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THE MOTIVATION OF WORKING PRACTITIONERS SEEKING A DOCTORAL EDUCATION: FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF CONFUCIAN LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

This doctoral study explores the motivational orientations of working practitioners pursuing a professional doctoral program who are former and current DPS-IM program students at Syracuse University, School of Information Studies. The found motivational orientations are compared to Confucian philosophy principles of self-cultivation illustrated in *The Great Learning* (*DaXue*《大學》) which is considered the first of a set of Four Books (*Sishu*《四書》). The manuscript's structure consists of a brief of three principles, followed by eight steps that promote individual self-cultivation. Researchers frequently utilize these steps as a connection between civil conduct applied to social and political order (e.g. Keenan, 2011, p. 37). This study uses this Confucian philosophical framework to reveal self-cultivation components related to the motives and aspirations of this select group; Western older adult learners. This study also aims to bridge Eastern motivation theory with Western approaches, making a contribution to both motivational theory and adult education fields of study.

This research utilized semi-structured interviews of twenty one DPS-IM students (80.77% participation). Collected data revealed that the majority of the participants were working professionals who have been in their field for at least 10 years. The interview data revealed that self-cultivation was found to be the greatest motivational factor for this study group followed by self-improvement, self-transformation, and sense of responsibility; which are all supported by Confucian learning philosophy found in *The Great Learning*.

This study suggests that even though in modern times, a 2000 year-old Eastern philosophy of learning is synonymous with the motives of adults seeking further education regardless of their cultural background.

THE MOTIVATION OF WORKING PRACTITIONERS SEEKING A DOCTORAL

EDUCATION: FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF CONFUCIAN LEARNING

PHILOSOPHY

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DOCTORAL THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of Doctor of Professional Studies in Information Management
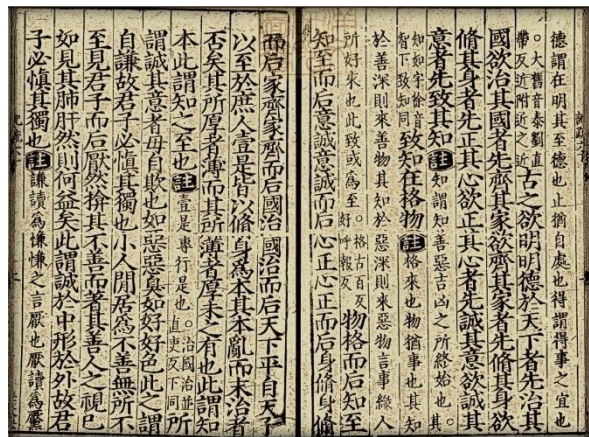
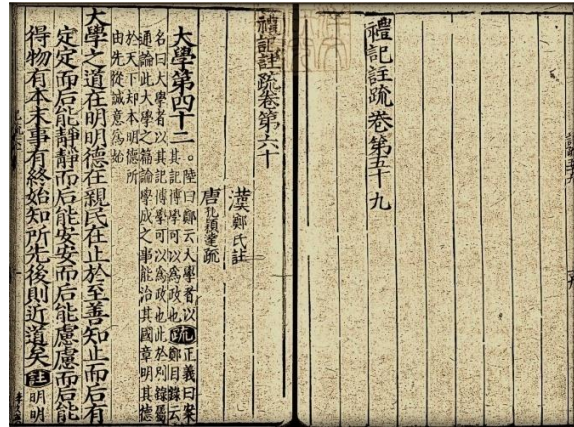in the Graduate School of Syracuse University

Syracuse University

May 2014

Original text of *The Great Learning*

Li Ji《禮記註疏》六十卷 (《十三經註疏》所收).

東京: 東京大學東洋文化研究所所蔵漢籍善本「全文影像資料庫」

Tokyo, Japan: The Institute of Oriental Culture, University of Tokyo.

My thesis work is dedicated to my late beloved father,

黃鶴屏

Wong Hok-Ping

His confidence in me and words of encouragement

in the pursuit of excellence

led me through my academic achievements

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

The completion of this study absolutely would not have been possible without the help and support of a great many people. I first want to thank the twenty-one DPS-IM cohorts who not only volunteered their time to participate in this study, but offered unconditional support and encouragement throughout my research journey.

Next, I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee for their support and assistance with a special thanks to Dr. Art Thomas, my advisor, for offering invaluable guidance and help with crafting my proposal document. I thank Dr. Ruth Small and Dr. Derrick Cogburn for challenging me to reach my potential and providing constructive comments. Their support and assistance have been invaluable and much appreciated.

I am truly grateful to each of you for all your help.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

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Since August 2008, the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University has offered

a doctorate program for information professionals. Classified as the Executive

Doctorate Program or Doctoral of Professional Studies in Information Management

(DPS-IM)program includes an off campus terminal degree curriculum with a blended

doctoral learning system including six face-to-face on-campus residential seminars,

required core courses, student progress reports, and a publishable dissertation.

Students may complete their doctoral degree in 36 to 42 months, compared to four

years in a traditional doctoral program. Much like a standard PhD program, students

are supervised by an academic advisor and committees, and assessed by internal and

external examiners.

  The DPS-IM program is designed for the professional associated with "executive

and senior information management positions in the public, private, defense, academic,

and non-profit sectors" (Syracuse University School of Information Studies, Doctoral of

Professional Studies overview, 2013). This program has successfully attracted many

professionals; five to six professionals have entered the program annually as of 2012.[1]

These professionals are experts in their fields, demonstrating preparedness for

doctoral work (Doncaster & Lester, 2002, p. 91). The program is identified as an

alternative to the traditional and dominant PhD route for advanced work and study

within a professional setting; appearing not to be in competition but rather distinctive

and alternative to each other (Taylor, 2007, p. 156).The differences between the

traditional PhD and the DPS-IM are displayed in Table 1.1.

      The distinguishing feature of a professional doctorate program is a cohort-based

model in which students are immediately categorized as being members of a learning

community (Budziszewski, 2008, p. 8). Adopting the cohort-based model, the emphasis

of Syracuse DPS-IM program is to support professionals going beyond a "practitioner"

and performing scholarly research in their fields. To date, a total of 26 professionals

have participated in the DPS-IM program.[2]

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[1] The School of Information decided to implement an alternative year admission model in July 13,
2012 (Dean Elizabeth (Liz) Liddy's email message to faculty and students of the School of
Information Studies on July, 13, 2012).

[2] The DPS program is not accepting new students in 2013 and 2014, "Applications will not be
accepted for the DPS-IM program for 2014. The next admission term is tentatively planned to be
summer 2014 for a 2015 entering cohort." (Syracuse University School of Information Studies
website)

Table 1.1: The differences between the PhD and DPS-IM program
(Adopted from Syracuse University School of Information Studies graduate program websites)

Distinctive features	PhD	DPS-IM
Research oriented	Research training every semester through individual faculty-supervised, hands-on research practice	Research training through brief residency course, distance learning, and collaborative work
Professional Development	Normally viewed as providing initial training for a career in academia	Tends to be seen as higher level program in terms of career change and development or the desire to consolidate professional experiential learning
Collegiality	Faculty members work closely with students in both formal and informal settings	Teaching team/cohorts of students; create a strong peer network
Supervision	Personalized supervision; students are given annual individual evaluations by faculty to identify significant intellectual gains over the past year and to suggest courses and prioritized activities for the remainder of the program	Different mentors/supervisors for different elements of the program. Supervisors may be experts in a specific professional area as opposed to a particular discipline
Educational credentials	Entry following a Master's degree	Entry following a Master's degree, with at least seven years of senior experience in the information profession
Skills	Requirement for transferable skills in training and have a CAN-DO and WILL-DO attitude toward the doctoral study	Students already employed usually at a senior level in their profession and are knowledgeable/experts in their field
Assessment	Outcome product of dissertation	Continuous assessment through course work plus outcome product of thesis
Research	Focus on making a contribution to knowledge with wide dissemination	Focus on affecting professional practice as well as making a contribution to knowledge, with focused dissemination

The typical DPS-IM student is an established and experienced practitioner in the field of information science which includes librarians, information specialists, CEOs and CIOs, employees in the US government, or public and private sectors, working in education and/or management roles. They are knowledgeable in their fields, possessing leadership and problem-solving skills. They have a high-level capacity of engaging academic research activities in a cohort-learning model. Their ages range from late-thirties to nearing retirement years. They are in their mid-career or end phrase of their profession yet they are eager to combine their life experiences and academic research. These working practitioners enter the doctorate program with responsibilities such as full-time employment and family commitments. They are able to invest in their education. Each of them holds at least a master's degree. Many possess two or more master's degrees (Appendix A).

Like my cohorts, my decision to return to graduate school and pursue a doctoral degree was a personal choice resulting from a complex interaction of past experience and present circumstances. Career development and professional advancement are not the dominant motive for my entering the DPS-IM program since I have already had substantial work experience. Instead, my desire to reach the summit of academic achievement is the motive for my enrollment in the doctoral program.

I have served as a professional librarian for over a decade and enjoy daily conversations and challenging discussions with faculty and graduate students while assisting with their research projects. The nature of this environment pushed and

stimulated my interest to pursue a doctoral degree, demanding that I become more knowledgeable in my field by developing new academic research skills.

When I attended the summer 2011 residency mixer event, one of the PhD candidates asked me, "You are already knowledgeable in your field (library science), why do you want a doctorate?" I answered, "Having served as a librarian and providing research assistance to students and faculty for years, I wanted to move beyond a practitioner and pursue more scholarly studies."

In Fall 2012, I enrolled in the motivational aspects of information study course and was exposed to many motivational theories. These theories revealed the establishment of the relationship between inspirational theories and older adult students, showing that interest has increased in this area and is considered of vital importance in the current higher education field.

As the result of my career in library science, the casual conversation with fellow cohorts and PhD students, and the motivational topic insight gained in the afore mentioned information studies course spurred my research interest, I decided to investigate the motivation of older adults (particularly working practitioners) pursuing a doctoral degree.

Statement of the problem

During the past decade, many higher education institutions have developed non-traditional degree programs attracting older adults. Furthermore, adult education has become one of the major research areas in the field of education. However, past

research efforts have primarily focused on three main dimensions: (1) demographics and gender descriptive variables, particularly older women (e.g. Grossberg, 1981; Clayton & Smith, 1987; Schonfeld, 1989; Chrzanowski, 1995; Clift, 1998; Ford, 1998; Carlson, 1999; Padula & Miller, 1999; Chambers, 2002; Thurston, 2002; Hydock, 2005; Frances, 2009;Bates & Norton, 2013); (2) the differences between traditional and non-traditional students (e.g. Gordon, Olson &Hamsher, 1993; Jacobson, 2000; Kikuchi, 2006; Abdullah, 2008; Stephen-Grube, 2008; Mulenga & Liang, 2012); (3) and career-oriented adult learners such as nurses (e.g. VanNoord, 2006; Adorno, 2010; Pederson, 2012; Williamson, 2013), business professionals (e.g. Carter, 1992; Chen, 2000; Buchanan et al, 2007; Teowkul et al, 2009), and teachers (e.g. Chan, 1997; Cai, 2004; Harvey, 2005; Chen, 2009; Chiu, 2012) who are seeking a Bachelor or a Master's Degree. Despite the increasing number of older adult involvement in higher education, studies focusing on the refined category of the middle-aged and/or end-phase career older adults returning to academia have been neglected.

The most common thread of conceptual framework of past literature unveiled a great effort to create inferential motivation theories concerning older adult students; such as the Maslow's (1943, 1954, 1958) hierarchy of need theory (Chiang, 2001), self-determination theory (Deci et al., 1991; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Habibin, 2012), Elliott & Church (1997) and Elliott & Sheldon's (1997) failure avoidance achievement theory (Lee, 2007; McCollum & Kajs, 2007; Heimerdinger & Hinsz, 2008), Dweck (1986) and Dweck & Leggett's (1988) social-cognitive theory of self-regulation (Dupeyrat & Mariné, 2005), while very little has been investigated specifically utilizing Eastern

motivational concepts to study Western adult learners. In this study, I propose to apply a previously unused approach by using a Confucian theoretical framework to explore the motivational aspects of the DPS-IM students – older adult learners who do not come from "Confucian education nations" (Marginson, 2010) or Confucian-influenced societies (Tan & Chee, 2005; Inglehart, 2006),[3] who are returning to academia. Following this theoretical perspective, this exploratory study was designed to elicit and analyze the motivational components of this unique population.

Rationale and purpose of the study

The topic of this study invokes my own experiences as an older adult seeking a doctorate at midlife. When I was introduced to fellow program cohorts, I was inspired by the excitement and energy in the crowd. They were diverse socially, culturally, and had varied educational and professional backgrounds. I remain impressed by their career accomplishments. Many of them are the leaders of prominent private corporations or public settings with the titles of CEOs, CIOs, and military general or commander. The most amazing discovery was that two-thirds of my cohorts are over 45 years of age; regardless, they had just begun an extremely self-disciplined demanding program in addition to their well-established careers and busy daily lives. Sharing casual conversations with my fellow students provided a flash back of my own

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[3] In Tan and Chee's (2005) study, the "Confucian-influenced societies" referred to Singapore and Malaysia. When mapping global values, Inglehart (2006) specified the "Confucian-influenced societies' are China, Taiwan, South Korean, and Japan. Marginson (2010) refers "Confucian education nations" to Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Japan and Korea.

adventure and posed many questions, which eventually led to the development of this comprehensive study:

- What motivated fellow cohorts to pursue this program? (Determination)

- What are the uncertainties of seeking a doctoral degree? (Doubts)

- What brought this diverse group of professionals together to take on a doctorate journey? (Aspirations)

- Do they have anything in common? (Matching/Alike)

The questions of determination, doubts, aspirations, and matching have elaborated the leading research topic that I intend to address: motivational factors affecting professional doctoral studies students re-entering academia at middle age and beyond.

Research questions

This study focused on the decision/motivation factors of older adult students enrolled or enrolling in the DPS-IM program at Syracuse University School of Information Studies. This effort examined the possible inclusion of motivation theory across cultural borders by using Eastern philosophy as a conceptual framework of studying the motivation of Western adult learners.

This study was guided and administered by the following four research questions:

RQ 1: What factors have motivated working practitioners pursuing a professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce? (Self-cultivation)

RQ 2: What learning experiences in the lives of these working practitioners have influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life? (Self-improvement)

RQ 3: Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education? (Self-transformation)

RQ 4: What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees? (Sense of purpose and responsibilities)

The conceptual framework was primarily drawn from Western motivational theories exhibited in a specific study group while correlating these behaviors to an Eastern motivational model conveyed in the Confucian *The Great Learning*. Therefore, my proposed study is <u>NOT</u> about:

- The retention and persistence of older students

- The interpretation of neo-Confucian philosophy

- A comparative study of the academic motivation between Western and non-Western adult students

- Motivational aspects of older adults pursuing an online advanced degree

- The influences of Eastern collectivism versus Western individualism in adult education

Significance and contributions

Previous studies on the motivation of the older student focused on demographics and mainly use statistical analysis (quantitative approach) with a large number of participants. Considering the potential relatively small number of participants in this study, this research uses semi-structured interviews for data collection and analysis which will allow a more intimate process to collect a broader range of information.

The approach of this study was to use the Confucian philosophy of learning motivation as the conceptual analytical framework; yet while avoiding the generalization of the characteristics of the "Western" and "Asian" components commonly associated with this topic with the primary belief that motivation is human nature. With this in mind, it is important to point out that the focus of this research is NOT a neo-Confucian analysis or an interpretation of Confucian works.

In summary, the contributions of this study are summarized as follows:

- To identify motivational aspects of adult learners seeking a doctoral education after years in the workforce
- To demonstrate if Confucian philosophy of learning motivation concepts are associated to the decision-making process of working practitioners pursuing a doctoral education
- To make a contribution to the literature in the field of adult education

Table 1.2: The research approach of this study

Areas	"Missing pieces"	My approach
Adult education	Motives of older adult professionals re-entering graduate school for a doctoral study	Researching adult students ages 35 to 65 pursuing a doctorate degree after years in the workforce
Motivation theories	Non-Western motivation theory	Eastern motivation theory
Research method	Narrative approach	Collect study group's personal experience and stories for analysis
Confucian philosophy of motivation	Confucian motivation aspects in *The Great Learning*	Use Eastern motivation concepts to explore the motivation of Western adult doctoral students

Assumptions and potential limitations

Assumptions relevant to this study are:

- The interaction of intrinsic and extrinsic forces within the individual and the surrounding environment causes the adult to take some action (Williams,1996, p. 8)

- Curiosity about what motivates adults to participate in adult education has prompted considerable writing and research in the field (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991, p. 79)

- Returning to school is now more than a trend; it is becoming the norm (Schlossberg, Lynch & Chickering, 1989, p. 34)

- Learning is the way for human intellectual growth, self-fulfillment, and manifesting innate clear character (Kim, 2000, pp. 119 & 124). Therefore, there should be no significant motivational pathway difference between these "West" adult learners and "Eastern" Confucian motivation of learning

- DPS-IM students know and can articulate their decisions to seek a doctorate degree at this time in their professional career; participants in this study are open and honest concerning their motives for seeking a doctorate

- The decision of DPS-IM students seeking a doctoral education represents positive change, which is perceived as a positive decision

This study is limited to the research of older adult students who are re-entering graduate school to pursue a professional doctorate at Syracuse University School of Information Studies. The size of the population under investigation limits opportunities to generalize to significant other populations, but provides opportunities for further research. Other potential limitations are:

- The purposefully selected study population is derived from the 26 current and past DPS-IM students at one institution. A larger study group might reveal different data

- Being a member of the cohort (insider-research) might have an impact on the data collection or analysis (possible bias)

- Four DPS cohorts attended the presentation of this proposal. Considering that their participation in the defense process might affect their responses to the research questions, they will be considered as a subgroup to determine if

there are any common features about their responses suggesting it was due

to their attendance at the proposal defense

Despite limitations, this study provides a foundation for further investigation of

the motivations of older adults engaging in a doctoral level study.

Terms and definitions

The following definitions apply to this study:

<u>Cohort of students</u>: A unique group of working professionals who entered the DPS

program at the same time and are expected to graduate in the same year. The nature of

cohort-based model learning as depicted in Cross (1998, p. 5) is a collaborative

learning, which Budziszweski (2008, pp. 8-9, 11) defines as community of learners and

connection – a constructivist development approach can help practitioners and policy

makers better understand and support adult learning.

<u>Confucian model of motivation</u>: A motivation theory developed from eleven

components illustrated in *The Great Learning* (originally text described as three

objectives and eight steps of practice), which serves as the theoretical framework of

this study.

<u>Confucian-influenced societies or Confucian-based education nations</u>: Countries,

regions, and/or communities that have been historically influenced by traditional

Confucian philosophy, which is commonly taught as a required topic in these Eastern

education systems. These societies include China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Malaysia,

Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam (Albrecht, 2001; Barron & Arcodia, 2002; Chuang, 2007).

DPS-IM program: Doctoral of Professional Students in Information Management which is offered at Syracuse University School of Information Studies. This program is classified as a part-time Executive Doctorate Program. Typically, students have been or are employed at a professional senior management level for at least seven years. They are knowledgeable experts in their respective fields (Syracuse University, School of Information Studies, Doctorate of Professional Studies overview, 2013).

Information/working professionals graduate students: Doctoral of Professional Studies students who enter the doctoral program bringing years of practice in the field of information science and/or library science. They are the experts in their fields and professionals associated with "executive and senior information management positions in the public, private, defense, academic, and non-profit sectors" (Syracuse University, School of Information Studies, Doctorate of Professional Studies overview, 2013).

Motivation: The process whereby goal-directed activity is instigated and sustained (Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008, p. 4).

Older adult students: Graduate students who are at least age 35, pursuing an advanced degree at graduate school.

Reentry or returning older adults: Students at least 35 years of age, who have returned to pursue a doctoral degree after spending years in the workforce.

The Confucian, *The Great Learning* (*DaXue*《大學》): Text that is traditionally dated

to the fifth century, soon after the death of Confucius (551-479 B.C.). It was most likely

composed by his followers during the brief Qin Dynasty (221-208 B.C.) (Eno, 2010). It

consists of one of the Four Books, *Sishu*《四書》– Book One: *The Great Learning*《大

學》, Book Two: *Doctrine of the Mean*《中庸》, Book Three: *Analects*《論語》, and

Book Four: *Mencius*《孟子》.

Three objectives and eight steps of practice: *The Great Learning* consists of a brief

text of three objectives, followed by eight phases of practice as governed by the

principles of the three objectives. The core teaching of the text is to glorify righteous

conduct/behavior, gain insights of the perfection of knowledge, attain the utmost

goodness, and create an ideal world of harmony and prosperity (Legge, 1893; Ku, 1915;

Wang, 2006; Eno, 2010).

Organization of the study

This thesis is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 constitutes a general

introduction into the topic elucidating of the background of the prescribed research

circumstances, problems, theoretical framework, rationale and potential limitations,

significance and contributions.

Chapter 2 provides a presentation of previous related studies in the area of adult

education that have relevance; emphasizing motivation theories, older adults and

higher education, Confucian educational philosophy values, Eastern philosophy and

motivational constructs as depicted in *The Great Learning*, and the connection between Confucian philosophy of learning motivation and Western motivation theories.

Chapter 3 consists of the research design utilized in this project, including the rationale of decision-making for screening and selecting participants, and the strategy for conducting the data analysis in the use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques, and the validity of the interview questions. To validate the research approach, two pilot studies were performed in June 2013 and September 2013 respectively.

Chapter 4 reports and analyzes the findings identified from research to be conducted and answers the research questions presented in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5 contains a summary of the research and findings, discussion of the findings, conclusions from the findings, and recommendations for future research.

Appendices include the profile of DPS-IM students from 2008 to 2012, demographic questionnaire, interview questions, informed consent letter, the questionnaire, Syracuse Institutional Review Board application, participant consent letter, a support letter from Syracuse University School of Information Studies, the Syracuse University IRB approval letter, Syracuse IRB amendment application and approval, related literature of older adults returning to higher education, selected literature in motivational aspects of working professionals reentering academia for an advanced degree, and the details of two pilot studies.

Chapter 2

Literature review

_____

The literature review accomplishes several purposes when conducting research; such as filling in gaps, extending prior studies, and providing a framework for establishing the importance of the proposed study (Creswell, 2003, pp. 29 & 30). Leedy & Ormrod (2009) further explicated that the function of literature review offers new ideas, informs researchers about other researchers who conduct work in the same area, shows researchers how to handle methodological and design issues, and reveals methods of dealing with problem situations. The published literature provides existing theories and prior research studies to assist researchers in indentifying their research problem (pp. 66-67) and to better understand of what is currently known and/or unknown about a topic. With that in mind, this mixed research study is guided by previous studies that focused on the motivational aspects of older adults pursuing an advanced degree at their middle to late age. The main focus of the literature review is on relevant theories used and their measurement instruments.

