.	Interaction of Students & faculty	Description of experience in program department with faculty and staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Tell me about your opportunity to work closely with a faculty in your department. b. How was your relationship with the faculty in your program? c. How did your interaction with faculty contribute to your persistence and attainment of your doctoral degree?
3.	Interaction with Peer groups within a doctoral program	Description of the relationship with peers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. How did your interactions with peers contribute to your persistence toward attaining your doctoral degree? b. Walk me through your overall experience and the challenges encountered while in the program. c. Tell me some of the strategies you used to mitigate these challenges.