To make sure that the theoretical foundations and the choices of research design are not derailed, the search for related literature focuses within the following seven areas: motivation theories and their implications to higher education, motivational orientations of older adults returning to graduate school, motivational aspects of working professionals re-entering graduate studies, de-motivations and barriers of older adults pursuing higher education, Confucian oriented learning motivation concepts and *The Great Learning*, motivation scales and measurement tools, and narrative approaches and life-story studies.

To further orient and guide this study, the literature review was organized and presented under the following headings:

- Western motivational theories of adults participating in higher education

- Motivational aspects of working professionals returning to academia

- Motivation scales and measurement tools used in adult education

- Confucian educational philosophy and values

- Eastern motivation depicted in *The Great Learning*

- Motivational constructs in *The Great Learning*

- Confucian philosophy of learning motivation and Western motivation theories

Western motivation theories of participating in education

Motivation is a major research area in human psychology and higher education. Psychologists and educators have studied motivational orientations of college students since the 1950s. They have created an in-depth literature compilation pertinent to

motivational theories and their applications to higher education. Most studies explored

assorted motivational theories based on experimental projects using unique cases,

focusing on theoretical and empirical literature. In examining previous literature, it

appears that Maslow's (1943, 1954 & 1958) hierarchy of needs theory,

Csikszentimihalyi's (1997) flow theory, Deci & Ryan's (2000 & 2008) intrinsic and

extrinsic motivation theory, Deci et al's (1991) self-determination theory, and Elliot's

(Elliot & Church, 1997 & Elliot & Sheldon, 1997) failure avoidance achievement theory

are commonly used for the conceptual frameworks in studying adult motivation in

education (as cited and construed in Heimerdinger & Hinsez' work in 2008). Other

theories include human capital and social capital theory (Taylor, Kajganich & Pavić,

2011), economic investment theory (LaLonde & Sullivan, 1993 & 2005; as cited in

Jepsen, 2012, p. 169), and consumer decision theory (Li, 2010).

The NEED theory of Abraham Maslow

Maslow's (1943, 1954 & 1958) five-need theory is a definitive theory of human

motivation (p. 370). It is commonly interpreted as a pyramid model with the

physiological needs at the base and self-actualization needs at the top, as presented in

Figure 2.1. Based on this principle, when people are physically healthy, their

physiological needs have been satisfied, and are motivated, they will eventually embark

to self-actualization. In addition, he infers that this concept is biographically, culturally,

and situational determined as well (Maslow, 1943, p. 371). He believes that human

needs arrange themselves in hierarchies of prepotency (i.e. predominance) and that the

appearance of one need usually rests on the prior satisfaction of another more

prepotent need (Maslow, 1958, p. 26).

Figure 2.1: Maslow's pyramid motivation model

(Extracted from Maslow, 1943, pp. 372-382)
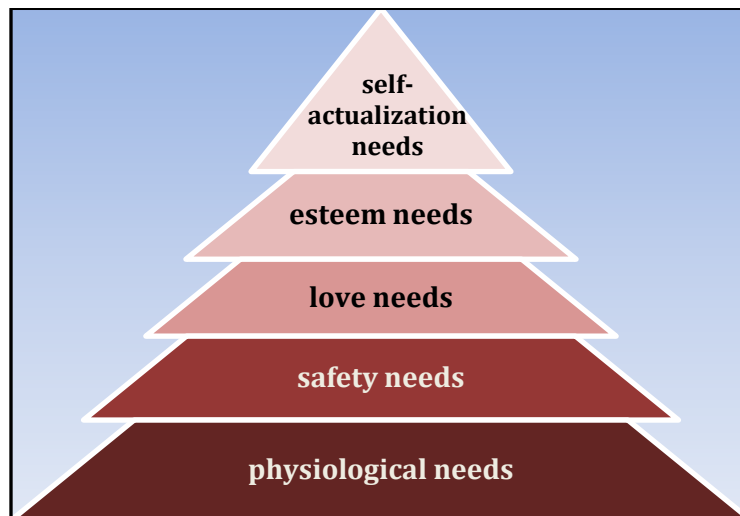
Since its first introduction in the 1950s, the Maslow's need-based theory has

widely been used for investigating older adult's involvement in education. For instance,

Warren (1968) reviewed the theory and sought implications for developing the inner

potential among adult students. The suggestions included promoting maximum learner

participation in program planning and evaluation, encouraging of self-actualization,

making programs attractive and evaluating programs in terms of their contribution to

self-actualization and intrinsic learning (abstract). Roberts (1972) considered self-

realization, self-direction and self-actualization learning in adult education as a function

of Maslow's need hierarchy.

With an aim to answer the questions, "Why do adults at age 50 seek a doctoral degree?" and "What drives older adults to pursue further academic studies with financial and time commitments when they are approaching a narrowing possible career direction and opportunity in formal employment?", Short (2004) used Maslow's theory as the conceptual framework in her published study. Twelve adults who were presently or recently enrolled in a doctoral program, and who were at least 50 years old during their program of study were analyzed (p. 31). They answered the initial research questions with four primary factors: the desire for credentials, generativity/giving back to others, love of learning and teaching, career change and new opportunities (p. 95).

Maslow's theory has also assisted in exploring the educational motives of non-Western student groups. In 2001, Chiang used Maslow's theory as a conceptual framework to compare and determine the motivation of adult students enrolling in the Department of Business Administration at the National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan (p. 40). Chiang found that self-actualization needs are the greatest motivation for the non-traditional student, followed by esteem, social, and safety needs. Physiological needs were the least common motivational need among this study population.

The flow theory of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

The origin of Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory stems from the desire to understand the phenomenon of intrinsically motivating or actively rewarding in and of "itself" (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 89). The theory relies on the psychology of

engagement with everyday life (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 37), changing the pattern of life, and being in a flow-producing situation (Ibid., p. 121). The conditions of flow, according to Csikszentmihalyi, include: (1) one is engaging challenges at a level appropriate to one's capabilities; (2) one possesses clear proximal goals and receives immediate feedback about the progress being made; (3) intense concentration on the present moment; (4) merging of action and awareness; (5) loss of awareness of oneself as a social actor; (6) a sense of controlling one's action; (7) a sense that time has passed faster than normal; and (8) experience of the activity is intrinsically rewarding (the ultimate goal is a purpose for the process) (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2010, pp. 195-196). A key characteristic the flow model shares with other motivational theories is interactionism (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002, p. 90).

As shown in the above paragraph, flow theory has an emphasis on intrinsic factors of motivation. According to Schopieray (2004), flow is a state that people become absorbed completely in the task they enter and forget time and experience feelings of satisfaction (p. 14). In this regard, Lee (2005) examined the relationships of motivation and Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory relating to academic procrastination among college students. The data collection was from a questionnaire which was translated into the Academic Motivation Scale (Vallerand & Bissonnette, 1992 & Vallerand et al., 1992). These findings suggest that high procrastination was associated with lack of self-determined motivation and a low incident of flow state.

The self-determination theory

The self-determination theory primarily concerns promoting in students, an interest in learning, a valuing of education and a confidence in their own capacities and attributes (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991, p. 325). According to Deci and Ryan (2008), this theory focuses on "types" of motivation rather than amount of motivation, paying particular attention to autonomous motivation, controlled motivation, and amotivation as predictors of performance, relational, and well-being outcomes (p. 182). The empirical works within this theory traditionally focus on the long-term goals that people use to guide their activities (Ibid, p. 183). When applied to higher education, the self-determination theory primarily concerns promoting in students, an interest in learning, an appreciation of education and a confidence in their own capacities and attributes (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier & Ryan, 1991, p. 342). Support for self-determination includes offering choice, minimizing controls, acknowledging feelings, and making available information needed to perform the targeted tasks (Ibid.).

VanNoord (2006) adopted the self-determination and self-efficacy theories to identify motivational factors of adult learners returning to higher education in nursing. A total of 75 study participants provided data revealing motivation for returning to higher education originates from both internal and external sources (p. 87).

In a quantitative study of mature students' motivation to re-enter higher education, Van Rhijn (2012) concluded that self-determination is the main factor influencing adult students to return to higher education (p. 346).

On the other side of the globe, Habibian (2012) applied the self-determination theory to study the motivation orientations of 55 doctoral students at the National University of Singapore. Habibian's research revealed a high correlation between intrinsic motivation and leaner autonomy and a low correlation between extrinsic motivation and learner independence (p. 219).

<u>The failure avoidance achievement theory of Andrew Elliot</u>

In 1997, a hierarchical model of approach and avoidance achievement motivation was proposed and tested in a college classroom by Andrew Elliot and Marcy Church (Elliot and Church, 1997, p. 218). At the center of this theory is the assessment of a person's achievement-relevance goals and calculation of one's proportion of goal avoidance (Elliot and Sheldon, 1997, p. 171).

Deckers (2010) interpreted achievement motivation as a "need to achieve and need to avoid failure" (p. 191). He explained that the need or motive to achieve is a disposition to engage in task-oriented or achievement behavior suppressing a high external or internal standard of excellence (Ibid.) In the use of this theory, Okada (2006) studied 100 Japanese university student's motivation in terms of their motivational style in a task-solving setting (pp. 1 & 11). The results are that in a non-controlling instructional situation, the interest scores among students with an introjected-external factor were lower than those with a high motivational style; and anxiety-compelled scores among students with high motivation and introjected-external styles were higher than students with low motivation style (p. 11).

McCollum & Kajs (2007) also applied this theory to explore student motivations in an educational leadership program at a mid-sized Southwestern university in the United States (p. 51). Their findings show that the motivational theory of goal orientations translates well into the education program (p. 54). McCollum and Kajs concluded that the goal orientation theory can serve as a research tool in studying the motivation of older graduate students (Ibid).

In the examination of the relationships among failure avoidance, performance, and related variables in a goal-setting situation, Heimerdinger & Hinsz (2008) invited 171 college students to take part in their study. The results demonstrate that failure avoidance negatively correlates with self-efficacy, goal commitment, and task performance (Ibid.). The authors conclude that failure avoidance motivation has important consequences in goal-setting situations (p. 395).

The social-cognitive theory of Carol Dweck, Albert Bandura, and Barry Zimmerman

The social-cognitive theory conveys the concept that human behavior is extensively motivated by the ongoing practice of self-influence (Bandura, 1989, p. 248). The focus is on the self-regulatory processes as self-reinforcement in which students' learning involves the use of specific strategies to achieve goals on the basis of self-efficacy perspectives (Zimmerman, 1989, p. 329). However; individuals vary in the extent to which they pursue goals relating to the self-versus other people versus the world (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, p. 268). In other words, the self-regulation of conduct is neither entirely an "intrapsychic affair," nor do individuals operate as autonomous

moral agents impervious to the social realities in which they are involved (Bandura, 1989, p. 278).

In the use of Dweck's social-cognitive theory (Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck, 1986 & 1988), Dupeyrat & Mariné (2005) examined the motives of adults returning to school after years in the workforce. Their study focused on relationships among beliefs (implicit theories) regarding the nature of intelligence, goal orientation, and cognitive engagement using path analysis (Ibid., p. 43). The study population, 76 French students, consisted of 45 women and 31 men (Ibid., p. 48). Participants completed a 121-item questionnaire developed to assess various aspects of student motivation and academic engagement. The study proves that Dweck's theory is a significant tool for investigating achievement motivation and academic performance in adult returning students (Ibid., p. 57).

In an attempt to clarify the linkage between different social factors and adult motivations in re-entering school to acquire a university degree, Kwong, et al (1997) used the social-cognitive theory as the framework to perform a study with 425 adult students in Hong Kong. They found that family togetherness is the most important factor, followed by career advancement, skills acquisition, personal development, social connection and networking, and communication improvement (pp. 528 & 529)

More recently, Lin (2011) applied the self-determination and socio-emotional theories as the framework to explore the motivations of older adult learners who were 60 years or over (pp. 766-767). These two theories helped derive five constructs of

intrinsic motivation: learning for new knowledge, a sense of accomplishment, desire for stimulation, emotional regulation, and generativity (Ibid.).

Other theories used for adult education:

Other "less commonly used" motivation theories include social capital and human capita theory, financial incentive theory and the consumer decision theory. Social capital theory is commonly used by educators for examining youth development and schooling (Kalmijin & Kraaykamp, 1996; Lopez, 1996; Hudson, 2006; McNeal, 1999).[4] Taylor, Kajganich & Pavić (2011) bridged human capital with social capital theories to the terrain of adult learning (p. 3) attempting to make sense of adult education through the social capital perspective. They suggested that continuous learning over the life course has been linked to economic prosperity and to greater political participation (Ibid.) in which they situated adult education within a lifelong learning framework (p. 10).

The use of the financial incentive theory concept can be found in LaLonde and Sullivan's (1993 & 2005) study. In their study, they linked adult education and economic investment by comparing the earnings effects of returning to higher education. While looking at the gender differences in adult enrollment, they found that working adults re-entering academia are driven by "return-on-investment". [5] Across the globe, in Taiwan, Li (2010) analyzed the motives of elementary teachers returning to graduate school by using the consumer decision theory to promote adult education

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[4] Cited in Taylor, Kajganich & Pavić's research paper (2011, pp. 24-25).

[5] Denoted in Jepsen & Montgomery (2012), p. 169.

marketing (abstract). Li's study reflects on Boshier et al's (2006) investigation on the motivational aspects of adult learners in the era of market socialism in postmodern Shanghai (p. 202).

<u>Summary</u>

The previous studies suggest that the most common motivational constructs in research are intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, goal achievement with frequently inserted applications of self-determination and self-efficacy. In this regard, it appears that no single motivational theory provides a full explanation for adult participation in higher education.

In the selection of study population, the past research on motivational aspects of adults participating in graduate education has significantly focused on either demographics and/or gender (e.g., Bates & Norton, 2002; Hydock, 2005; Frances, 2009) or differentiation aspects of traditional and nontraditional students in a doctoral program (e.g., Stephen-Grube, 2008; Mulenga & Liang, 2012). In fact, research of midlife female adult student outnumbered male student-centered studies. The typical study population age was 45 to 60. Other distinguished characteristics of past research include:

- There are increasing numbers of *dissertations* on motivational aspects of older adults reentering academia after spending years in the workforce, compared to other published research articles in this general topic area, which indicates a common thread for the choice of investigation among doctoral students

- Many of these dissertations were completed by older students who are pursuing a doctoral degree in a "non-mainstream" (or land-granted) institution such as Capella University, Argosy University, Widner University, and Robert Morris University (researcher as participant)

- The common motives of adults reentering graduate school were life changing events, the search for "self," seeking credentials, the joy of learning, changing values at midlife, self-satisfaction, sense of achievement, career prospects, and expanding social contact

The pertinent literature suggests increasing numbers of adults are returning to higher education. Many researchers have an interest in investigating of this topic and are using well-established Western motivation theories, including studies conducted with Asian participants. These findings can be divided into two main categories: internal and external motives, shown in Appendix B.

Motivational aspects of working professionals returning to academia

Participants of this study are working professionals currently enrolled in a doctoral study program. To date, there is no single study found that focuses on the motivation aspects of a cohort within an information management doctoral studies group. Thus, I expanded my literature review to other professional programs referenced as "Western" learners to fulfill background needs which include adult returning students who are:

- Psychiatrists (Huston, 2011)

- College professors (Chrzanowski, 1995; Lin, 2005)

- Nurses (Warren & Mills, 2009; Richardson, 2011; Watkins, 2011; Wei, 2013; Williamson, 2013)

- Maritime professionals (Ng, Koo & Ho, 2009)

- Office workers (Chen & Huang, 2013)

- Physical therapists (Stoecker, 1991; Ruby, 2008)

- Social workers (Rumberger, 1990)

- Teachers and college administrators (Chan, 1997; Cai, 2004; Leonard, Becker & Coate, 2005; Lin, 2005; Clark, 2007)

- Those who have served in the US military (Howard, 2006)

What drives working professionals returning to graduate school for an advanced degree? The above-mentioned studies have drawn similar conclusions from their data. In fact, the findings are almost identical. These prior works suggest the driving force behind the study population endeavors are external incentives and internal desires as the main factors. The external incentives found in these studies are career advancement, opportunities to land a better job, requirement of the current position, leaving an unsatisfactory job, potential higher wage gain, and social interaction at an academic level. Internal desires derived from these studies include adding excitement into a boring midlife, cultivation of life potentials, contribution to the area of study, love and the enjoyment of learning, and lifelong popularization (Chen, 2000; Chao et al, 2009). In addition to these consensus factors, a few studies revealed other influences on decisions. Some focused on a consumer perspective (Adrignola, 2010), and the

return-on investment (LaLonde & Sullivan, 1993 & 2005), and the behavioral intention

models (Yang, Blunt & Butler, 1994).

In terms of research design, most of the reviewed literature was performed with

a purposeful selected population and using of qualitative research approach such as

questionnaires, surveys, and the semi-structured interview as illustrated in Appendix C.

The implications of the previous research include:

- Exploration of adult's motivation in pursuing an advanced degree is a
  common topic among older adult graduate students globally - similar
  research was performed in the United States, Taiwan, Japan, and England

- A narrative inquiry approach which is a norm in the study of adult education

- Social and cultural contexts in motivation are in need of further investigation

- Phenomenography as a research method – useful for revealing how things
  look from the point of view of the respondent (Marton, 1981 & 1986)

- Doctorate program is a work-integrated learning experience (Baxter &
  Burden, 2008)

In addition to the above mentioned motivational aspects, some researchers have

made attempts to explore de-motivation and other barriers associated with older

adults reentering academia. According to the reviewed literature, the barriers and the

de-motivation factors are varied:

- Financial poverty, time poverty, and institutional barriers (Spanard, 1990;
  Bowl, 2001; Madison, 2005; Green & Kelso, 2006; Hwang, 2006; Williams &
  LeMire, 2011)

- Lack of family support (Wang, 1997; Bowl, 2001; Madison, 2005; Hwang, 2006)

- Academic ability (Williams & LeMire, 2011) and fear of failure (Adorno, 2010)

- Teacher behaviors and teaching style (Wang, 1997; Green & Kelso, 2006; American Council on Education, 2007)

- Too old to pursue an advanced degree (Hwang, 2006)

- Overloading work and juggling between work and study (Wang, 1997)

- The application and process of enrollment is too complicated and time-consuming (Madison, 2005; Hwang, 2006)

- Unfortunate previous learning experience in higher education (Hwang, 2006)

In brief, working adults reengaging in higher education draw motivation from a sense of autonomy, commitment to a self-actualization career, career enhancement and potential higher wage gain, personal growth (Deggs & Machtmes, 2012, p. 29), and life satisfaction (Fisher, 1986, P. 202). Obstacles that prevented returning to higher education generally were based on the individual situation, support from the institutions (Spanard, 1990; Horine, 2007) and their peers (Ford, 1998).

The literature review found more research topics on motivation as compared to de-motivational (barriers) within this study group. Teachers and college educators stand as the most common working professionals to enter a doctorate program as reflected in the studies of Cai (2004), Clark (2007), Lin (2010), and Fahlman (2011). Past studies also demonstrate that there is no single motivational theory commonly

attributed to the doctoral candidate endeavor suggesting that no two adult students

returned to graduate school with the exact motive(s).

Motivation scales and measurements used in adult education research

With an aim to produce scientific data in studying motivation aspects of

students, researchers have made great efforts to develop and/or adopt motivation tools

and scales to measure related human motivation behavior. Houle's (1964) typology is

considered the earliest motivation scale which researchers have recognized, tested, and

refined in the past decades. Other widely used popular scales would be Boshier's (1971,

1973 & 1976) Education Participation Scale (ESP), Burgress' (1971) Reason for

Education Participation (REP), Aslanian, Brisknell & Ullman's (1980) Life Transition

Theory, Vallerand & Bissonnette (1992), and Vallerand et al's (1992) Academic

Motivation Scale (AMS). Boshier's model has been even translated to a Chinese version

which was utilized studying the motivational aspects of Chinese adult learners in China

(Boshier, Huang, Song & Song, 2006).

Boshier et al's (2006) article also defines reasons for adults returning and

participating in higher education. Motivation measurement tools and scales used in this

topic are itemized-style measurement tools. They are driven by predictive variables

such as need-based (Maslow, 1954), Deci et al's (1991) intrinsic and extrinsic

motivation theory, and Elliot and McGregor's (1999; Elliott & Harackiewisz, 1996)

failure avoidance and goal setting theory. The outcomes of these tests were the result of

using a large number of participants to complete a self-administered questionnaire

drawn in quantitative data. In many ways, these measurement scales echo each other's concepts as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Key factors in motivation measurement scales in adult education

Motivation instruments	Key motivational factors				
	Professional advancement	Social relationship	Cognitive interest	Desire to know	Escape/ stimulation
Houle's typology (1964)	X	X	X	X	
Boshier's EPS (1971, 1973)	X	X	X		X
Burgress' REP (1971)	X	X		X	X
Vallerand et al's AMS (1992)	X		X	X	X
Aslanian, Brisknell & Ollman's (1980) Life transition theory	X	X		X	

Many researchers adopted and modified these previous measurement scales and used statistical analysis to reveal factors influencing adult learners' participation or non-participation decisions. The details are summarized in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Selected motivation measurement literature in adult education

Researcher	Research project	Study population	Measurement scales	Type of research
Boshier, Roger (1971)	Motivational orientations of adult education participation	233 adults selected at random from three institutions	Houle's typology	Research paper
Boshier, Huang, Song & Song (2006)	Motivational orientations of adult learners in Shanghai	448 working adults in Shanghai	Chinese version of Education Participation Scale	Research paper

Researcher	Research project	Study population	Measurement scales	Type of research
Cliff, Scott Brewer (1998)	Motivations and academic self-concept of midlife male students	426 midlife male graduate students	Boshier's EPS	Doctoral dissertation
Fujita-Starck, Pamela J. (1996)	Motivations and characteristics of adult students	Random sample of older adult students in noncredit continuing education courses at the University of Hawaii	Boshier's EPS	Research paper
Garst, William C., Ried, Douglas (1999)	Motivational orientations of students in a nontraditional doctor of pharmacy program	100 nontraditional students in the University of Florida's nontraditional PharmD program	Boshier's EPS	Research paper
Hegarty, Niall (2010)	Motivation levels in graduate school students	200 graduate students majoring in either education or business	Vallerand's AMS	Doctoral dissertation
Hegarty, Niall (2010)	Application of the academic motivation scale to graduate school students	240 graduate students majoring in either education or business	Vallerand's AMS	Research paper
Johnston, Connie Dianne (2010)	Motivations of adult women enrolled in a community college	3,000 random students	Boshier's EPS	Doctoral dissertation
Morstain, Barry R., & Smart, John C. (1974)	Reasons for participation in adult education courses	611 students in adult education courses at one college	Boshier's EPS	Research paper
Phipps, Tyra Cassandra (1986)	Adult learners' reasons for participation in a non-traditional degree program	316 students	Boshier's EPS	Doctoral dissertation
Shi, Yu-Juan (2002)	Adult participation in the study of motivation at a community college (Taiwan)	700 questionnaires	Boshier's EPS	Master's thesis

The majority of previous studies used laboratory test and pre-set questions to perform research in the use of quantitative approach. The results provide, numerical

data and offer models for investigating reasons for adults participating in education activities. The statistical findings are valid and helpful in identifying the contextual characteristics of the individual's motivation. Yet the contents of the surveys and questionnaires call into question the participants' state of mind. Thus an alternative content of theory needs to be developed for providing an alternative perspective in the study of the motivation of these adult learners.

Confucian educational philosophy and values

Confucian philosophy and values have widely influenced in the Chinese education system since its establishment circa. 551 B.C. Within this context, education has been perceived for centuries as important both for personal improvement and societal development (Wang, 2006, p. 2). Confucian learning philosophy entails self-actualization, self-realization, and self-transformation where learning is an unending process; one should participate in learning continuously until reaching the stage of "human perfectibility" (Wang, 2006, p. 2). Therefore, the Confucian learning philosophy targets self-cultivation originating as an intrinsic motivation value found in Confucius' *Analects* 《論語》 (Wang, 2006, p. 3) .

According to Pratt (1991), the notion of "learning for one's self" is driven by the Confucian education values as (pp. 309-311):

- Learning as the acquisition of knowledge or skill from others
- Learning as fulfillment of responsibility to society
- Learning as a change in understanding of self in relation to society

These three learning values are indeed extracted from the Confucian text found in *The Great Learning*'s (《大學》) "eight steps to personal cultivation" and "social development" (Keenan, 2011, p. 41.

Eastern motivation concepts depicted in *The Great Learning*

The Great Learning (*DaXue*《大學》) is traditionally dated to the fifth century, soon after the death of Confucius (551-479 B.C.), and was most likely composed by his followers during the brief Qin Dynasty (221-208 B.C.) (Eno, 2010). It was the first of a set of Four Books (*Sishu*《四書》 – Book 1: *The Great Learning*《大學》, Book 2: *Doctrine of the Mean*《中庸》, Book 3: *Analects*《論語》, & Book 4: *Mencius*《孟子》) establishing Confucianism conduct and self-cultivation models. The manuscript's structure consists of a brief text of three objectives, followed by eight steps that make the connection between individual self-cultivation and civil conduct in the social and political order (Keenan, 2011, p. 37). It is believed that the text was originally dated from the last days of the Zhou Dynasty (1046-256 B.C.); but the current arrangement of the text was rearranged and introduced by the Neo-Confucian Zhu Xi (1130-1200 A.D.) in the Song Dynasty (960-1270 A.D.) (Eno, 2010).

For Confucian researchers and scholars, this text is considered as the Catechism of Confucian teaching (Ku, 1915). The core teaching of the text comes from glorifying righteous behavior, gaining insights into the perfection of knowledge, attaining the utmost goodness, and creating an ideal world of harmony and prosperity – a sequence of intelligible thought (Ku, 1915). Wang (2006) interpreted this work as the

transformation of an individual and the development of a "highly systematic method of self-cultivation" (p. 206).

Legge (1893) and Ku's (1915) English translated versions are considered authoritative versions for both Western and Eastern scholars. Their works along with Wang (2006) and Eno's (2010) interpreted contexts serve as the main reference sources of this study. Modification has also been made with respect to the original Mandarin version. The modified three objectives and eight thematic contents of the Confucius philosophy of learning are displayed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: The Confucian three objectives and eight stages of practice

The Way (*Tao*) of Learning	Three objectives	To glorify righteous behavior	在明明德
		To transform the person	在親民
		To attain utmost goodness	在止於至善
	Eight stages of practice	Investigating things (science and society)	格物
		Extending one's knowledge	致知
		Making one's intention sincere and honest	誠意
		Rectifying one's mind and heart	正心
		Cultivating one's self (self-cultivation) in all stages of life	脩身
		Harmonizing one's family	齊家
		Governing and serving the country	治國
		Bringing peace throughout the world	平天下

It is a general consensus that the philosophy of *The Great Learning* promotes

moral self-cultivation, promotes goal achievement (Cheng & Low, 2010; Chuang, 2007;

Ryan & Kam, 2007; Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011; Wang, 2006; Yu & Yang, 1994)

and lifelong learning (Hwang et al, 2012; Ryu, 2008; Sun, 2008; Zhang, 2008). The eight

stages are steps designed to reach the three objectives as depicted in previous studies

(Birch, n. d.; Yu and Yang, 1994; Kim, 2000; Eno, 2010; Keenan, 2011; Lim, 2011;

Trumbull and Rothstein-Fisch, 2011). The interpretation is that the refinement of

knowledge relies on the investigation of things. The sequence of this learning process is

interpreted as follows:

- When things are investigated, knowledge is extended;

- When knowledge is extended, the intentions are authentic;

- When intentions are authentic, minds and hearts are rectified;

- When minds and hearts are rectified, personal life is cultivated;

- When self is cultivated, families are regulated;

- When families are regulated, states are governed;

- When states are governed, peace will reign throughout the world

In brief, *The Great Learning* illustrates individual motives for promoting learning,

obtaining and retaining knowledge while valuing of education with a rich social (sense

of responsibility) and political serve all contexts. This text can also serve as a model for

moral education and an interconnected goal achievement process. This study utilizes

the three objectives and eight stages as the conceptual framework for revealing the

motivational aspects of working practitioners returning to academia and seeking a doctoral education.

Motivational constructs in *The Great Learning*

The core philosophy of *The Great Learning* is based on the philosophy of ancient Chinese moral education and the promotion of lifelong learning. In 1893 the Western Sinologist, James Legge described this text as a guide for adult learners. He extrapolated that the idea of learning in Confucian philosophy style is a process through one's entire life, referring to what we describe today in adult education as, "lifelong learning." Therefore, selecting this text as the conceptual framework for investigating the Western learner selected group is valid.

When interpreting the organization of the text, scholars unquestionably determined that the three principles and eight steps of practice are commonly considered as the progressive process of cultivation (Kalton, 1988, p. 89; Eno, 2010; Keenan, 2011, pp. 40-72) and/or instructions for learners (Legge, 1893), which Birch (n. d.) defined as the "ladder analogy." While I agree that this philosophy is about personal cultivation and lifelong learning, I dispute the supposition that the three principles and eight stages of practice are sequential. I propose that these steps are indeed dependent on the other steps to move to the "higher" level, but not necessarily in a designed progression. In my view, this is the result of a stereotypical interpretation that learning in the Chinese culture is simple passive learning, which Wang (2006) identified as "hierarchical teaching" – Teachers first present theories or concepts step by step, and then proceed in an orderly way to explain the concepts (Ibid.). On this

account, *The Great Learning* is seen as a systematic structure of delivering of content. However, this "authoritarian teacher and obedient student" (Ibid.) interpretation does not reflect the teachings depicted in the text (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: The progression of Confucian three principles and eight steps
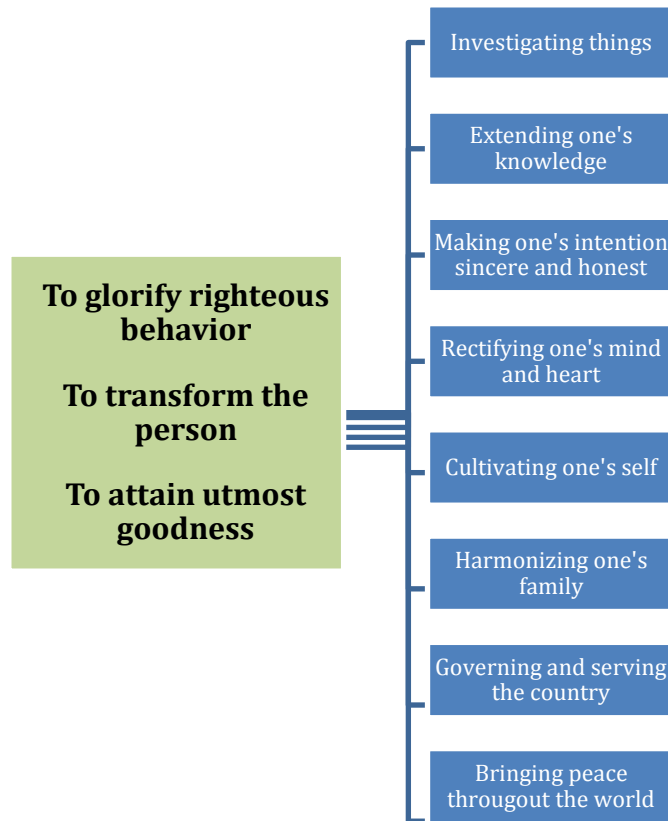
The three principles and eight steps are not necessarily seen as a sequence or steps for learning. They instead represent "motivational constructs," eleven philosophical concepts of learning motivation, which have been overlooked by researchers. To disclose the hidden motivational constructs in *The Great Learning*, a Confucian model of motivation was created and presented in Table 2.4. These motivational constructs and dialogical data collected from interviews serve as the primary categories of the motivation questionnaire.

Table 2.4: Confucian philosophy of learning

Motivational constructs	Major teachings in *The Great Learning*	Interpretations from previous literature on *The Great Learning*
Self-cultivation	- Investigating things - Extending knowledge - Cultivating one's self in all stages of life	- To reach the highest excellence; commit oneself to meaningful educational goals, strive to benefit from the educational experiences (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p. 10) - To have true ideas and acquire knowledge and understanding (Ku, 1915) - Only with a systematic study of things; knowledge and understanding come (Ku, 1915) - Things are investigated, knowledge is extended (Kalton, 1988, p. 84) - Learning as a change in the understanding of something (Pratt, 1992, p. 310) - When one has true ideas, one's mind is in a proper state, a well-ordered condition (Ku, 1915) - Cultivate oneself and produce the highest good of luminous virtue(Tucker, 2013, p. 25) - Confucian education philosophy presents as the practices of lifelong education where is the main motive of learning (Sun, 2008, p. 559) - Learning through one's life was Confucius' educational idea (Zhang, 2008, p. 552)
Self-improvement	- To attain utmost goodness - To glorify righteous behavior	- Learning is a lifelong effort of aiming for forging a morally excellent life and of becoming a virtuous person (Kim, 2004, p. 117) - Learning as an improvement of self (Pratt, 1992, p. 311)

Motivational constructs	Major teachings in *The Great Learning*	Interpretations from previous literature on *The Great Learning*
		• Straightened out and made one's understanding to be fully extended (Eno, 2010), expanding one's knowledge
Self-transformation	• To transform the person (have an influence or inspire others) • Making intention sincere and honest • Rectifying one's mind and heart	• Going beyond the exceedingly difficult stage and arriving at the advance stage, transforming oneself to a "new person" (Kalton, 1988, p. 88) • Self-transformation through a personal grasp (Ibid., p. 89) • Nurturing one's innate character; "making the new self" (Eno, 2010). • The ultimate goal is to renew oneself and renew/inspire the people [others] (Ibid., p. 82) • Transformation is from the social-cognitive perspective (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p. 9)
Sense of purpose and responsibilities	• Harmonizing one's family • Governing and serving the country • Bringing peace throughout the world	• Places personally valued future goals as the core motivation to study (Miller & Brickman, 2004, p. 9). On this account, the motives embedded in *The Great Learning* are to regulate one's family, govern the country, and maintain a harmonic society • When one has a standard of excellence, one has a fixed and definite purpose (Ku, 1915) • One wishes to make illustrious virtue manifest throughout the world (Kalton, 1988, p. 84) • Learning as fulfillment of responsibility to family and society (Pratt, 1992, p. 310) • Promote righteousness and great goodness; and bring goodness to the world (Lim, 2012)

In a study of understanding Chinese culture and learning, Wang (2006) provided a comprehensive interpretation of the significant features of Confucian education values. Wang interpreted that the ideal of Confucian learning is an inner-directed process which is similar to Maslow's need-based theory (p. 3). Following Wang's (2006) interpretation, researchers' attention focused on the inferential contents of Western and Eastern learning and teaching philosophy. Researchers adopted Confucian philosophy of learning motivation to conduct a comparative study between Eastern learning and teaching with other cultural philosophy; Bashrat et al (2011) presents a comparative review and analysis of Confucian philosophies of education and Islamic teachings within the perspective of lifelong learning. They suggest that the concept and philosophical idea of lifelong learning in Confucian and Islamic concepts are incentive driven (extrinsic motivation) rather than an intrinsic motivation. However, this contradicts what Cheng and Low's (2010) examination in which they recognized that instead of being strictly incentive driven motivation, the desire to teach and serve is a non-incentive motivation (p. 681).

Based on a critical review of previous research done by a community of Taiwanese psychologists from the perspective of the philosophy of science, Hwang and his colleagues (Hwang et al, 2012) developed a conceptual framework to analyze the students' achievement motivation for academic performance in Confucian societies (p. 219). They classified the theory of the life goals and achievement motivation in Confucian society into four main categories (p. 232): life goal, vertical distinctiveness, personal goal, and horizontal distinctiveness.

The philosophical framework of Hwang et al's (2012) study was unmistakably based on the Confucian "Four Book"(*Sishu* 《四書》). Whereas, the structure of Confucian learning is grounded in the first book, *The Great Learning*, in which "the way of great learning consists in manifesting the clear character, loving the people, and abiding in the highest good" (Kim, 2000, p. 109). The Confucian perspective of self-learning is nothing more than self-cultivation (p. 112). Within this context, learning is considered the way for human growth, self-fulfillment, moral virtue, and manifesting innate clear character (Ibid., pp. 119 & 124). The backbone of Confucian's book, *The Great Learning*, according to Ryu (2008), is to cultivate moral self-knowledge and virtue in the fulfillment of the ultimate end point of creating a peaceful and harmonious world.

These prior studies suggest that *The Great Learning*[6] serves as a practical guideline for adult education; a sequence of intelligible thoughts and philosophy of learning. In summary, these previous studies are confined to three paradigms displayed in Table 2.5.

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[6] While many scholars followed Legge's (1893) translation work and named Confucius work *DaXue* 《大學》 as *The Great Learning*, Ku Hung-Ming (1915) transliterated the book as the *Method of Higher Education*, making an inferential to higher education.

Table 2.5: Findings of prior research related to Confucian philosophy of learning

Citation	Life-long learning	Self-learning	Cultural achievement
Ang & Low (2012)		x	x
Bashrat et al (2011)	x		x
Cheng & Low (2010)			x
Chuang (2007)		x	x
Coopamah & Khan (2011)			
Hwang et al (2012)	x	x	x
Kim (2000)		x	
Kumar & Maehr (2007)			x
Ryan & Kam (2007)	x		x
Ryu (2008)	x	x	
Sun (2008)	x	x	
Trumbull & Rothstein (2011)			x
Wang (2006)		x	x
Yu & Yang (2011)			x
Zhang (2008)	x		x

Through the lens of *The Great Learning*, previous literature focused on morality and cultural values, giving high importance in academic communities (Bashrat et al, 2011, p. 31). These studies contribute to the understanding of Confucian philosophy in the following areas:

- Confucian work dynamism[7] and the Chinese value (Matthews, 2000; Leung, 2010)

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[7] (1) Tan and Chee (2005) defined Confucian work dynamism as interpersonal trust including diligence, persistence/perseverance, thriftiness, filial piety, respect for authority, and loyalty; (2) Confucian work dynamism is depicted as "human-heartedness, moral discipline, and integration," which is the ultimate path to achievement goals and learning strategies in Leung's study 2010).

- Studying Eastern philosophy of education and learning (Pratt, 1992; Kim, 2000; Kim, 2004; Ryu, 2008; Sun, 2008; Zhang 2008; Chen et al, 2009; Cheng & Low, 2010)

- Comparative studies between Confucian and non-Confucian ("Western") concepts of scholarship and learning, focusing on the influences of societal-cultural factors (Yu & Yang, 1994; Chuang, 2007; Ryan & Kam, 2007; Zhao and Biesta, 2011)

- Cultural interpretations of achievement motivation theory, analyzing the differences and similarities between Western and Eastern perspectives (Li, 2003; Kumar & Maehr, 2007)

- Examining the Confucian's philosophy of learning motivation and the nature of achievement motivation among non-Eastern population such as Coopamah & Khan (2011; nurse students in United Kingdom), and Ang & Low (2012; Chinese Bruneian businessman)

- Most studies have a great focus on understanding culture and lifelong learning (Kim, 2004; Yu & Yang, 1994; Wang, 2006; Kumar and Maehr, 2007)or life goals and achievement motivation in Confucian society (Ryu, 2008; Chen et al, 2009; Trumbull & Rothstein-Fisch, 2011; Hwang et al, 2012).

Confucian philosophy of learning motivation constructs and related Western motivation theories

Confucius 孔子(551- 479 B. C.) was one of the first documented teachers in ancient China. The focus of his teachings, according to Ryu (2008), is the development of the "complete human"[8] rather than pursuing a narrowly trained specialization. The complete human refers to an idealized state of being perfect where learning involves a lifelong commitment to and a continuous process of self-education (Tu, 1993, p. 45). The Confucian idea of human perfectibility is the result of concrete steps repeatedly renewed (Ibid). The principles and steps of Confucius "humanistic education"[9] are depicted in one of his works, *The Great Learning*. Hwang (1988) labeled this work as the internal structure of Confucianism (as cited in Yu & Yang, 1994, p. 241).

According to Tu (1993), the purpose of *The Great Learning* is three-fold: (1) to nurture the enlightening virtue (在明明德) – to cultivate our personal knowledge; (2) to care for the people (在親民) – to help others to realize themselves; and (3) to dwell in the highest good (在止於至善) – to strive toward excellence (p. 37). The core of these Confucian themes focuses on developing an increasingly refined self-awareness by learning, and motivating self to perform at one's highest level. This principle has

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[8] "For Confucius the goal of education is to become fully human – human beings who learn and pursue the Confucian core values, cultivate them, and practice them in their day-today lives. As such the whole focus of Confucian education is the development of whole persons rather than narrowly trained specialists." (Ryu, 2008, p. 3)

[9] "Confucian humanistic perspectives concern human nature, the self and autonomy, and self-actualization and self-cultivation. (Ryu, 2008, p. 2)

particular relevance for the adult learner who enrolls in a graduate program for a specific reason. Yet, this interpretation of *The Great Learning* has neither been elucidated by previous researchers nor used as a conceptual framework for investigating a non-Confucian-influenced population.

In the past decades, researchers have attempted to construct a Confucian perspective of life goals and achievement motivation. Kim (2004) argued that the Confucian way is based on "learning is life and life is learning" (p. 125), indicating that extending one's knowledge through one's life is the center of Confucian teaching. Chuang (2007) compared Confucian learners and non-Confucian learners in the use of Confucian philosophy regarding preference for learning with the aim of determining the influence of the principles of Confucian philosophy on learning concepts (p. 243).

In the recent years, two similar themed studies were located, Coopamah & Kam (2011) and Ang & Low (2012) which suggests a bridge between the "West" and the "East" motivation theory. The study of Ang & Low's (2012) research combined the West and East perspectives. It utilized both Confucian perspective and Maslow's need theory to investigate Chinese Bruneian businessmen, examining and identifying their values that motivate them in their daily livelihood; both at work and in their day-to-day living (p. 39). In addition to the basic concepts depicted in Maslow's theory, they found that most Chinese Bruneian businessmen support their traditional education, infuse with religious teachings from 觀音 (Guān Yīn), & 關公 (Guān Gōng). These figures embrace striving for wealth, prosperity and longevity (Fú 福, Lù 祿, Shòu 壽) as cultural values (p. 44). Ang & Low's research offer initial understanding of Confucian philosophy in

attempt to demonstrate that Eastern philosophical tradition can be applied successfully to Western culture.

In an effort to explore the differences in learning styles of Confucian learners from Eastern and Socratic groups in the West, Coopamah & Khan (2011) proposed the implications of Confucian learning as related to nursing education in England. The authors emphasized that a Confucian learner possesses a mixture of characteristics and drivers that intermingle to produce a flexible and encompassing learning style (p. 44). They recognized three apparent characteristics in this learner: motivational ethos, conformity and communalism (p. 45). While analyzing and comparing this Confucian learning style, the authors concluded that a number of features are similar to the philosophy of nursing education and practice. They conclude that these similarities facilitate and enhance the educational interaction for nurses from the East when they come to study in Western countries (p. 46).

The studies of Coopamah & Kam (2011) and Ang & Low (2012) suggest that the Eastern learning philosophy has been omitted from higher education.

Summary

As Ryu (2008) pointed out, most previous studies on adult education are based on Western concepts and perceptions with the commonly known and well-established intrinsic and extrinsic motivational theories such as Maslow's need-based theory, Csikzentmihalyi's flow theory, Deci & Ryan's self-determination, and Bandura's social-cognitive theory. All these approaches are based on the individual's desire to grow,

which Chen and Chu (2001) defined as "growth theory" (p. 4). This Western concept of personal growth and taking responsibility for self and others is reflected in the Confucian four themes in learning philosophy depicted in *The Great Learning* as self-cultivation, self-improvement, self-transformation and sense of purpose and responsibility; which establishes a theoretical connection between the "West" and the "East". Table 2.6 compares the content theories developed by Western motivation theorists and Confucian learning philosophy.

Table 2.6: Comparison of Western motivation theories and Confucian learning philosophy

Confucian learning philosophy		Maslow need theory	Bandura's social-cognitive theory	Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory	Csikszentmihalyi	Elliot failure avoidance
Growth theory	Self-cultivation	Self-actualization	Self-reactive influences	Intrinsic motives	Desire to learn the environment	Intrinsic motives (internal standard)
	Self-improvement	Esteem need	Self-regulation		Challenge one's capabilities	
	Self-transformation	Physiological needs	Self-efficacy			
Responsibilities for self and others	Sense of purpose and responsibility	Belongingness, social, and affiliation – love needs, safety and security	Relatedness	Extrinsic motives	a sense of controlling one's action	Extrinsic motives (external standard)

I conclude that Eastern philosophical personal growth orientations and taking responsibilities for self and others as related to the common theme of motivational theory as a conceptual framework in studying motivational and personal growth tendencies in Western adult students. This novel concept should be considered for investigation.

In this study, I propose using *The Great Learning* philosophy of learning to explore the motivation to participate in a doctoral program by a selected group of Western adult students with an aim toward bridging the two cultures as related to motivational theory (Tables 2.7).

In terms of research methods, the main venue for qualitative data collection is the semi-structured interview which should provide qualitative data to reveal a better picture of the "human factor." A quantitative technique will be also used to capture the key themes from the dialogical data with an aim at determining whether there is a dominant motivational factor. This synthesis would provide insights for the central research questions, and provide an in-depth understanding of the motivational concepts affecting the selected study group.

Table 2.7: Related Western motivation theories and Confucian *The Great Learning*

Research questions	Confucian constructs of learning philosophy in *The Great Learning*	Western motivation theories
What factors have motivated working practitioners pursuing a professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce?	Self-cultivation • Investigating things • Extending knowledge • Cultivating one's self in all stages of life	Intrinsic motivation • Deci & Ryan's Self-determination theory (Intrinsically motivated behavior; Deci et al, 1991, p. 328) • Maslow's need theory (Physiological, esteem, and self-actualization; Maslow, 1943, pp. 372-382) • Csikzentmihalyi's flow theory (Flow is a state in an activity that is intrinsically enjoyable (Shernoff, et al, 2003, p. 158)
What learning experiences in the lives of these working practitioners have influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life? Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education?	Self-improvement • To attain the utmost goodness • To glorify righteous behavior Self-transformation • To transform the person (have an influence or inspire others) • Making one's intention sincere and honest • Rectifying one's mind and heart	
What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees?	Sense of purpose and responsibilities • Harmonizing one's family • Governing and serving the country • Bringing peace throughout the world	Extrinsic motivation • Deci & Ryan's Self-determination theory (extrinsically motivated behavior; Deci et al, 1991, p. 329) • Bandura's social-cognitive theory (self-reactive influences and self-regulation; Bandura, 1991, pp. 248, 256-259) • Maslow's need theory (safety and social Maslow, 1943, pp. 372-382)

Chapter 3

Research methodology

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The aim of this study

This study analyzes the motivational components of the doctoral students in the

Doctoral of Professional Studies in Information Management program (DPS-IM) at

Syracuse University. The aim is to make an inferential with a claim using Confucian

learning philosophy described in *The Great Learning* as the conceptual framework to

bridge the "East" and "West" philosophy of learning and motivation theories related to

this unique study group.

Research questions

This study was guided and administered by four research questions:

    <u>RQ 1:</u> What factors have motivated working practitioners pursuing a

              professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce?

    <u>RQ 2:</u> What learning experiences in the lives of these working practitioners have

              influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life?

RQ 3: Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or

current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working

practitioner will seek a doctoral education?

RQ 4: What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how

would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees?

The study population

Participants of this study are working practitioners who are experts in their

chosen fields and are willing to share their individual journey. This study population

was chosen not merely for practical reasons of proximity and access to data, but

originated from the researcher's own reflection as an older adult pursuing a doctorate

after years in the workforce. This study also reflects the diversity of the Syracuse

iSchool doctoral students, including gender, age group, career and educational

background experience classifications.

Methodology

The qualitative data were collected and derived from one-on-one semi-

structured interviews. Prior to the data collection, there were two stages consisting of

four steps of the inquiry processes. First, the acquisition of Institutional Review Board

(IRB) approval via Syracuse University Office of Research Integrity and Protections,

was filed on June 6, 2013 and approved on June 12, 2013. The application documents

include a description of the study (Appendix E) with the informed consent letter and

informed consent script, the guided interview questions (Appendix F), and the standard

IRB application form (Appendix G). Upon receiving the IRB approval, the study moved to the second step; a pilot study (pilot study #1) to validate the interview protocol (guided interview questions), and preliminary data analysis. At the same time the demographic questionnaire and invitation of participation letter were sent out to potential participants for the primary research project. After the revisions of research questions, interview protocol, and the title of the study, the third step was to file an IRB Amendment application. Upon receiving the approval of the amended IRB, the fourth step was to perform the second pilot study.

Upon completion of the second pilot study, the amended documents were sent to the participant candidates including the questionnaire, information about the study, and a participant rights description concerning anonymity and the option of choosing not to participate in the study (Appendices D & E). The details of the stages and steps in carrying out this research are displayed in Figure 3.1.

Instrument #1: A demographic questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) was tailored as a tool for collecting descriptive data. The purpose of using of this type of instrument in this study for the data collecting process is twofold. First, the quantity of returned questionnaires collected determined the total number of participants. Second, contents unveiled diverse backgrounds of each participant, providing career paths, years in the profession, gender, age, and the educational background of their self and immediate family members (e.g. educational background of parents and siblings).

Figure 3.1: Mapping the strategy of inquiry

Stage One

Syracuse IRB EXEMPT
Application Approval

Approved

Approved

Send demographic
questionnaire to
potential participants

Conduct pilot study #1

Validated the
interview protocol

Conduct pilot study #2

Identified
participants

Revised and validate
the interview

Stage Two

Data collection and analysis
- Arranged and conducted semi-structured interviews
- Transcribed the interview conversations with a second coder
- Sent a copy of the interview transcript to participants to verify the contents
- Coded and created themes
- Achieved an inter-coding agreement with second transcriber
- Compared the themes utilizing *The Great Learning* motivational framework
- Used qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques to examine the themes captured from the dialogical data

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Upon receipt of the returned questionnaire from the study group, semi-structured interviews were arranged and conducted at the earliest convenience of the participants.

Instrument #2: Semi-structured interviews

The purpose of the semi-structured interview is to obtain non-conventional and qualitative data drawn from the 26 participants and match the objectives of this study.

The process of the interview investigation is adopted from Kvale's (2007, pp. 35-36) seven stages of interview research technique– thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting (Figure 3.2).

Table 3.1: Seven stages of the interview inquiry
(Adopted from Kvale, 2007)

Steps	Procedures	Seven stages
1 & 2	Beginning	• Thematizing • Designing
3	Activity	• Interviewing
4, 5 & 6	Carrying out	• Transcribing • Analyzing • Verifying
7	Completion	• Reporting

The interviews were recorded using a digital audio recording device. A diary-style log was maintained containing dates of interviews, personal reflections, and remarks during and following the interviews. The recorded interviews were transcribed in PDF format and kept in a secure location. Each participant was assigned an encrypted identifier and a folder containing his/her profile, signed informed consent form, transcribed interview, and the summary of the interview. Words and phrases from each interview were transcribed by the researcher and a co-transcriber.

The individual data were shared with the participant to guarantee accurate interpretation. The transcriptions were created and the results were analyzed for consistent agreements or individual differences among the participants; at that point, themes emerged. The unveiled themes were grouped and organized and their relevance to the Confucian philosophy motives of learning were highlighted and intercalated.

Pilot studies

The research and interview questions were accessed in two pilot tests (Appendices L and M), using a similar study group of five working practitioners presently or previously engaged in a doctoral program not enrolled in Syracuse's doctoral program. These pilot samples provided the researcher an opportunity to analyze the reliability of the interview questions and evaluate the interview process by reviewing the length of the interviews, potential biases, and ethical issues which might occur during this process.

A pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study, yet it greatly increases the likelihood (Simon, 2011, p. 159). These two pretesting processes provided a better picture of what was to be expected in the proposed main study by providing insight to the arrangement of and length of each interview, follow-up questions, and expected outcomes.

Two important outcomes derived from the pretests are; both pilot studies support the relevance of each question to the stated intent of the research and both findings provide a glimpse of the expected results of the primary study. For instance, the themes extracted from Pilot Study #1 include self-learning and self-cultivation activities, a desire of giving back, motivating others, and being a model for family which are components of the dialectal data, similar to the Eastern motivational philosophical components depicted in *The Great Learning*. More specifically the Confucian-influenced cultural motivational concepts; investigating things, extending one's knowledge, and cultivating one's self, established a link between a non-Confucian culture (West) and a Confucian-influenced culture (East), suggesting that Confucian learning philosophical practice is present in this select group of Western adult's motivational behavior.

The preliminary correlative data from the pilot studies also suggest that even though the teaching philosophy of Confucius was created and applied thousands of years ago, the principles and theories are successfully applied to education in modern times. The pilot studies provided proof that this research study would offer strong evidence-based data, to determine if there are significant implications regarding the research topic.

Methods utilized

The instruments of this study include a demographic questionnaire and semi-structured interview, which are required for both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The purposefully selected study population profiles are depicted in Appendix A.

Data collection: Demographic questionnaire:

The demographic questionnaire was sent to the potential population in July 2013. Of the 26 students approached, 21 consented to participate in the study; 80.77%.

The received informed consent forms were placed in individual folders with an assigned non-identifier number. The folders were housed in a safe place in the care of the researcher for protecting the individual's identity. All data will be discarded once the study is completed and finalized.

Data collection: Semi-structured interview:

Considering that members of DPS-IM cohorts live in different regions of the United States and Canada, it was unlikely to conduct individual face-to-face interviews. Therefore, the interviews were conducted by phone while utilizing a digital recorder to capture the audio data. A test run to determine the reliability of the digital recorder for the phone interviews was performed in July and August 2013.

The workflow of data collection is presented in Figure 3.2. The process of the proposed study is depicted in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.2: The workflow of data collection
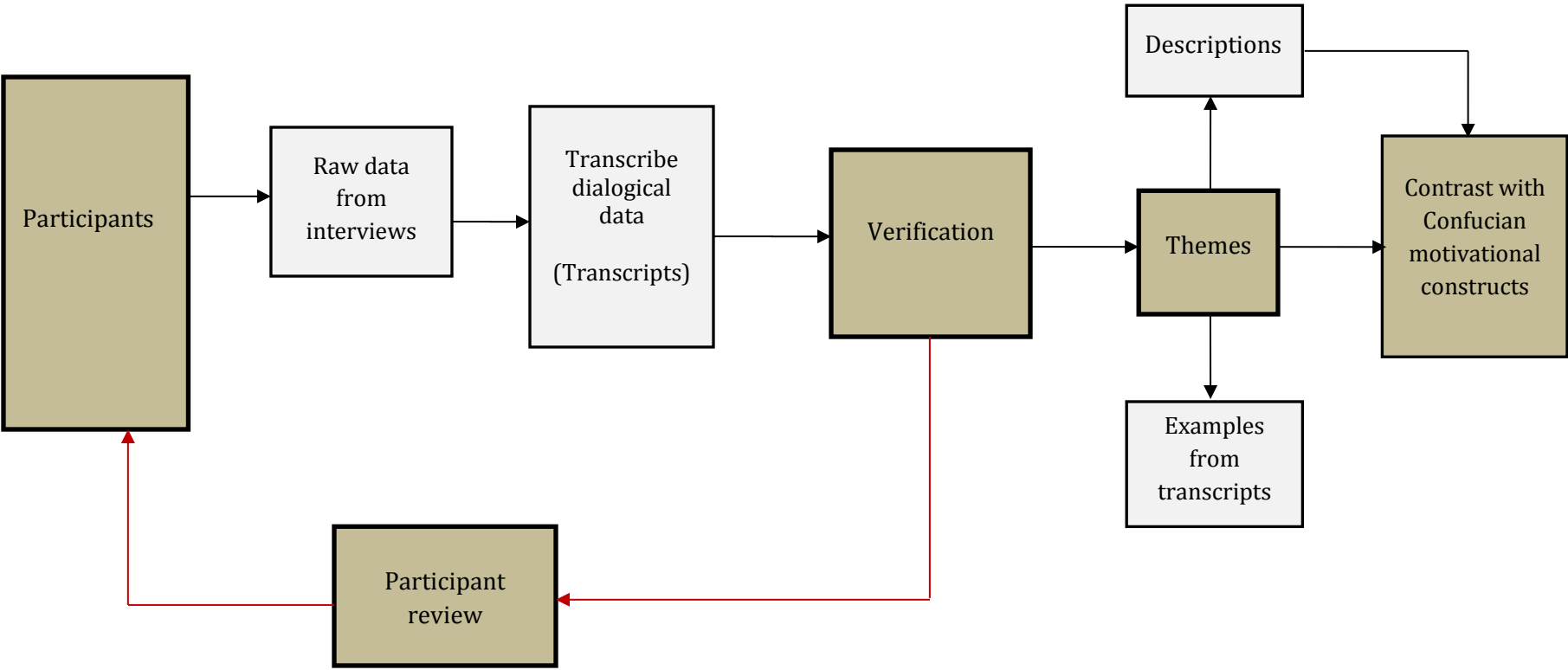
Figure 3.3: The process of this study
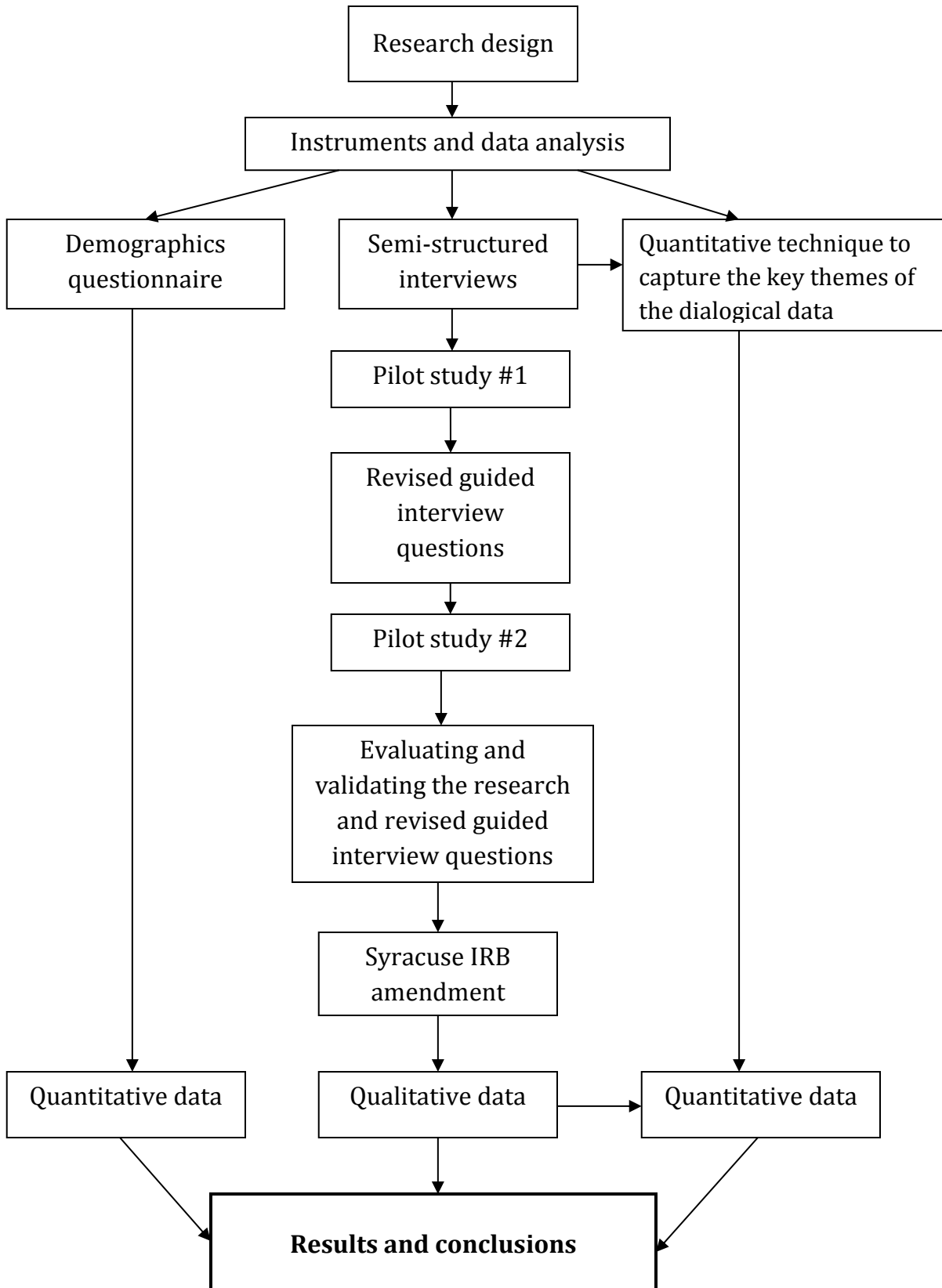
Data analysis plan

Three procedures were used for analyzing the interview transcripts. First, the conversation data were transcribed on the same day the conversations were recorded. The transcripts were prepared and met the inter-coder agreement. Utilizing a second transcriber provides the opportunity to seek out errors, avoid bias and ensure dependability, while providing a different perspective of the conversation data promoting further beneficial discussion in differences of analysis. After confirming the interview results with the co-transcriber, the transcripts were sent to the participants for accuracy verification.

Upon receiving the reviewed and approved transcripts from the participants (100% approval), the transcripts were analyzed qualitatively and motivational themes and categories were extracted. Next, the themes and categories were compared to the eleven areas of the philosophy of learning motivation depicted in *The Great Learning* to create a demonstrational link between Eastern and Western motivational constructs (The flow of the data collection is shown in Figure 3.2).

In addition, dialogical data captured from the interviews were analyzed quantitatively to determine significant factors present that were derived from the four motivational constructs extracted from *The Great Learning*. The quantitative examination of the themes consists of descriptive analysis; frequency distribution, and percentages.

Reliability, trustworthiness, and validity

Prior to the process of data coding development and categorization, the transcripts were verified and endorsed by each participant for accuracy, allowing the participants to review and validate interview data (transcripts). Most importantly, this process was used to clarify and avoid any misinterpreted, misunderstood or misrepresented meanings of the participants, providing alternative interpretations of the reflection made by the researcher (Maxwell, 2004, p. 259).

This verification, according to Carlson (2010) clarifies and confirms particular aspects of the interpretation of the data provided, which is a common procedure for increasing trustworthiness and validation of the textual data (p. 1105). Validation enhances the reliability and creditability and the recognition of unintentional omissions (Ibid., p. 1102). Following this practice, the researcher and the second transcriber performed line-by-line coding and verification by the interviewee, key themes were discovered and recorded.

Transferability and generalization

Transferability refers to the likelihood that the themes and context of a study have applicability in another institution (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40). In this study, the investigation is limited to a specific institution and program studied; therefore, the development of transferability and the claim of a generalization would need further studies with a larger population and different institution.

Summary

This chapter presents a thorough discussion of the processes for the study including the selected study population and the semi-structured interviews data collection process, a description of the demographic questionnaire and techniques, and procedures for transcribing the data, and generated themes that aim to provide answers to the research questions.

Chapter 4

Results

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The purpose of this study is to explore the motivational aspects of working

practitioners returning to graduate school and pursuing a doctoral education where

four research questions were posed: (1) What has motivated these working

practitioners enrolled in the DPS-IM program? (2) What earlier learning experiences

have influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education? (3) Do the individual's

personal interests, educational values, and career paths have an effect on pursuing a

doctorate? (4) What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures? These

questions should provide the answers for determining the correlation, if any, between

Confucian motivational learning philosophy and this select group of Western students

pursuing an advanced degree.

Participants

The common factor of the study population is that they are working

professionals who have embarked on pursuing a doctorate program at Syracuse

iSchool. This study population was chosen not merely for practical reasons of proximity

and access to data, but originated from the researcher's own reflection as an older adult pursuing a doctorate after years in the workforce. This study should also reflect the diversity of the Syracuse iSchool students, which will include gender, age group, career and educational background experiences classifications.

The participants were initially contacted through email to invite them to participate in the study. After reaching out to all DPS-IM students, 21 of 26 students, 80.76% agreed to contribute to this study. The participants who provided their consent to participate were asked for a date and time that they found convenient for the interviews. The twenty-one participants selected to participate consisted of current or graduated students of the DPS program, 13 men and 8 women. Participants encompassed five areas of profession: Project management, information technology services (IT), business consultant, education, and health information services.

Table 4.1: The profession of participants (N = 21)

Participants' profession	Sector	Number of participants (Frequency)	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
Business consultant	Public/private	3	14.29	14.29
Educator	Public	4	19.05	33.34
Healthcare information services	Public	1	4.76	38.09
Information technology services	Public/private	8	38.10	76.19
Project management	Private	5	23.81	100.00
Total		**21**	**100**	**100**

Table 4.2: Participants' Status in the program (N = 21)

Status in the Program	# of participants (Frequency)	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
2nd year	5	23.81	23.81
3rd year	5	23.81	47.62
4th year	5	23.81	71.43
Graduated	6	28.57	100
Total	**21**	**100**	**100**

Figure 4.1: Participants' status in the program (N = 21)
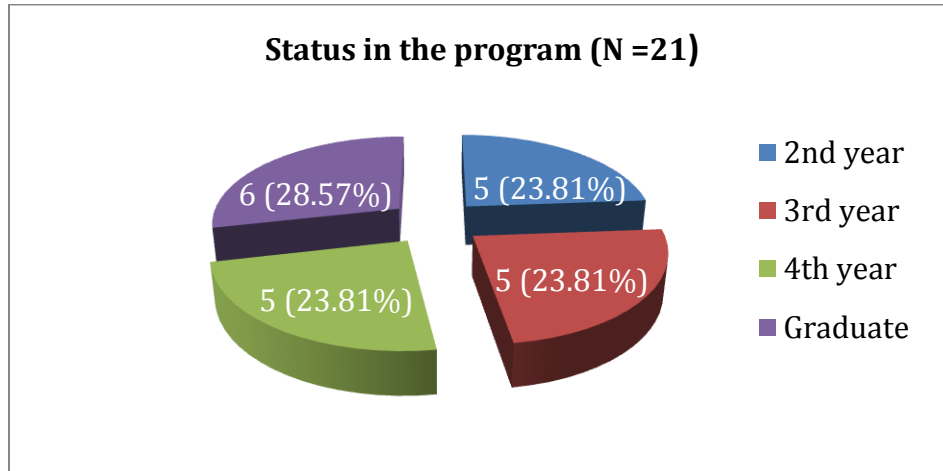
Most participants in this study, 71.42% are in the 35 to 49 age range. Six male participants are in the age range 45 to 49 (28.57%) which is the majority group in this study. The age group distribution by gender is shown in the Figure 4.2. The majority of participants hold a Master's Degrees (N = 13, 61.90%); eight participants have more than one advanced degrees. Ten participants are working in a business setting, 8 in state or federal government agency, and 3 in non-profit organization (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3: Distribution of the age group of the participant (N = 21)

Age group	# of participants (Frequency)	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)
35 - 39	2	9.52	9.52
40 - 44	6	28.57	38.09
45 - 49	7	33.33	71.42
50 - 54	1	4.76	76.18
55 - 59	2	9.52	85.70
60 and over	3	14.29	99.99 (100)
Total	**21**	**100**	**100**

Figure 4.2: Age group distribution of participants by gender (N = 21)
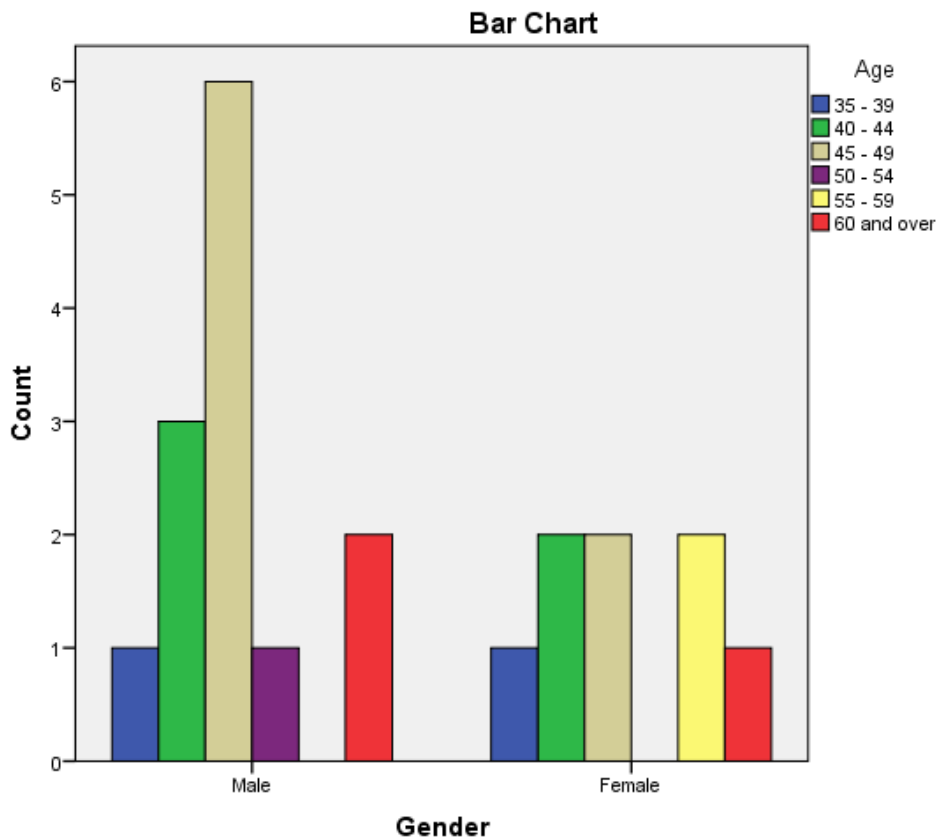
Table 4.4: Education of the participants (N = 21)

Degrees	# of degrees (Frequency)	Percent (%)	Cumulative percent (%)	Types of degrees
One advanced degree	13	61.90	61.90	EMS, MA, MS, MSIM
Two advanced degrees	6	28.57	90.47	MBA, MS
Three or more advanced degrees	2	9.52	99.99 (100)	MA, MS, MEd, MLS
Total	**21**	100	100	Master's Degrees

Figure 4.3: Number of advanced degrees of participants
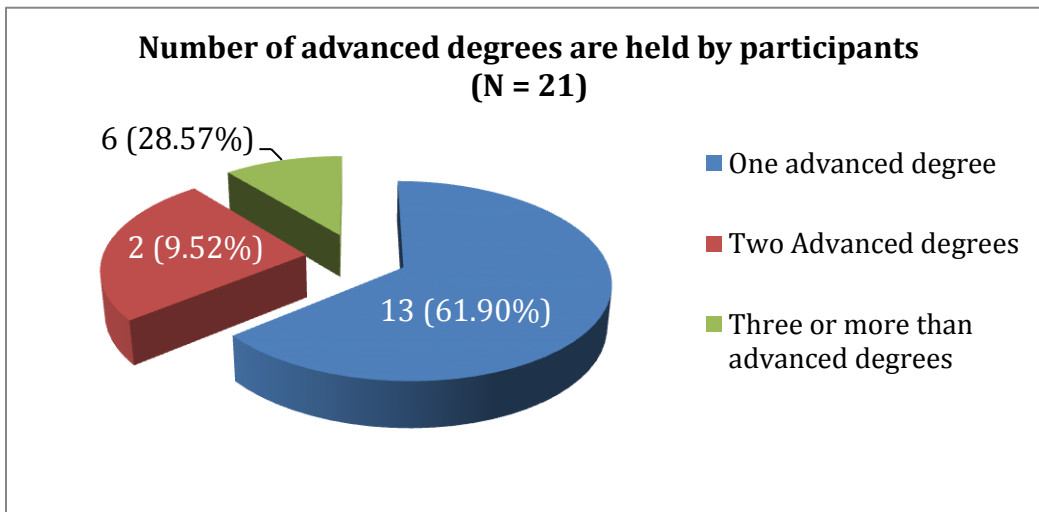
Summary:

In this study, a population of working practitioners were purposely selected and recruited based on their enrollment in the Syracuse DPS-IM program regardless of gender, age, educational background, status in the program, and degree of career path as depicted in the above tables and figures. This group is not homogenous as what might be seen in a residential doctorate program.

There were a total of 13 male and 8 female students with an age range from 35 to 66 years of age participated in the study. The study population is a group of working practitioners who in fact have very diverse individual situations, including marital status, previous learning experience, personal goals, financial situations, educational beliefs and values, life stability, time management in relation to family and other life responsibilities. These individual's different situations, status, or other classification were found to be related to some of the triggers in this study group. For instance, the negative learning experience in a prior traditional doctoral program pushed two participants (e.g. MS010 and MS016) to seek a doctoral education particularly designed for working professionals. In addition, the sense of responsibility to family motivated participants to purse an advanced degree (e.g. MS001, MS004, MS010, and MS016). Other situations and factors are illustrated in their own voices in the following sections.

Interviews

In this study, semi-structured interviews were used to gather information with a goal of understanding the multitude of motivational associated reasons for entering the DPS program. The one-on-one interview allows the researcher to ask clarifications regarding the responses of the participants. The interview process was conducted from November 2013 to December 2013. The interviews were limited to the Syracuse DPS-IM graduates and current students. The appointment times were set up through emails with each participant. All interviews were audio recorded.

Following previous researcher's practice, the transcription of individual's interview were generated exactly as spoken in the interview including colloquial expressions *err*, *umm*, and *ahh* for capturing the degree of certainty of the participants' responses (Zorzi, 2011, p. 43). After transcribing the interview conversation, the transcripts were sent to participants for reassuring that the researcher did not misinterpret and did not misunderstand what participants said. Participants were also reassured that the interview responses are kept confidential.

The presentations of the interpretation of the results begin with the identification of thematic categories specific to each of the research question. These categories were arranged and grouped; then were examined for the correlations with the four constructs found in *The Great Learning*, the text utilized to describe Confucian learning philosophy.

Interview data and findings

The conversational data was collected, recorded and analyzed utilizing the step four through six guidelines described in Kvale's (2007) seven stages of interview inquiry (p. 36). The data was transcribed by both the researcher and the second transcriber. The inter-coder agreement (93%) was satisfactorily recorded.

The presentation of the interpretation of the results begins with the identification of relevant categories specific to each of the research questions. The researcher and the second transcriber satisfactorily agreed and identified several themes from the raw interview data which were grouped into eight main themes: Road

to Syracuse, influences on decisions, effect on others, personal significance/satisfaction of the degree, plans of what to accomplish with the degree, unintended outcomes (the DPS graduates), anticipated benefits, and recommendations to others entering the DPS program (Details and the interview excerpts are displayed in Appendix N) . The eight main themes are further examined, arranged and grouped according to specific themes. The themes then divided into sub-themes which correlate and/or are not directly engaged with the four research questions (Table 4.5).

Recommendations to others entering the DPS program is the only main theme that is not related to a research question. The findings were correspondingly presented with the four posed research questions.

Table 4.5: Raw data, thematic dimensions and their relation to the research questions

Themes from the raw data	Answers to the research question	Theme dimensions
Road to Syracuse; influences on decisions	#1: Factors influencing participants pursuing a doctoral education	• Personal reasons such as personal goal achievement, love to learn, set an example for others, encouraged and inspired by others etc. • Professional development such as career advancement, gain credential, credibility, respect and prestige in the workplace • Other factors (e.g. affiliation with the university)

Themes from the raw data	Answers to the research question	Theme dimensions
Personal significance/satisfaction of the degree	#2: Previous learning experience of participants that influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education	Previous learning style such as mode of learning, positive and negative previous learning experience at graduate schools
	#3: Participants' research interests, education values and beliefs, current and past career path increase the likelihood that they would seek a doctoral education	Individual particular research interests, personal educational values and beliefs, the impact of their current and past career paths
Plans of what to accomplish with the degree, unintended outcomes, and anticipated benefits	#4: Participants' goals for their future, and how they would use their new knowledge, perspective, and degree	To advance in their current position or to get a new job; to become an adjunct professor/teaching; to apply knowledge and skills in their profession

RQ #1: What factors have motivated working practitioners pursuing a professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce?

All twenty-one DPS-IM students expressed unique motivational factors for entering the program, openly sharing why they chose to take on the doctorate journey. Darkenwald (1977, pp. 15-16) states that people seek further education by participating in higher education for mixed reasons including personal and family situations, employment, financial situation, and home responsibilities. In expressing their reasons, the participants in this study confirm Darkenwald's claim; generally stating similar reasons for this educational endeavor. Fifteen thematic categories were

identified, and one "outlier" (death in the family) was included in three main categories,

personal reasons, professional development and other individual motives (see Table

4.6).

Table 4.6: Motivational factors of entering DPS-IM program

	Motivational factors	Number of participants
Personal reasons	Death in the family (outliner)	1 (4.76%)
	Encouraged and inspired by a peer, friend, mentor, colleague, family member	5 (23.81%)
	Interest in doing practical research and doing research on a particular topic	7 (33.33%)
	Love to learn; lifelong learning	6 (28.57%)
	Personal goals and achievements	14 (66.67%)
	Set an example for others (children, siblings, colleagues, etc.)	8 (38.10%)
Professional development	Career advancement (e.g. passed over for a promotion, etc.)	12 (57.14%)
	Connectedness with other professionals	7 (33.33%)
	Credential; gain more credibility, respect and prestige in the workplace	12 (57.14%)
	Improve performance in current job or line of work; performance concerns	5 (23.81%)
	Remain competitive in the field	4 (19.05%)
	Updating skills and knowledge of the field (be relevant)	6 (28.57%)
Others recognizable factors	Affiliation with and/or previous learning experience at Syracuse University	9 (42.86%)
	Offered tuition assistance through employer or other source (e.g. family)	5 (23.81%)
	Received marketing information/program information	6 (28.57%)

Personal reasons

<u>Personal goal achievement:</u>

Personal goal achievement was found to be the main drive for the majority of participants (14 participants; 66.67%), who came to the program simply for personal goal and achievement. Participants considered the pursuit of a doctorate degree as a major life goal, the purpose of which was to achieve personal improvement leading to self-satisfaction. The interview excerpts in the following paragraphs illustrate the individual participant's desire of pursuing a doctorate:

> It was something that I've always wanted to do. And finally I had the time and money to focus on pursuing this. (MS 002)

> I had always wished to be able to get a doctorate degree, doctoral degree. (MS 005)

> I always wanted to have my doctorate. It was a dream of mine. (MS 006)

> I would say probably the biggest thing is just personal goal. That's the thing I want to do personally. (MS 008)

> Well, I always thought that I wanted to do. I had intimately looked at different PhD programs but I never found one that would work for me personally. (MS 009)

> A few personal reasons … the personal reasons were … were that the doctorate was actually something I had wanted to do for many years. Something that I actually set the goal for myself when I was about 16 years old, believe it or not … that goal of having a doctorate; it's something I always want to do. And I knew that if I ever got the chance I would jump on it. (MS 010)

Education has been always very important to me, as well as members of my family. This has always been a part of my whole personal educational alignment goal, [which] was to obtain my doctorate degree. This is not something that came along during my working career. It's always been part of my own personal educational goal since childhood of getting my doctorate degree. (MS 012)

I have been a lifelong learner through formal education ... so it's something I have been doing since I graduated from high school ... I have a desire to get back into school and to a learning environment ... I've always learned things and was involved in formal education. (MS 017)

I always wanted to further my education and do this [pursue a doctorate degree]. ... As far as I can remember it, being in school and getting a doctorate certainly is my goal. (MS 020)

Two participants described their personal goal for having a doctorate degree as a "dream;" something they always wanted to do:

I always wanted to have my doctorate. It was a dream of mine. ... So when the DPS program became available, all of sudden this possibility in my lifelong dream opened up. (MS 006)

I always thought that I would go in just do a Bachelor, Master's, PhD ... just boom, boom, just right in a row. And, of course, life got in the way of that and I ended up being a working professional. That ... but I never forgot that goal that dream of having a doctorate. (MS 010)

One participant particularly emphasizes that the main drive for him to seek a doctorate degree has nothing to do with his career but is related to his personal goal:

I can tell you absolutely nothing to do with my job. It was a desire for personal improvement. I wanted to go to a terminal degree level. I was in an organization that really did not have any value on terminal degrees. So it wasn't my job that motivated me. It's just something that I pushed myself ... I wanted to do. (MS 018)

The majority of participants openly admitted that their entering the DPS-IM program was motivated by their own personal, internal drives to always strive to achieve their personal goal; pursuing a doctorate degree. This internal orientation was evident from their competitive natures – to always do their best and always strive to provide the best services in their workplace; to ultimately be a better leader in their occupation:

> I really wanted to be able to do research to understand the research process and apply to my work because as a consultant and working in education, I make a lot of decisions. I want to be able to do research and make good decisions that are based on very good information. (MS 005)

> A doctorate is a special way to deepen my knowledge and my ability to push out and thinking of the best idea and the new ideas that would change my own practice and hopefully change the practice of those that I serve, that I work with. (MS 006)

> I want to learn about theory, how to find it out because I could provide so much better service to the faculty that I work with if I understand the academic language better. ... [The degree] improves my work relationship and I have more confidence. (MS 009)

> I have passion of disseminating knowledge to peers and to my industry ... I want to do it in an academic fashion. (MS 012)

> In fact education will help me to have one-on-one dialog at the same knowledge level with my colleagues and be a better leader in my occupation. (MS 014)

Set an example for others (children siblings, colleagues, etc.):

Setting an example for others or for the significant persons appears a powerful personal trigger for participants seeking this terminal degree. More than one-third of

the participants (8 participants; 38.10%) emotionally expressed that they wanted to set an example for their children and become a role model for them. Others specifically want to be a mentor for their subordinates, and colleagues. The desire of setting an example for others is an identifiable motivational factor found in this study group, influencing their decisions to take on the doctoral journey:

> The kids were fully aware … they [my children] know that dad's back to school. We [my wife and I] kind of hopefully picture it as kind of an example setting thing to them. (MS 001)

> I feel incredibly responsible to do something, to contribute something larger than myself; I feel like I have a responsibility to do something, contributing, leveraging my knowledge in some beneficial ways to people, to the world. (MS 007)

> One of the personal reasons that I had is to set an example to my daughter. My daughter was doing very badly [at school] … things got worse. … I wanted to show, demonstrate that for her. One of the things that motivated me through the program was that moment … when I turned around in the stand and looked up at graduation and see her up there. (MS 010)

> I have small children. So I think it is a good thing to show them … studying behavior and continuous learning. And it's kind of a role model for my children to pursue that DPS. (MS 011)

> I mean there are definitely positive influences come down the road. I mean once my kids see … OK dad's doing that. Hopefully I am thinking there are some influences down the road … OK … that's what to take to do to pursue a higher education degree. (MS 013)

> I think the most significant benefit would be the personal satisfaction of earning a doctorate degree. And … also being able to share that with my wife and my son … setting a good example for him … pursuing a doctorate

degree and getting my education despite obstacles that might be in the way. (MS 016)

Once completed the degree and use your credential ... that's very important and highlighted and supported by lower staff which also encourages them to do the same. (MS 020)

I'll try to influence career choices for junior officers at work. And when I have the opportunity to influence program changes, either for budgetary items, new technology development in my current position, I provide input where I can. (MS 021)

One participant (MS 005) articulated that her personal interests have always been related to learning and motivation which ultimately has driven her into the program to learn as an independent researcher. To her, this is "what a doctorate program teaches you to do." In addition, her pursuing a doctorate is not just achieving her own goal, but helping others to achieve their goals whether being a young student or an adult worker. She emphasizes that it is all about helping people become an independent learner.

Interest in doing practical research:

For seven participants (33.33%), they came to the program because they had a particular area that they want to explore or to learn more about. They were specifically interested in pursuing a practical research project. And the practical implication of the DPS program absolutely fits their endeavors. For instances,

My passion behind doing that [seeking a DPS] is really about research, learning, and discovery. (MS 001)

I think … for me, it was really wanting to be able to do research; to understand the research process and apply to my work. (MS 005)

I became very interested in a particular topic. I had no intention of doing a doctorate degree but I became particularly interested in something. (MS 007)

I've a very strong personal interest because I have a passion to do research. … Being a science practitioner, I wanted to get more involved into the research aspect. That was really what motivated me to get my doctorate degree. (MS 012)

My research plan lies in why entrepreneurial research has to reach the real world and make it economically in terms of changing people's finance in order to creating new jobs, to creating new markets and new climate. This topic is a personal interest and personal passion. (MS 015)

My research interest was intersection of cloud computing and manufacturing because I have been managing information technology groups in manufacturing environments for many years. … The DPS program is a pursuit of the domain of information systems, as one of its core pillars … an information system is really at the intersection of people, technology, and business. (MS 017)

I wanted to focus more on data and understand data science and meta-data and be able to be a data scientist in the health information science field. I looked at the curriculum [DPS curriculum]; I thought that would be a good curriculum coursework to support me completing my degree. (MS 020)

Encourage and inspired by others:

Five of the participants (23.81%) indicated that they are encouraged or inspired by a peer, co-worker, a friend or a family member to take on a doctorate journey.

I actually had several doctors [PhD holders] that were mentors of mine as I went into the process. (MS 001)

Specifically I had a colleague that helped me through the application process. It was an individual colleague that gave me ... moved me over to the tipping point ... that got the process rolling. (MS 003)

I was notified by one of my colleagues about the availability of the DPS program. So, that personal contact made a huge difference. (MS 006)

I had a discussion with a peer, a colleague and ... he suggested to me to pursue the DPS program. And so another trigger [in addition to having an interest in a particular topic] is like ... encouragement from a peer, a colleague at work. (MS 007)

I guess by following certain mentors ... I think it was back in September 2009 when I talked to one of my colleagues at work. I wondered if applying for Syracuse's DPS program was a good or bad idea. And then he just said, "Why don't you just apply and you never know unless you apply." I said, "Yes." And then I thought about it a couple of weeks and then I decided to apply. (MS 013)

Love to learn; lifelong learning:

Nearly twenty-four percent of the participants described that one of the drives for entering the program was simply because they love to learn and were driven by their natural inclination to learn. They identified themselves as a lifelong learner.

I see getting my doctorate as the baby step. I am studying a small piece that I am passionate about. I am learning the process really. I am learning how to. So, once the doctorate is completed, then my real passion begins. Then I am going to continue on research those I am interested. (MS 001)

For me, it's a matter of the continuing to learn and the satisfaction of accomplishing that what motivated me to pursue a doctorate degree. (MS 004)

I pride myself on being a learner. That is a very high value to me. ... There have been very few years in my life when I have not been taking classes

on the side of working full-time. And every one of my degrees has been obtained while I was working full-time ... not my undergraduate. (MS 006)

Um ... part of it definitely a lifelong learning because I'm always taking classes. Even if it was not toward a degree, I would take classes here and there because I enjoy it. I enjoy learning. (MS 009)

I have been a lifelong learner through formal education. ... So it's something I have been doing since I graduated from high school. I am 53 years old and have been going for almost 30 years. And I want to continue that. (MS 017)

I think it was more the way I was brought up. My parents were both teachers. ... I think I just developed as a lifelong learner. (MS 018)

Death in the family:

Many adult education researchers identified changes in family life, leisure activities, and health status as triggers or catalysts for adult participation in higher education (Aslanian, Briskell & Ullman, 1980, p. 17; Coleman, 1990, p. 15; Williams, 1996, p. 13). In this study, one participant expressed that an important person in her life passed away; pursuing a doctorate degree was a way for her to go through the grieving process. This confirms the previous studies' implications that life situation can affect drive for adults returning to graduate school.

I mean that ... a very key important person in my life died. And I was going through the grieving process and so on. ... When you go through those kinds of things, you question the purpose of life and your purpose of all sorts of things. And so this program [DPS] assisted me to reengage with life. (MS 007)

The six above-mentioned personal reasons for participants entering the DPS program are summarized in Figure 4.4.

Figure 4.4: Motivational orientations: Personal reasons

Motives: Personal reasons

- Death in the family
- Encouraged by peers
- Interest in doing practical research
- Love to learn
- Personal goals
- set an example for others

1 (4.76%)
5 (23.81%)
8 (38.10%)
6 (28.57%)
14 (66.67%)
6 (28.57%)
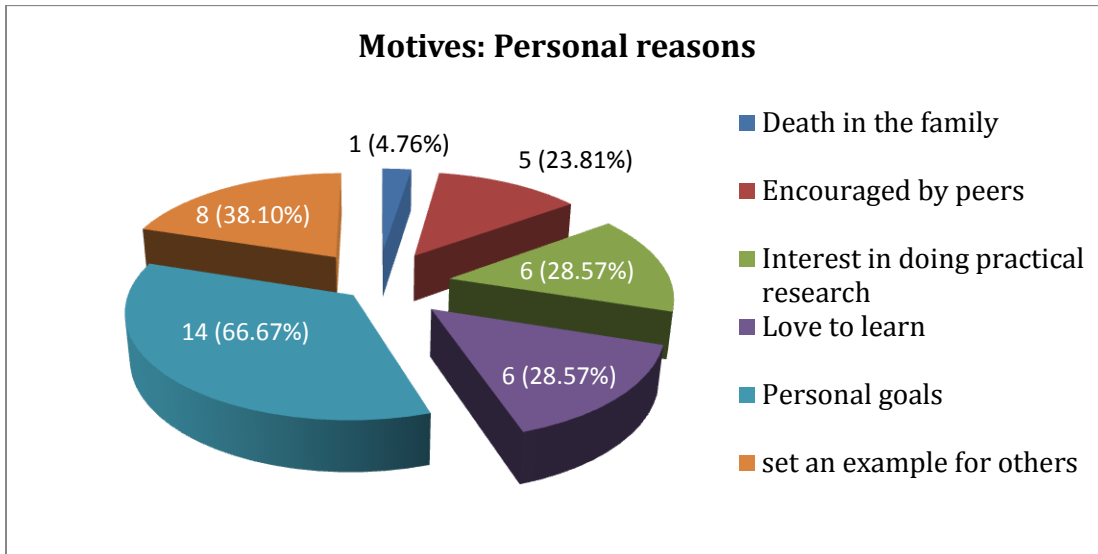
Professional development

Career advancement

More than half of participants articulated that they entered the DPS program with an aim to advance their career paths; 12 participants (57.14%). The general consensus of this group reveals that another Master's Degree would not be advantageous in their current profession. One participant particularly stated that:

> The specific trigger was, for me, when I finished my second Master's Degree, I realized that it probably wouldn't be that advantageous for me to go and get another Master's Degree, that it probably is the opportune time for me to get my doctorate degree. So, I guess the trigger completely was my second Master's Degree. (MS 012)

Other participants expressed that a doctorate will set themselves apart from everybody in their company and most likely provide them a higher possibility of getting

promotion or allow them to take the next step of advancing their profession within

their organizations or another one; therefore, a doctorate degree is a must:

> The degree perhaps will help me moving up and getting into consulting work or as an adjunct instructing for a major university or maybe for a small college or maybe get into some work like department head at the university ... something like that. (MS 008)

> I have made new contacts and prospectus. I feel I am in a very good spot to take the next step whether in the organization I am in now or another one. (MS 010)

> Having a doctorate, down the road would put me towards promotion to ... say... a higher executive within the ... organization I am in now. That was another trigger. (MS 013)

> The only way for me to be promoted and to build a career in my occupation is to get a better education [further my education]. ... It is the only hope of getting promotion. (MS 014)

> I decided to seek a doctorate degree because I was feeling that my career was stagnant and feel that executive doctorate degree would help me advance my career by getting additional education. (MS 016)

One participant exclusively stated that one of the motivational factors to enter

the program is because he felt stagnant in his current job; he was passed over

promotion twice because of lacking a doctorate:

> I had been passed over for promotion on two specific occasions. And in each case the candidate who was selected for the promotion instead of me has a doctorate degree. So their advanced degrees set them apart from me, kept me from that position. So I am going to seek my doctorate degree to help me be on level footing with my peers who actually have their doctorate degrees. (MS 016)

Apparently, many participants perceived that a doctorate degree would open

doors, new opportunities, and avenues in professional advancement:

> My research has introduced me to the new people in my career field. It has given me the opportunity to work with couple of hospitals, veterans, administration, and folks who work in the healthcare field. The process of my research and working towards the degree has opened new avenues … and in fact potentially other business opportunities which obviously weren't there before. (MS 003)

> When people learned that I was doing this [pursuing a doctorate], new opportunities opened up to me; people started seeking my services that they wouldn't have asked me before because I wasn't involved in the DPS program. (MS 007)

> It will provide an opening for me that I do either consulting or adjunct instructing on the side. (MS 008)

> I noticed that having that degree, it kind of … opened doors or as far as I want to go for my career, moving forward. (MS 013)

The findings conveyed that the doctorate degree will potentially provide extra

credibility when starting one's business (MS 020). In fact, a few DPS graduates

indicated that upon their graduation, they have had many new unexpected

opportunities (MS 012):

> I have been giving opportunities in writing and collaborating on articles with one of my cohorts. … I have been able to use my research skills to get a grant funding for one of the digital products we [my organization] are creating. (MS 005)

> I think, [the most significant benefit of earning the DPS] probably is the opening the door to XXX University [to teach]. So it opens the door [for me] to … change career. (MS 006)

My professional area is research administration and there are some peer-reviewed journals that I see often and I really want to be at an advanced level to contribute to those. My initial plan to accomplish with my degree was to learn about different research terminology so I could provide much better service to the faculty that I work with. Instead, I have started teaching after obtaining my degree. Currently I am in the process of planning to teach another undergraduate level course. (MS009)

The first thing happened after completing the degree … I have already published. Now I am actually writing a book with my advisor. (MS 012)

I had no desire or expectations that the degree would advance my career. I hadn't pursued the degree because of the professional development. But surprisingly the degree has opened up another opportunity in my current position I haven't anticipated. I have been asked to do other things and work other things. And I have been acknowledged as an expert in terms of seeking out new information knowledge several months after I graduated. (MS 017)

For those who have already reached the highest level of their careers, it is unlikely that the degree would provide them a complete change in their career field or serves as a discriminator of their career; but they did express that this terminal degree has enhanced their knowledge and skills in their fields (MS 017, MS 018).

Credential, gain more credibility, respect and prestige in the workplace:

Closely aligned with professional advancement is the category of gaining the credential of the doctorate degree. Twelve participants (57.14%) addressed that obtaining a doctorate would give them respect and prestige in their workplace. They believe that a doctorate would certainly advance their professional status and provide them a higher level of credibility for their current profession and/or potential employers compared to the Master's Degrees holders. The following excerpts revealed

the important role of gaining more credential in the decision of entering into the DPS

program:

> I want to earn my doctorate to provide more credibility to not only my practitioner work but also to my third career [teaching]. (MS 001)

> I realized that there was more that I can bring not only to the teaching environment but the authorship environment that I was embarking on. And I felt that this degree [DPS] would fill in some of those holes and provide me the credential to improve my performance. ... Today I run my own company. My own company provides consulting and education and training. The element of running my own business is highly dependent upon the ability to present credentials to potential clients, customers, university students ... gives them confidence that I am relevant in these particular career fields (MS 003)

> I think [a doctorate] is something to validate your credential ... to make sure that you have been able to accomplish things. (MS 011)

> I think especially for women. We have a challenge to prove that we understand what we are doing and what we are qualified to do whatever our jobs are. So I think to have a doctorate degree is one step that you can help ... try to be different from others. (MS 011)

> Just by being in the federal government organization for nine years, I noticed that the need for education and the balancing of practical experience I work with, would give me more credibility when [and what] I spoke to ... say ... the higher leadership team. (MS 013)

> One was being seen as an expert in my industrial; the second was marketability. ... I think being young and female, people very often question how serious they should take you. So I definitely felt that having a doctorate, it would automatically say, "We need to take this girl seriously." (MS 0019)

> I needed to pursue a doctorate degree because the credential would give me all of the credentials to sit at the table. I wanted to be more than just a

manager. A doctorate is the credential. So with the credential, it gives me the respect and prestige that I need. ... It gives me the sort of the respect and the prestige that I need. ... And again, starting my own business can give credibility and associated knowledge in doctorate research. (MS 020)

Pursuing a doctorate degree, it gives me leverage on the table. That ... regardless of my work and qualifications; ... when you cross that professional academic boundary ... it's just different ... a different credibility rating. (MS 021)

The interview data revealed that more than half of participants attending program are motivated by validating their credential in their fields, and gaining respect and prestige from their peers. They need the credential for their professional status even though they have been working for years and are considered as experts in their field; for them to make the next step up, they need stronger credentials. A terminal doctorate degree would set them apart from their peers, providing them new opportunities to excel to the next phase of their career.

Connectedness with other professionals:

Participants feel that the interaction with other professionals (cohorts) is a great way of learning and is one of the triggers for entering the DPS program. Participants in this study believe that connectivity would allow them to grow academically, professionally and personally. Seven participants (33.33%) described how the opportunity of establishing connectedness with other working professionals in the program would give them invaluable support and engagement they need to achieve and be successful in the program. They perceived the connectivity with cohorts as being a

positive motivational influence, which confirms Budziszewski's (2008) study that the

cohort membership was referred as a "community of connection" in which each

member supported and was supported by every other member; "It is a process of

assimilation based on a learned support structure that evolves over time." (p. 8). The

following quotations are extracted from the semi-structured interviews, and

unquestionably support Budziszewski's conclusion:

> I would say … like personal experience as a professional motivated me
> into an environment where I potentially share my experiences and what I
> have learned with other professionals and with other persons … that are
> interested in learning. A doctorate degree allows me to mature the
> experiences that I have into an environment that I could share. … It [the
> degree] prepares me better to be able to share my experiences and my
> learning to help other people develop theirs. (MS 002)

> The good thing of this particular program [DPS] is the cohort. We have
> several colleagues that are going through the same experience at the same
> time, and so that forms a natural support group which helps you see
> through when things get rough and hard to remember why you got into
> this thing in the first place. So the colleague support of the cohort and
> mentors are hugely important. … I am able to use the degree, use the
> studies that I have in the degree, I see it as enhancing the relationships. …
> I am often asked, "What is your thesis about?", and, that gives me an
> opportunity to open an avenue of communication with folks who are
> interested in the topic in the area of research I have been engaged. (MS
> 003)

> There have been people that have been interested in the fact that I am
> going back to school and getting a doctorate. They found someone who is
> 62 years of age and … I think they found it initially sort of perplexing and
> they finally said that is a good thing. Someone has undertaken that. …
> because of … generally by no means from a negative influenced but
> became a very positive influence the relationships that I have. (MS 004)

Well, I am still researching and writing [after graduated from the program]. One of my cohorts is my partner. We have been doing some writing together, collaborating on article. (MS 005)

In terms of professional work, I think it has deepened relationships and opened some professional doors that I didn't have before. … And I would not have the opportunity to collaborate with other educators [in my field] on the same plan that I can do because I have my doctorate. (MS 006)

I think … what also motivated me was the cohorts. I worked a lot with another student in the cohort, and we collaborated a lot, we interacted a lot. So if I didn't get a lot of feedbacks from my committee, my cohort member and I would have been giving each other a lot of really critical important feedbacks … so kind of filled that gap … maybe a little bit. (MS 007)

I mean … it's wonderful to be with a group of professional people that are also interested in continuing learning and professional development. I think … I have lifelong friendships from the program and the people we met. It has been wonderful to work in the university environment. (MS 011)

In my case … like Dr. XXXX who is my advisor; he also works for a federal government agency so he puts me with the connection with the agency's supervisor. So that way it makes it easier … it's just the connection portion that I see within the professions and doctoral program. (MS 013)

I would be among students who were in my own age group as well. For me, it is not necessary in the classes with a lot of younger students that I wanted to be part of the group that … could relate to, share experience and I can learn from them as well. (MS 020)

This is where it comes down to the personal level of discussions that have happened in our cohort. Everyone is driven by something different. It's wonderful to talk to two of my cohorts. One is a government civilian; the other is a federal government employee how they are leveraging this doctorate research into their jobs. (MS 021)

<u>Improve performance in the current job:</u>

One participant emphasizes that as an adjunct instructor, if he doesn't stay current on what is happening in his profession, he is not relevant in his position, therefore the key for him is to remain relevant and be able to improve his performance in his current job by furthering his education, "My area specialty in information and cyber security. It's a rapidly changing environment. And if you don't stay current on what is happening in those career fields, you are not relevant as an instructor or as a figure." (MS 003) This view is extensively shared with other participants in this study.

> Studying [pursuing for a doctorate] has been already influencing my behavior and professional development for my team [at work]. I am the director. It's influencing my decisions, decisions for hiring … it has practically implied and influenced my profession. (MS 001)

> It [a doctorate degree] helps me to validate my maturity and my development in growth professionally as a career person. … I can develop skills and prepare myself to provide quality product from the learning and teaching perspectives. (MS 002)

> The doctorate degree made me more proactive [on my job]. So it changed me in how I interact and therefore indirectly improved my work relationships. My initial goal going into the DPS program was to learn about research, to be better doer… better accomplishment my job. I have done that. (MS 009)

> My doctoral research has given me a better understanding and tools to interact with people [people who are from a very different culture]. (MS 010)

> When I have new challenges at work, when I have meetings that I have to participate and discuss, that … the capability of my listening and the complexity of my reasoning are much more better so that help me … support better my decisions and influence people [at work]. (MS 014)

Remain competitive in the field:

Three participants (14.29%) put a specific emphasis on the need of remaining competitive as a working professional. They reveal how important it is for them to keep current in their field, thus being competitive in the labor market. The participants' views of competitiveness are highlighted in the following excerpts:

I was even thinking that doctorates would think more professionally. The professional certificate [such as a doctorate] might make you more marketable. (MS 001)

To remain competitive as a professional ... try to advance my degree or my certification. ... It's a natural progression for me. (MS 002)

I found myself very often have to prove more than any other native ... more than any other American-born person that I have met. That is the labor marketing in America, right? You need to prove that you are better than an American-born person. That is ... that is a big motivation for me ... in order to compete with American citizens in the labor market. (MS 0014)

The second reason [for joining the DPS program] was marketability. Obviously, I want to have a career to provide for myself. I want to do everything I can to make myself marketable. A terminal degree I think it's a great way to do that. (MS 019)

Update skills and knowledge in the field:

Technological change requires frequent participation in at least some form of formal education in order to just maintain the current state of art in nearly every endeavor (Merriam & Caffarella, 2007, pp. 15-21). It is becoming commonplace now for working adults to return to higher education if they are to upgrade their knowledge and skills (Williams, 1996, p. 17). This view is reflected by six participants (28.57%) by

specifically illustrating the sense of the need of updating their skills and knowledge in

their profession; making a significant contribution to their decision of seeking a

doctorate.

> I have been teaching at the graduate level for the past eight years. I realized that there was more that I can bring not only to the teaching environment but also the authorship environment that I was embarking on. And I felt ... like ... this degree would fill in some of those holes. ... I will be satisfied having a deeper knowledge of the research area which I have spent last few years working on and I anticipate that the gaining understanding the appreciation insight continuing to fulfill a few things of my professional career. (MS 003)

> Having been brought back to work [after retired] a year before ... two years before I started the DPS program, I thought there's got to be a "huge hole" [in my career knowledge base] and ... it's appropriate for me to do this [joining the DPS program]. (MS 004)

> I think that was part of my decision making because that's really what the DPS program is. It is a way to develop evidence-based practice but it is not all theory, and it's not all practice. ... And I also understand that the way that I learn is going to deepen in something and doing the learning myself. I do not consider information delivered to me to be learning. And so it is important to me to pursue my own learning. (MS 006)

> Not that just the program is knowledge-based and I have a desire to learn and be more knowledgeable in the field. (MS 009)

> I think it is very important for information specialist to keep abreast of trends new knowledge that is generated. And our profession because is based on so much technology, there's only new development that we need to catch with. And for me, the best way to catch up is just to get formal education ... to update my knowledge. ... We have new fresh young people getting into the profession. They have updated skills. So I don't want to be less knowledgeable than them. Let's say that is the main motivator. (MS 014)

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I've been in the workforce for over twenty years, and a couple of Master's Degrees along the way. … And I worked for 15 years at Syracuse, I thought it would be a good idea to acquire a few more additional skills … to get another degree, whether I use it in teaching or not … some of these skills are going to be transferable and useful even in industry. (MS 015)

The majority of participants in this study mentioned that the pursuit for a doctorate degree was due to two main motivators: personal reasons and professional development. From the frequently addressed importance to "stay current" and "be relevant in the field", there is a consensus that to some extent, they do have a sense of career pressure to obtain a terminal degree.

Figure 4.5: Motivational orientations: Professional development
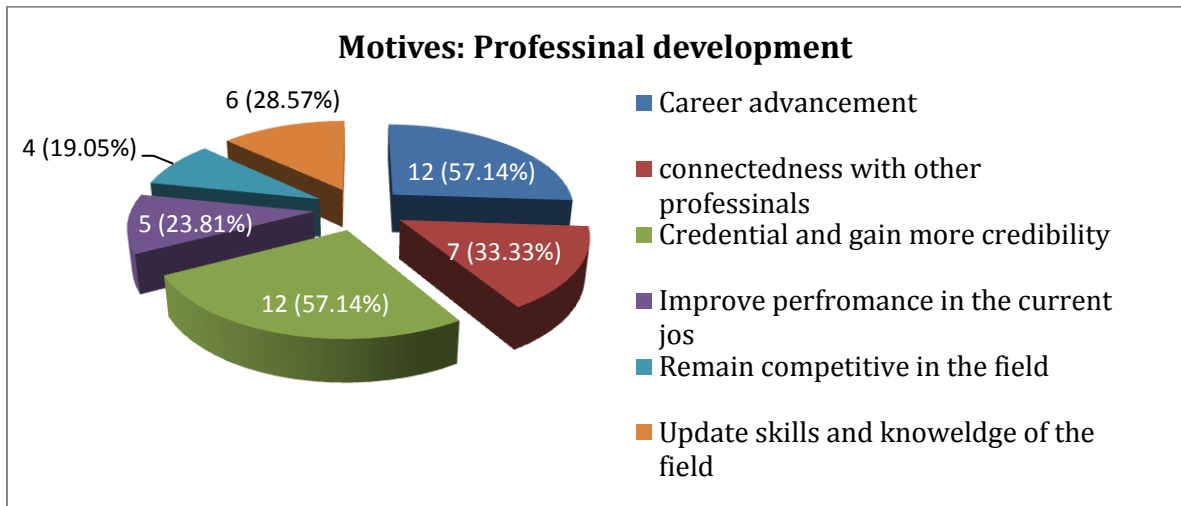
Motives: Professinal development

- Career advancement: 12 (57.14%)
- connectedness with other professinals: 7 (33.33%)
- Credential and gain more credibility: 12 (57.14%)
- Improve perfromance in the current jos: 5 (23.81%)
- Remain competitive in the field: 4 (19.05%)
- Update skills and knoweldge of the field: 6 (28.57%)

Others recognizable factors

<u>Affiliation with and/or previous learning experience at Syracuse University:</u>

It appears that nine of the 21 participants (42.86%) have some sort of personal or professional connection with Syracuse University. Among them, three are currently

employed by Syracuse University as faculty/staff members. Five participants are

Syracuse graduates and have a very positive learning experience with the university,

particularly with the iSchool. One participant grew up in the Syracuse area. All nine

participants express that they are familiar with Syracuse iSchool and know the iSchool's

learning and teaching environment, which ultimately has led them into the DPS-IM

program. For examples,

> [I am] an instructor, a professor in graduate education [at Syracuse University iSchool]. (MS 003)

> Oh well, I got a phone call from Syracuse University, from Dr. XXXX saying that this program [DPS-IM] is just existed. … I previously took a Master's Degree from Syracuse University so I was familiar with the program. Although the program [DPS] is different from what I was expecting, that was based on continuing what I have already started at Syracuse University in Washington, D.C. That has been one of the specific reasons for continuing on. (MS 004)

> I graduated from the iSchool at Syracuse with my Master of Science. So I kept watching to see if they would ever have such a program, a distance doctoral program. And when I found it, I was immediately interested in getting into the program. (MS 005)

> The [DPS] degree opened a door for me to coming to Syracuse [I became a faculty member at XXX University upon my graduation]. (MS 006)

> For me, part of … the last 14 years in the university [Syracuse], it always seems that … that level of learning [doctoral education] is always out there. And you almost feel you should have … should go for it … So part of the thinking would just be a right thing to do where I am at. (MS 009)

> Well, one thing I took … I took my Master's Degree at Syracuse. And so that was one of those reasons that I decided to go to Syracuse. I am kind of familiar with the curriculum. (MS 011)

I made the decision to come to Syracuse to work, but I was still looking for something outside my job that would allow me to exercise my interest in academics. I had been considering a program such as this one. And when I came to work at Syracuse, it came more natural to me, I want to take an advantage of being around a university campus and therefore, enjoying such a program. (MS 015)

I was always involved in the Master's program at Syracuse. And this, the first doctorate program was announced. And, so a lot of it was just timing and being involved at the early stages. (MS 017)

I grew up just north of Syracuse. So I knew a little bit of the school. (MS 018)

Offered tuition assistance through employer or other sources:

Employer sponsored reimbursement is often mentioned as a motivating factor (Adrignola, 2010, p. 162). Data of this study unveiled that participants feel that having sufficient funding from their employers to support their endeavors is an identifiable motivator of entering the program. A few participants articulated that they are supported either by their employers or sponsored by their organizations, a scholarship or company monetary assistance program. However, there is no data that specifically reveals that the decision of seeking the DPS is made solely by a tuition reimbursement benefit or a monetary assistance program.

Finally I had the time and money to focus on pursuing my doctorate degree. Being able to afford the time and financially pay for my education were the triggers. (MS 002)

It is the fact that I work at the science laboratory at XXX University, a renowned East Coast university. And they [the university] encourage … actually pay for the majority of education. (MS 004)

My husband has a career. … He's willing to invest the money and allowed me to be very focused on my work. (MS 005)

It was a scholarship under a federal government sponsored program. Um … and then I applied to Syracuse. (MS 021)

Received marketing /program information:

One of the unexpected motivational factors is the Syracuse DPS program marketing information process. Six participants (28.57%) mentioned that part of the reason for attending the DPS program was because they were either contacted directly by the faculty members of Syracuse iSchool or they noticed the announcement for the program; the description of the program matched what they have been looking for:

I started evaluating different programs. And I learned relatively quickly that the residency kind program does not fit in where I am in my life. So I started expanding my search out. … I called the [Syracuse] program directors, talked with them a little bit, asked if I could speak to a couple of faculty members and talked to a couple of faculty members, which led ultimately my decision for DPS at Syracuse. (MS 001)

I have been looking at programs that state schools or other small private schools. … I couldn't find a program as I looked … it's probably six, seven years ago. … So, I kinda stopped looking and I talked to my wife. She went online and looked at some of the programs that were available. And she told me about this program [DPS-IM]. So that's how I started. (MS 008)

Oh well, I got a phone call from Syracuse University iSchool … from Dr. XXXX saying that this program [DPS-IM] had just existed [announced]. He just wanted to know if I am interested in it. That's the primary trigger that I have. (MS 004)

Well, I was notified by a faculty member from Syracuse iSchool that the program [DPS-IM] was available. So that personal contact made a huge difference. (MS 006)

The third trigger would be … just … this [DPS-IM program description] came across my desk telling me about the Syracuse iSchool DPS-IM program. (MS 007)

Well, it was the day they [Syracuse iSchool] release the description, the DPS program. I saw the description of the DPS-IM program. … I read the description and noted that it was part-time and yet accelerated. So it had fine line point. Then it was virtually an immediate decision for me. (MS 009)

Figure 4.6: Motivational orientations: Other recognizable factors
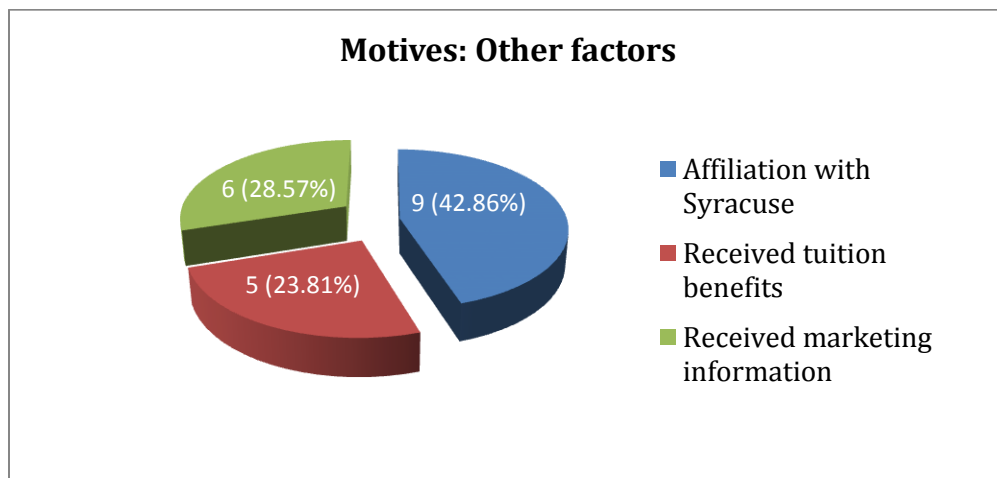
Unanticipated findings:

Two very interesting themes were revealed during the interview conversation. One being that, two female participants rejected the traditional restraints placed on women; that people generally do not take female employees seriously in the workplace. The participants perceived that the pursuing a doctorate is a way to break traditional gender boundaries.

Well … I think especially for women. We have a challenge to prove that we understand what we are doing and what we are qualified to do whatever our jobs are. (MS 011)

Certainly I think being young and female; people are very often how serious they should take you. So I definitely felt that having a doctorate, it would automatically say, "We need to take this girl seriously." (MS 019)

Cooper (1999) defined this as "adjusted identities." She interpreted that women returning to school articulate a desire for a new, self authored identity; the focus for women was on redefining individual identities (p. 31). The data of this study echoes Cooper's findings. This gender perspective would be grounds for future investigation.

Another unique finding is that a first generation immigrant female participant repetitively depicted that her pursuing a doctorate is to prove that she is equally qualified as her American-born professional business counterparts. As an immigrant, she inferred that she needs to excel at a higher level in her current occupation to stay competitive, which initially was one of the motivational factors that brought her into the DPS program:

> Certification [doctorate degree] that you are accomplished, new learning curve, … is very important for me as an immigrant … I found myself very often have to prove more than any other native … more than any other American-born person that I have met. That is the labor marketing in America. I need to prove that I am better than an American-born person. That is a big motivation for me … to be on top of the game, in order to compete with American citizen … in the labor market. (MS 014)

Summary – RQ 1

The motivation of the participants entering the DPS program are varied; yet the findings commonly revealed in Research Question 1 that personal reasons (66.67%) and professional advancement (57.14%) are the strongest motivational orientations for these working practitioners. These motivational factors consistently concur with

previous studies on older working adults returning to higher education to pursue a

doctorate degree mainly because of professional commitment (e.g. Chiang, 2001, pp.

53-54; Hydock, 2004, pp. 106-111; Short, 2004, pp. 66-68; Lin, 2005, p. 117; Brailsford,

2010, pp. 18-20; Huston, 2011, p. 143; Williamson, 2013, pp. 52-55). Apparently, career

advancement is in some extent related to the level of years in the workforce; the

participants judged that it was the right time to pursue a terminal degree to gain extra

credentials for promotion.

In many cases participants expressed that they have experienced or are

experiencing different levels of frustration during their doctoral journey; however, the

anticipated rewards of a sense of accomplishment, personal satisfaction and the

recognition of the doctorate seem to overcome any obstacles (MS 002, MS 011, MS 013,

MS 015, MS 017, MS 018, MS 021) and in the end, they would be able proudly to claim,

"I did it!" (e.g. MS 006, MS 009, MS 018)

Q2: What learning experiences in the lives of these working practitioners have
influenced their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life?

Some participants in this study reveal that they were motivated by their prior

learning experiences such as mode of learning, negative and/or positive learning

engagement in the colleges.

Mode of learning:

Ten of 21 (47.62%) participants indicate that they are very comfortable with the

distance learning program and the decision of entering to the DPS program was

influenced by their previous distance learning experience or their remote working environment.

> My previous experiences have always been … some form of information and technology and management skills which has helped me to decide to enter this particular program. From my Master's degree in information systems, I participated in a distance learning program. Once I looked into the DPS-IM program that I am participating now, the [learning] methodology was somewhat similar. … The fact is that I did distance learning before … was a positive experience … and that helped me to decide to use this format for this degree. (MS 002)

> My previous experiences in teaching virtually … I have been teaching virtually and being a student virtually over many years. I have been part of either distant learning or virtual learning for literally three decades. And so the opportunity of this particular program [DPS-IM] … and the mixture of residency and virtual mixed, mixed method of virtual residency look to be a very, very fruitful environment. (MS 003)

> Well … I've never done a full distance program, but I had taught. I wrote a course and taught a course online. And. I was familiar with how distance programs work. I did want a program that has residency and the way to connect. I also want to sure that the program wasn't just a watered down version of … more engaging program that would be happened on site … I think I made a good choice. I was very pleased with the entire program. (MS 005)

> It was perfect in a sense that it [DPS-IM] was distance, online; it was perfect in a sense that it was for mid-career professional. (MS 007)

> When I took the Master's Degree [at Syracuse], I took a couple of courses in residency, and then the rest … online. Its kind like residency you "pick and choose" what I could do for residency and what I could do for online. And then I also did online education with National Defense University, which is … another … I mean another college level courses. So I have been involved. (MS 011)

Well, I was influenced to select this executive doctorate degree because it offers both online and face-to-face opportunities [courses]. And so from that learning modality, I am comfortable with that because I do a lot of work with teams that are in a remote location. We occasionally get together with face-to-face. So that was the experience of working with teams in a remote setting … in a distance setting that encouraged me to go back and seek the degree here [Syracuse University] because of that distance type of environment. (MS 016)

My [post-secondary] education was a combination of resident and distance learning. I would have to say … it favorably influenced my decision. It was a positive influence because I was comfortable with a distance program. I have been through a distance program at the National Defense University. (MS 0018)

I have finished my last part of my undergraduate studies [via online courses]. It gave me more flexibility to do courses. That was the magnet of the online software and tools that were significantly exponentially better, just for the distance courses. So I had experience in distance learning. I knew that that flexibility would be something that was certainly necessary for me. Although I still liked being in the classroom, I needed something to give me flexibility that would again be one of my decisions that influenced … influenced my decision to move forward in the DPS-IM program. (MS 020)

Negative learning experience:

To some extent, previous negative learning experiences appear to have affected cohort motivational decisions for entering the DPS program. Three participants described how this type of negative learning experiences affected their education choice:

After I finished my Bachelor degree, I enrolled to the engineering school at a state university in my home state. I was enrolled in mechanical engineering school. When I got up there … nothing was wrong with the school, a good school. I was just in the wrong spot. It's just not for me. And

engineering was not for me. And … I remember when I was in my first set of classes, it was the first time I ever had a really significant academic problem, not … not like failed but … I had to withdrawn from one course and got a low B in another course. I could remember one day driving back to our apartment from school; I had that, "It isn't right; I don't need to be here. I shouldn't be here. That it is not what I need to be doing right now." And I went home and talked to my wife about it. She agreed. So we made a change … It's kind of a negative experience turned into a positive one because I felt like a failure but at the same time I was happy that I didn't try to push through and force myself into something that I was not prepared to do. (MS 010)

In my previous education [post-secondary], we had courses strictly online. And I found that if you don't have the self-discipline to stay on top of your coursework, it's very easy to fall back. And I mean I had experienced … even in this program [DPS-IM]. I didn't have the self-discipline that I always want myself to be, and as a result, it just likes the coursework keeps piling up on you. (MS 013)

I was attending a traditional face-to-face full-time PhD program. The negative experience was that the faculty focused just on your ability to add research that would help them promote their research rather than interested in the students … what I was interested in research. As a result of that negative experience I left that program … because it wasn't what I was seeking, what I wanted to be. (MS 016)

It was advertised as a part-time program but they really want you to be there full-time and attend a lot of different meetings and lunch and learn and things like that outside the class. And I simply didn't have time to do that as a working adult. And that … that experience … I left the program because it wasn't tailored for working adults … professionals … like the executive doctorate at Syracuse. (MS 016)

Positive learning experience:

In this model, positive learning experiences refer to the prior evidence-based learning at graduate schools, or the experience in pursuing a graduate degree via

writing a thesis instead of coursework, and having an excellent learning experience in a

prior graduate education program. These experiences have played a decision-making

role for these working professionals seeking a doctorate degree within this program:

> I think part of my decision making was because that's really what the DPS program is. It is a way to develop evidence-based practice but it is not all theory, and it's not all practice. And that exactly what I've done in my entire life. (MS 006)

> I enrolled to another Master's program back here [in my home state] … a state university here in Duran. I was highly successful in that program. I did a rare thing that most students in the program didn't do. That is, I actually selected to write a thesis. Most Master's students just do coursework and move up. And because I had that option, I chose to do the thesis. And I did my own basic research from the ground up. And it was very successful. That's a positive experience. I think that contributes to knowing what I want to do and giving me confidence, and doing it right. (MS 010)

> I had excellent learning experience when I did my Master's at XXX University in Austin, Texas. It's an amazing university. I learned a lot and it really changed my career and opened my eyes to new things, and new trends. I learned about new technology. I developed my skills through the program. I learned about managing a library. I learned about the basic principles of librarianship. I participated in Kappa Delta Pi which gave me the skills of leadership in a workplace. And I met amazing people. (MS 014)

> I think … having had a prior graduate degree, a Master's Degree … I knew that the doctorate degree … the learning of a doctorate degree is different in terms of learning, in terms of how you go about learning and what you are seeking to learn. It's just different. You are exploring a body of research and you are looking to contribute to the knowledge-based in a way that has not been contributed before. From my prior graduate degree, I don't think I learned how to discover new knowledge. So … that's something I am hoping to learn, to increase my skills by going to the DPS program. (MS 017)

Well, I learned to adapt over the years. It's interesting because having spent 19 years in a profession where they care more about the metals on your chest than you actual experience. That was a new enlightenment to realize that there are other circles out there. I learned that adversity, adaptability ... is the key to survival. I took that and figured out how to meet those requirements and then applied for a transition to another community. (MS 021)

Summary – RQ 2

Research Question 2 aims to explore participants' previous academic learning experiences that affected their decision of entering the DPS-IM program. The conversational data reveal that many participants have distance learning or teaching experience, thus they are comfortable with this mode of learning. The DPS-IM program is designed with the combination of face-to-face residency and online learning which has helped them with their decision to take on the DPS journey.

In addition to the mode of learning, participants' prior learning experiences in other institutions also play a decision-making role for their doctorate journey. Some of them mentioned that they had full-time doctoral education experiences prior to entering the Syracuse DPS-IM program. They entered a traditional PhD program and discovered that that was not what they want. Also, full-time residency programs are not tailored for working professionals and do not work with their career and family situations.

Another factor contributing to motives is that these working professionals want to incorporate their past and new knowledge into their doctoral experience. The nature

of the DPS-IM program feeds that need – a cohort-based program that focuses on the combination of theory and practical use.

RQ 3: *Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education?*

Individual's research interests;

Many participants indicated that they possessed a very specific research interest which aligned with the DPS-IM program. The DPS-IM program is tailored for working professionals who are the experts in their fields. The interview data revealed that some participants were driven to the program because they had a particular problem in their work environment or in their profession that they wanted to solve or they wanted to tackle and learned more about it. One participant in particular stated that, "if someone is interested in the program, and I am going to advise on whether it is a good fit or whether they were in the position ready to tackle such program, I think I would want to ask what problem you are facing in your field? And what issues that you have to tackle and learn more about?" (MS 005) This viewpoint is simultaneously supported by many other participants:

> I knew I have these interests and passion. ... I was looking for a program that would help me really mentally improve how to format academic augments, how to substantiate claims, and how to openly contribute to that body of knowledge ... for me knowledge is practitioner. When I am studying for a DPS, that's exactly what I am doing. ... I study it, I live with it, I do it, I teach it ... I kind find a passion about it. (MS 001)

I have a very particular interest. So that was kind of a trigger … being very interested in something. … And I am very much a hands-on practical person. I also like the theoretical conceptual step. And, and so it seems like a perfect thing to be able to bring something that occurred to me in a practice setting to bridge that with research. So I really like that the DPS program … attempts to foster and facilitate the link between research and practice. (MS 007)

My personal research interests have always been with quality of life ... and of course the information that surrounds the quality of life. And so I … and so [this is] one of the things that I sort of discovered as I got into this program that is really exciting to be able to look into my personal interests and match up a project that would motivate me to … just my career … aspiration, personal aspiration. So I enjoyed that aspect of it immediately. (MS 010)

I have something I want to further explore. So I went to a doctorate program as more than I have a doctorate … what I can contribute to a doctorate. (MS 011)

I've a very strong personal interest because I have a passion to research. … I guess that this is something that is part of me … in me because I want to solve problem. I want to do it in an academic fashion. (MS 012)

My job at the XXX University in this position is all about connecting faculty members and their research interests and their intellectual property to the outside world or to the industrial world. And I am motivated by and passionate about it. (MS 015)

The research interest is influenced highly by your career path and career experiences. So, the influence of my research interest evolved from the practical work that I have done for many years. I worked with a lot of data scientists to … that didn't do too much with big data but they took and dealt with the big scope of health care data. … I understand that users have to make decision so that moved me forward with my research interest. … You have to have something you are passionate about, to have passion about the industry that I'm in. I am passionate about using information knowledge. (MS 020)

Personal educational values and beliefs:

Four participants shared that their families always emphasize the importance of learning and place education as vitally important in one's life. The value of education has always been part of their life. Therefore, it is natural to pursue a doctorate regardless of the stage of their lives.

> Education was always highly valued in my family. My father was an educator. He was a school superintendent, a high school principal and a junior high principal, a teacher and a coach. His mother [my grandmother] was also a teacher; and her mother [my great-grandmother] was also a teacher. So the idea that education is to be valued is something that I grew up with and something that I accepted as natural. (MS 003)

> I probably have five or six hundred semester hours of courses in my life. And, that's just something I enjoy doing and I enjoy learning new things. ... And I feel if I am not doing that, I am losing what I have already known that if I do not continue learning. ... I just feel that going to school is beneficial. ... My career pretty much is not over by any means but the standpoint is that it's established, I already know what I am doing. The specific education [DPS-IM program] this is the field of information management, information systems ... something I have done for decades. It seems that it is natural to finally ... I have four Master's Degrees; I should finally go ahead and work on a doctorate. (MS 004)

> I pride myself on being a learner. That is of very high value to me. I never figure that I know everything there is to know. Education provides an outlook for me, and an incentive and motivation actually for me to push out and learn new things. (MS 006)

> Well, I am absolutely a proponent of the value of having a professional certification. My educational belief is that getting an additional education certification is always beneficial and always paid in one way or another; there is a value to it. (MS 016)

I think … it was more the way I was brought up. My parents were both teachers. They placed a great deal of value on education. (MS 018)

Current and past career path

Participants observe the connection and alignment between a doctorate degree and their profession. They describe their current and past career path as a motivator for them to join the DPS program.

My past and current experiences … my career has always been in technology. I have been involved in different roles within technology. In the technical nature, part of the growth process as a professional is to develop in the management of technology. The DPS program prepares me better to be able to share my experiences and my learning to help others develop theirs. (MS 002)

I already had a couple of careers – government [federal] career, and business career. In fact, today I run my own company. And my own company provides consulting and education and training services for a variety of things. And again, the element of running my own business is highly dependent upon the ability to present credentials. (MS 003)

Every step of my career has built expertise and been accompanied by continuing graduate work. I first went into education. I started as a classroom teacher. And I then pursued a drama and an English teacher. And I pursued a Master's in communication and theater which had been directly aligned with what I was interested in. (MS 006)

I mean my career path is always taking me toward in the direction that a doctorate would be helpful. (MS 010)

It is absolutely an alignment between my career and the DPS. My career will change, and needs to change right now. The influence, the impacts of the DPS program in my skills, my knowledge, expertise … it certainly has impacts. (MS 014)

I was interested in IT [information technology]. I love IT. I was very comfortable with technology; but as I progressed along that career path, I began to realize that it wasn't … the biggest challenge in IT was not the technology; it was the people and the information. And so that's kind of what guided me toward the DPS program in Syracuse. (MS 018)

My job deals with digital content. And so, I focused on a research area that enhances that, and also looking at the digital content. I think aligning to very much … how to be better in my job. (MS 019)

Summary – RQ 3

Research Question 3 discovers the alignment and connection of personal research interests, educational values, and career path that have an influential factor in participant's decision of seeking the DPS. In many cases, these subjects label themselves as high-level lifelong learners that identify their motivation of coming to Syracuse as a focus on practical research which aligns with their individual research interest, educational beliefs, and profession. They emphasize that their current profession particularly has an influential factor for them either to advance in their positions or enhance their knowledge in the field by doing practical research; they desire to align (connect) their personal research interests with their profession. It is suggested that the individual's personal interests, educational values, and past and current career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education.

RQ 4: What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees?

When asking the participants, "What next?", what plans and hopes do they have once they have completed the DPS program, the participants candidly shared what they are planning to do and how they might use their knowledge earned in the program. Regardless of their profession and research areas, they all have a very clear future planned for themselves. They are looking forward to advancing in their current position, or changing career, or applying the new knowledge and skills in their profession.

<u>To advance in their current position or get a new job: Change career</u>

One third of participants (7 participants; 33.33%) openly affirmed that they are hoping to move on to the next phase of their career.

> I'll apply the knowledge to my professional career … actually for creation. I'd like to get into some kind of information management or information technology in a larger organization. (MS 008)

> I'll branch out from where I am currently at … maybe into a different kind of career. I am not sure where. (MS 011)

> Being seen as a practitioner, it has already lined me kind of for the next phase of my career, so … do more research for other federal government agency based on the committee of the space-based improving the cloud and any other IT aspects … unlimited possibility within the federal government. (MS 013)

> Well, knowledge in the program may … I hope to get a new job or get a new position in the job that I have right now. (MS 014)

I would like to be a federal CIO. I don't know how the degree will ... I guess the degree would be a discriminator ... looking at that kind of job. (MS 018)

So, my research area focuses how people consume digital content ... hoping to ... figure out how to display the content and eventually getting a new job. (MS 019)

... Retire from the federal government agency and get a job with a Fortune 500 company. (MS 021)

To become an adjunct professor: Teaching

Six participants (28.57%) expressed that they have high hopes to get into a teaching position at the college level after graduating even though they understand that the degree is not a teaching degree (MS 020).

I retired from a government agency; and I am currently the director for an incorporation company in a Midwestern state. I have been writing curriculum and teaching as an adjunct for about 10 to 15 years. And so I was thinking forward towards my final (third) career – teaching in higher education. (MS 001)

Part of my plan is to teach professional in my field. And I have done with the program that I can develop the skills and prepare myself to provide quality product from learning and teaching perspectives. (MS 002)

[A doctorate degree] will provide an opening for me that ... do either consulting or as an adjunct instructing on the side. (MS 008)

Before graduation, I have submitted a couple of applications hopefully to become an adjunct faculty member at the university. So I am looking to begin my career in teaching, become an adjunct faculty ... being able to get on at XXX University or ... at a higher education institution. (MS 012)

I also know that in the adjunct faculty work that having a doctorate degree would benefit me by enabling me to teach more classes. (MS 016)

I know it [DPS] is not a teaching degree, but I think that having the ability to develop seminars and do some teaching [part-time] through seminars. (MS 020)

To apply new knowledge and skills in their profession: Application

Six participants (28.57%) addressed that they are eager to apply their earned knowledge and skills to their profession and have a practical impact on those who they work with.

As an instructor, a professor in graduate education, there will be a direct application there. The elements of some of my clients for whom I provide continuing training and education, and executive development. I intend to again leverage the degree and work behind the degree in those fashions. (MS 003)

I have been able to use my research skills to get a grant funding for one of the products we are creating. ... I'm using the knowledge learned from the program all the time. I had a huge investment. I want to make sure that I get as much out of it as I can. (MS 005)

From the standpoint, I work ... again where I work probably is the one where I'll work for the rest of my life. The information [knowledge] I gained from new application of simulation that is what I have done for decades. So, it's just more enhancement of what I am doing now. (MS 004)

For me, it is having empathies with both faculty and graduate students that I work with. I have done a much better job supporting research here [Syracuse University] by understanding research better. ... I work better and work smarter and become more valuable and provide better support research. (MS 009)

[The DPS degree] has helped me professionally. ... I took the survey quantitative design class. I immediately am able to apply those principles in the design of a survey. I know I am going to have good validated data.

The quantitative research tackles that immediately. So, it is very helpful in those regards. (MS 010)

Maybe continue doing research work while still working on campus. And then if I change jobs and work in industry, I would look at what this [DPS] provides me, and the learned skill sets and tools that I could use for doing systematic research ... even in a corporate setting. (MS 015)

Other future plans:

Of the 21 participants, four of them specifically assert that they do not anticipate or have not expected any changes at all in their career simply because they have already reached the highest level of their career, "I am with a company I work for and I am at the highest level of the management in the field of information management." (MS 017)

From the standpoint, I work ... again where I work probably is the one where I'll work for the rest of my life. (MS 004)

Well, when I first came to the program, I had no thought of changing career. What I wanted to accomplish was to base my leadership of the work we were doing in the XXX City ... on ... the best ideas in the field to make sure that everything I was helping to develop and pushing forward toward really align with the latest research and the best thinking in the field. (MS 006)

I had no ideas of what I was going to do once I completed the program. I just knew what I was doing was important. (MS 007)

I did not have any expectations at all about what the degree will do. It's really a personal journey to merge myself into the educational setting again and to achieve a doctorate degree. I have no other expectations other than that. (MS 017)

Summary – RQ 4

Research Question 4 reveals that the participants in this study sense that it is the right time and right program for them to gain credentials for promotion and branch out to other endeavors. Many participants have similar future plans such as using the knowledge gained in the program to teach and disseminate to others, and making a difference in their career or professional fields. During the process of data analysis, the researcher also unveiled some unexpected findings, which are discussed in the following sections.

Other findings

In addition to the above-mentioned findings, the interviews unveiled de-motivational factors, an unexpected comment about perceived faculty and administration staff negative attitudes about the DPS program, and most importantly, a positive impact on gaining problem solving skills.

De-motivations

Two de-motivational factors were identified during the semi-structured interviews. One is related to problems in time-management between their work, study, family and friends. The other is a personal work situation changed and directly affected the level of motivation to complete the program; the DPS degree program was not recognized as worthy by the current employer and federal government agency. While

the former can be resolved by proper planning, the latter does not allow a simple solution.

Time-management:

Some participants revealed that taking on a doctorate journey negatively influenced relationships with their families and friends because they have less time to spend with them. Many of them emotionally expressed that a lot of their personal time is used to focus on study and research in the program which they did not anticipate prior to entering the program. Therefore, the lack of time with family and friends is seen as a de-motivator.

> There is significant work involved on top of our working fulltime. It sets a significant burden on you … and not only just family and friends, but just personal down time. That's challenging. (MS 008)

> I have small children … I have work, I have school. I have everything else going on in my life. I am probably denying my children other things such as time, quality time I couldn't spend with them instead of studying. (MS 011)

> Working a full-time job and having a full-time family, time-management plays a key part because it wasn't always balanced to me. I would have to spend a lot more time doing my research which would take away time from my family. (MS 012)

> I mean … with the family with the new-born on the way, it has been challenging for most of the time. It's hard for the family to comprehend like why I go away and do not want to spend time with them. (MS 013)

> My social life is gone, basically. Because working full-time and studying part-time, I lost a lot of friends. It's hard to connect with people in a social way because I am busy. (MS 014)

Some of my friends are a little bit … they don't quite understand why I am pursuing a doctorate degree. I think they are a bit unhappy that I have less time with them because I am so busy with the program. So I think there is a negative impact that I have not seen my friends that much, involved with them like I used to be. (MS 016)

I definitely have less time with my friends … sometimes feeling being unmotivated. (MS 019)

As far as friendship goes, I haven't been able to spend much time with those very close and dear friends … and charity which I had been very active. I had to cut my time with them and have to stay focus. It has been really difficult for my friendships. (MS 020)

One participant even denoted that the negative effect on his family was so great that he has some regrets of taking on the DPS program. Only after he entered the program, he discovered the gravity of the situation he was in where the workload and the demand of his time had been underestimated:

Within my personal life, it was a negative process, a negative interaction. I was often away from my two children. And the doctorate program consumed of … consumed me, period. It consumed my mind and my thinking and … many hours. Three to twenty hours a week, in some cases over forty hours … and just unable to spend time with my family. And … for that I have some regrets. (MS 017)

Participants repeatedly addressed that they have not been able to spend time with their significant ones; It seems that there was a sense of guilt in their expressions particularly the ones who have small children. To overcome this de-motivator, a few participants gave advice from their own experiences, mentioning that they were "prepared for it to take up a substantial amount of time" (MS 001). Prior to entering the

program, they had conversations with the rest of the family and, explained and made sure that all family members are fully aware (MS 001) of the extensive requirements and time investment (MS 003). They agree that the compromise of time between studying and family obligation is a temporary issue and the problem would be routinely resolved once they complete the degree. At the end, they are very optimistic that they will catch-up time with family and friends after completing their doctorates.

> [I] will get the time back when I complete my degree. … And I will be able to strengthen that relationship". (MS 016)

> I'm certain that those core friendships, longtime friendships will make it through this, it's been tough. I will be glad when I am done so I can get back to some normalcy in my life. (MS 020)

Situation changed at work environment:

Two participants were de-motivated because of work environment and situations that changed unpredictably during their doctoral journey at Syracuse.

> My second research interest was for veteran and veteran affairs which I have a strong passion of being a veteran myself. But after a career change about a year ago … it makes it more difficult and a challenge. … I still have the passion for the VA and I think there is a great opportunity to explore it but for now my research interest is just to continue to complete the program. (MS 013)

> In addition to job changing, one point of discouragement is that the program is not acknowledged by the participant's current employer and organization:

> After going through the application process and entering the DPS program for a couple of years, I have the ugly realization that the federal government agency I am working for does not support me being in the program. And … whereas was once told that if I want to finish my degree…

I basically had been told that they would not acknowledge the program and I would be transferred to another place. (MS 021)

Unexpected negative perception by iSchool faculty towards the DPS-IM program

An unexpected finding was unveiled pertaining to the perception among participants that the DPS program is to some extent not supported by the iSchool faculty members. This negative feeling is sketched from the following direct quotation of a participant. He describes that:

There is one negative that I can point to it that is not at home; but more to do with how this particular program [DPS] has been perceived by some people on campus within the School of Information Studies. I don't believe that it has the right amount of recognition and support from some faculty and some administrators in the iSchool. This is a little disconcerting to me. (MS 015)

This viewpoint is echoed indirectly and separately by two participants during the inquiring of the satisfaction about having a doctorate as a working professional.

If they told me today that "the DPS program is going away ... and you are not going to earn your doctorate," I'll continue what I am researching. (MS 001)

On the negative side ... I've had faculty that wasn't that great (not good) ... didn't follow up ... assign assignments until late in the semester ... didn't really interact with students. I think it is very important in distance education program. (MS 020)

Gaining different perspectives towards problems

Another unintended finding is that a few participants claimed that the DPS program evidently improved their professional behavior and judgment in their work

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environment, providing them the ability to distinguish and approach problems differently; having diverse perspectives and improving their problem solving skills.

> Um … um … studying has been already influencing my behavior and … and professional development for my team [at work]. (MS 001)

> … And I have done with the program that I can develop the skills and prepare myself to provide quality product from the learning and teaching perspectives. (MS 002)

> You know … the degree teaches you how to think differently and looks at things differently … I think … it is … you know … teaches you critical aspects … (MS 008)

> Um … well … um … from a professional perspective … um … from an educational perspective … um … prior graduate degrees, I don't think that I learned how to discover new knowledge. (MS 017)

> So … in … in the program [DPS] … um … we talked about a lot of different things. We have … um … faculty members from a lot of trend disciplines … urr … you know … you have … um … people with background in Sociology … um … or management or … urr … computer science or mathematics. And I think that blend of faculty … um … really broadened my perspective. (MS 018)

At the end of the semi-structured interviews, participants were asked their opinions on the motivational aspects of working professionals seeking the DPS. Many of them denote that everyone has a different motivation for pursuing such a degree; it is also "different from those in their 30s and even those in the early 40s." (MS 004) They concur that motivation is not enough; it is associated with many other diverse issues and circumstances. In summation, their recommendations to others who are interested in entering the DPS program include:

Have a purpose or reasons:

> There is a certain amount of prestige that, that is always associated with someone who can preserve to get the degree. And, there is that aspect of motivation, but that is not enough. You have had other things to associate with it … to endure the process and see it through to the end. This probably is why so many people started a doctorate … don't end up finishing it simply because they did not develop good reasons behind it. … if you don't have a reason for how you are going to use the degree afterward and just having it is probably not a compelling motivation. It might be enough motivation to start, but it won't be enough to propel you through to completion. (MS 003)

> So, it is really about …, it [DPS program] matches about whether you have time to or you have the support to do it but whether or not it fits into your current environment and your current goal as far as your profession. I think that it's very important that people come into the program with a purpose. Even if their topics changed, if their focus changed, they still have had a very focus on why they are doing it and how would support what they are doing in their work. (MS 005)

Need a passion:

For some participants, the motivation for seeking a doctorate simply is to advance in their field without the driver or the passion of learning, possibly resulting discouragement or a reason to drop out:

> If you're just doing it to get a degree, it's a pretty rough road. That is why a lot of people are ABD or dropped out … understanding of your own passion, your own drive for learning, and of your work ethics, your willingness to focus in and drive yourself because others aren't going to be the same the degree where you just inquiry one course after another and you are through. This one you have to be solid and be self-disciplined enough to pursue it. (MS 006)

> You have to have a very strong desire and ambition to pursue this working doctorate degree. In my opinion, the demand of the work and the

demand of life and … the demand of the degree itself is so great. It is easy to quit but you have to have ambition, passion, and determination to actually finish the degree. (MS 012)

I mean … the second thing was what I said early on that I have always had a desire to do this. … My research topic is a personal interest and personal passion. (MS 015)

Alignment with work life and personal life:

I think everybody … practitioners seeking a PhD degree already known how much workload it is going to take? It's just how you fit it in your current life. Is it the right timing for it? (MS 013)

I absolutely underestimated that commitment in my journey. I underestimated the amount of work … You want it to be enjoyable and positive experience but you just have to make sure, in my opinion that your work life and personal life support that.   (MS 017)

… In my feeling there is a lot of logistical stuff and hoops to jump through in the doctorate that is not aligned with learning. Um … the processes just the shear tenacity that you have to show to get through it, and that does align with the workforce I am in. (MS 019)

You got to have some working experience so you can figure out how would this apply? How would it work? (MS 021)

Need to understand that a doctorate is not just another Master's:

It's [DPS] not the same as working on a graduate degree. I was overly confident. As a matter of fact, all my undergraduate and graduate degrees … well, I am a full-time practitioner. I have never been a full-time student. I've always been a full-time practitioner. So I just assumed that, "Oh, I have done that, that's how I earned all my degrees." That's my approach of education. And I am just doing more of it. It was grossly underestimated. (MS 001)

And ... um ... to have a different standing as a doctoral student instead of a Master's student, it's more of a partnership with ... the professors, and ... um ... you know ... you go to the class. Then they teach you ... and you leave ... um ... it's more sharing ... um ... transferring knowledge, transferring what they ... what the professors have done right or wrong in their careers. It's kind of guiding you along [mentoring]. So the interests have been really valued. And, I almost notice that when I first came to the program. Um ... what a different status you are as a doctoral student ... you are more part of the team. (MS 011)

Summary

The conversational data reveal that for these working professionals, their motives of entering the DPS program are driven by learning and the improvement of "self". Learning as defined by this study- (1) the acquisition of knowledge or skill from a formal education (a doctorate); (2) the exploratory of a particular area related to their profession; and (3) the passion of discovery.

The improvement of "self" includes: (1) to transform as practical researchers; (2) to expand their professional capacities; and (3) to make impacts on their families (set an example or being a role model) and community (contribute to their current profession).

These motivational factors are well-matched with the commonly known and well-established intrinsic and extrinsic motivational theories such as Maslow's need-based theory, Csikzentmihalyi's flow theory, Deci & Ryan's self-determination, Bandura's social-cognitive theory, and Elliot's failure-avoidance theory. The motivational orientations from the interview data also concur with analogous elements

found in Confucian learning and teaching philosophy. On that accord, the link between

Western motivational theories and Confucian learning philosophy is explicit

particularly the Confucian thought of personal growth in the pursuit of education and

taking responsibility for self and others. Both Western motivational theories and

Confucian learning philosophy emphasize inner drives and the increasing development

of self-improvement and self-transformation through learning. The linkage of the

Western and Confucian theories is presented in the following discussion section.

Currently, many social and developmental researchers argue against accuse the

propositions about the cross-cultural universality of human agency and motivational

autonomy (Chirkov, 2009, p. 257). Many researchers refuse the inter-cultural

interpretations of learning motivation. The main argument lies on the fact that the

motivational autonomy in learning ties to cultural values, for instance, individualism in

Western societies and the collectivistic or group-oriented culture in the Eastern world,

deliberately denying human nature, needs, and capabilities (Ibid., p. 254). The cultural

determinists might have influence in their inter-cultural interpretations studies, yet it is

not the case in this study.

The information derived from the dialogical data shows that even though

Confucian teaching philosophy was created and applied thousands of years ago in

Eastern cultures; the same principles are practiced presently in this Western academic

study group. The findings of this study match Chirkov's (2009) conclusion that

motivational autonomy provides strong psychological evidence to support a more

interactive, multi-dimensional picture of human nature (p. 253); which has led these

Western working practitioners through their pursuit of acquiring a doctoral education. The results of this study suggest that the inter-cultural interpretations of Western motivation theories and Eastern learning philosophy positively provide richer perspectives on motivational factors and lend an interesting perspective of cross-cultural behavior.

Additionally, interview conversations revealed two demotivating factors: lack of time with family and friends and negative attitude expressed by faculty towards the executive doctoral program/students. Time relevant constraint factors such as amotivation, are not expressed in the philosophical dimensions of Confucian learning and teaching described in *The Great Learning*.

To shine a light on the perspective of the demotivating factors found in this study, Gorham & Christopel (1992) conveyed that negative teacher behaviors were perceived as more central to learners' demotions and motivations which is recognized as controlled motivation (p. 241). Knowles, Holton & Swanson (2005) suggested that adult learners are self-directed and have a self-concept of being responsible for their own decisions, for their own lives (p. 65). When the adult learners are "controlled" and experience pressure to think, to feel, both autonomous and controlled motivation energize and they stand in contrast to amotivation (Deci & Ryan, 2008, p. 182). The negative attitude of faculty does fit into Western self-determination motivation theory; which is seen as a de-motivator/barrier, but also potentially to be regarded as more of a determinant for working practitioners in pursuing a doctorate degree.

The unexpected findings of the demotivating factors in this study indicates that higher education institutions and their faculty would need to explore the development of institutional strategies to alleviate these perceived barriers; which would require further investigation.

Chapter 5

Discussion, conclusions and recommendations

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Discussion: Motivational factors supported by Confucian learning philosophy

Confucius made clear that truly humane conduct requires moral responsibilities (Keenan, 2011, p. 50). Many scholars generally interpreted *The Great Learning* as a text of moral education for rulers and noblemen (e.g. Pratt, 1992, p. 303; Tu, 1999, p. 27; Kim, 2000, pp. 109 & 124; Chuang, 2007, p. 3; Hwang, 2007, p. 81; Eno, 2010, p. 1; Keenan, 2011, p. 37; Li, 2013, p. 113). The text elucidates the fundamental of Confucian learning philosophy that learning is not only for "self-cultivating" but also has a purpose, and has responsibility for others.

The key to self-cultivation is learning through the investigation of things; through this, one shall understand the principles in all things, which extend knowledge and better comprehension of the world, one would be improved and transform to a "new self." The core teaching of *The Great Learning* entails acquiring knowledge and the sense of responsibility of distributing the knowledge, therefore making positive influences to others, from family to the community at a large (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: The way (*Tao*) of the *Great Learning*

Self-cultivation: Acquire knowledge	Self-improvement	Self-transformation	Sense of purpose and responsibility

- Investigating things
- Extending knowledge
- Cultivating one's self

- To attain utmost goodness
- To glorify righteous behavior

- To transform the person
- Making intention sincere and honest
- Rectifying the mind

- Harmonizing one's family
- Governing and serving the country
- Bringing peace throughout the world

The interview data of this study suggest that participants are chiefly motivated by personal reasons and professional development. Several of the motives are well-matched with Confucian learning philosophy guidelines depicted in *The Great Learning*, as shown in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Motivational factors and Confucian constructs of learning

Motivational factors		Confucian learning philosophy	
		Three objectives and eight steps	**Conceptions of learning**
Personal reasons	Death in the family	N/A	N/A
	Encouraged and inspired by a peer, friend, mentor, colleague, family member	To transform the person	Self-transformation
	Interest in doing practical research	Investigating things	Self-cultivation
	Love to learn; lifelong learning	Cultivating one's self (self-cultivation) in all stages of life	Self-cultivation
	Personal goals and achievements	Making one's intention sincere and honest	Self-cultivation
	Set an example for others (children, siblings, colleagues, etc.)	Harmonizing one's family	Sense of purpose and responsibility
		Governing and serving the country	
		Bringing peace throughout the world	
Professional development	Career advancement	To glorify righteous behavior	Self-improvement
	Connectedness with other professionals	To transform the person	Self-transformation
	Improve performance in current job or line of work	To attain utmost goodness	Self-improvement
	Remain competitive in the field	To transform the person	Self-transformation
	Updating skills and knowledge of the field	Extending one's knowledge	Self-improvement

<u>Self-cultivation:</u>

The data analysis of this study has revealed that many participants have multiple factors for taking on a doctorate journey. One of the common motives is furthering their understanding by conducting practical research through. This desire for investigation of the surroundings is recognized and supported by the text within *The Great Learning*.

Li (2013) elucidated that Confucian concepts of learning refer to acquiring knowledge and skills as its core meaning (p. 113). This Eastern philosophy describes the process of self-cultivation as, "when things are investigated, knowledge is extended; when knowledge is extended, the intention becomes; when the intention becomes sincere, the mind is rectified; when the mind is rectified, one's person is cultivated." (Hwang, 2007, p. 84) For Confucians, self-cultivation is the way to generate virtue and knowledge, which starts from investigating things (Keenan, 2011, p. xxi). The process of self-growth is to learn, to examine, to explore, and to understand new knowledge. The notion of an exemplary person is presumed as laudable if self-cultivation and the extension of one's inherently relational self was natural as self-cultivation developed (Wang & King, 2006, p. 4; Keenan, 2011, p, 62).

In this regard, the learning is initiated from investigating things, acquiring knowledge, and then becoming self-cultivated. Despite the differences in learning and cultural backgrounds, this Confucius thought of the pursuit of learning has been disclosed and found its reflection in this study group of Western adult learners. Eight participants (38.10%) indicate that they made a decision of seeking a doctorate partially because they want to discover things, they want to understand broadly their

surroundings of work related or life-related issues, and/or they want to do practical

research taking on intellectual challenge (Keenan, 2011, p. 42). The following direct

quotations extracted from the interviews illustrate how Confucian concepts of learning

are embedded in Western learning culture (Table 5.2).

Table 5.2: Self-cultivation and the interview data

Participant	Self-cultivation "quotes"
MS 001	My interest is not based on the doctorate … because now, it's really on the discovery
MS 005	For me, it was really wanting to be able to do research to understand the research process and apply to my work
MS 006	I really am a lifelong learner and it was a way to deepen my knowledge [in the field]
MS 007	I was very interested in a particular topic in my field
MS 012	I have a passion to research … I want to do it in an academic fashion
MS 015	It is a personal passion … pursue a problem and seek a solution
MS 017	I have a desire to always learn new things … I have been a lifelong leaner through formal education
MS 018	I have a desire for doing research in the field of IT, not the technology but the people

Self-improvement

The Great Learning portrays self-improvement as "to attain utmost goodness"

and "to glorify righteous behavior." Kim (2000) enlightened that the concept of learning

is essentially to be learning for the sake of one' self, which is for self-improvement and

self-fulfillment (p. 123). In relation to this concept, it involves commitment to one's self

and requires persistence to continue and complete not giving up but aiming at self-

establishment more than anything else (pp. 123 & 124).

When asking the motives for entering the DPS program, many participants

explain that they want to improve themselves and job performance; to have a sense of

self-fulfillment; and they anticipate having this sense of self-accomplishment by completing the degree. Some of them have been facing multiple obstacles and barriers (MS 013 and MS 021) during their doctorate journey, yet they are not going to give up. In the Table 5.3, twelve participants (57.14%) described their self-improvement experiences that they recognized since joining the DPS program.

Table 5.3: Self-improvement and interview data

Participants	Self-improvement "quotes"
MS 001	Studying has already influenced my behavior
MS 002	[Pursuing a doctorate] helps me better to be able to share my experiences and my learning to help other develop theirs
MS 003	Not only to the teaching environment but the authorship environment that I was embarking on … I felt that this degree would fill in some of those holes and improve my performance
MS 005	It helps me make good decisions … based on very good information [e.g. scholarly information]
MS 006	The degree [would provide me] the best idea and new ideas that would change my own practice and hopefully change the practice of those that I serve those that I work with
MS 009	What I want to do is to work better and work smarter … be better at accomplishing at my job
MS 010	Take another step up and have conversation with people who I would not normally have a conversation with
MS 011	I am exposed to areas that I never had exposure to in my life. The academic literature, the academic research …
MS 012	Having the sense of accomplishment …
MS 014	I have to update my skills and knowledge in research; the capability of my listening is much better so that helps me work better for my decisions and influence people [at my workplace].
MS 018	I guess … a desire for personal improvement
MS 021	I always want to challenge myself.

Self-transformation

Self-transformation, according to the original text of *The Great Learning*, refers to "transform the person," "making intention sincere and honest," and "rectifying the mind." Hwang (2007) interpreted Confucian's self-transformation as renewing the people (both oneself and the people); and the process that they attain to abiding in the highest good (pp. 82 & 83). Within this concept, learning is seen as occurring through transference of information from investigating things; learning is considered as a change in understanding of self (Pratt, 1992, p. 311). It appears that this Eastern motivational paradigm is presented in the participants endeavors to further their education. In the following quotes, Six participants (28.57%) refer to changes that they have experienced; which can imply that learning can have a role in changing one's perspective on self (Ibid.)

> I am going back to school and became a very positive influence in the work relationships that I have (MS 004)

> The degree teaches me to become an independent researcher … I feel really confident in my career (MS 005)

> I am much better at reading research and understanding what is good research and what isn't (MS 006)

> [The degree] has helped me doing qualitative research … has helped my knowledge of understanding culture. … helped me have conversation with cultural leaders (MS 010)

> I think especially for women. We have a challenge to prove that we understand what we are doing and what we are qualified to do whatever our jobs are. So, I think to have a doctorate degree is one step that you can help … try to be different yourself [from others] again (MS 011)

> The things that I learned from the degree ... the different perspective that
> I gained in the program (MS 018)

Sense of purpose and responsibility:

Confucian cultures foster the notion that individuals are expected to fulfill role obligations in relationships, particularly to family members (Hwang, 2011, p. 1012) and the community at a large. Part of this is particularly related to the strong attachment to family and filial piety in Chinese cultural tradition. The influence of cultural tradition in education is important in this regard (Pratt, 1992, p. 302).

Confucian concepts of learning are elucidated quite differently from that of the Western perspective. Learning, for Confucians, is not just for the sake of one's self but rather for a great portion of the sense of responsibility for the society. These grounds are summarized from the text of *The Great Learning* as "harmonizing one's family," "governing and serving the country," and "bringing peace throughout the world." The individual's learning is not only for their personal benefits but most importantly, to make a positive impact on others as well: "when the ancients studied for their own sake, it led in the end to the fulfillment of others" (De Bary, 1983, p. 22). The significance of learning is that learners are not only to seek inner self-cultivation and virtue, but also to contribute their learning back to society (Li, 2013, p. 113).

In a sense that the standards for self-development are not derived from some idealized sense of personal autonomy but from societal roles, "learning as a fulfillment of responsibility to society." (Pratt, 1992, pp. 302 & 310) For Confucians, engaging further education is more than simply keeping up to date; it promotes self-

determination and responsibility (Coopamath & Khan, 2011, p. 46). The responsibility

of societal order was the core value in Confucian concepts of learning and in general it

is not speculated in the Western concept of learning. However, that is not the case in

this study. This study found that one of the motives for adult pursuing further

education in the Western world is to be accountable for their families or peers. Eleven

participants (52.38%) in this study expressed respectively that one of their motives of

entering the DPS program is partially to set an example to their children, peers, young

officers, and be able to make a contribution to the community at a large (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4: Participants' senses of purposes and responsibilities

| Participant | Responsibilities | |
	Family	Others
MS 001	Set example to my six children	Influences on my professional team at work
MS 004		My research would benefit and have value to the community at a large
MS 007		I feel I have the responsibility to do something … to contribute something larger than myself
MS 010	Set an example to my daughter	
MS 011	Set an example and be a role model for my two small children	
MS 012		I have a passion of disseminating knowledge to peers
MS 016	Set an example for my son	
MS 017		I feel I have the responsibilities to engage more with people I work with
MS 018		I have some kind of influences on my two children who are planning to go to Graduate School
MS 020		So … that's important and highlighted and supported by lower staff which also encourages them to do the same (pursue a doctorate)
MS 021		I'll try influence career choices for junior officers at work

Summary:

The four constructs captured from *The Great Learning* are fundamentals of Confucian learning philosophy, highlighting and denoting the integration of learners' motivational paradigms with responsibility and service (Coopamah & Khan, 2011, p. 44). This Eastern philosophy of learning focuses on individual growth and development with the need of societal and organizational improvement (Sun, 2008, p. 560), providing learners with a certain motivation and desire to undertake and fulfill endeavors with regards to teaching and learning (Coopamah & Khan, 2011, p. 44). Working practitioners pursuing a doctorate in their midlife possess a mixture of motivational characteristics and drivers. Yet, in many ways, these characteristics found have linkages to the four Confucian constructional concepts of learning as depicted in *The Great Learning*. The interview data presented suggests that self-improvement (N = 12, 57.14%) and the sense of purpose and responsibility (N = 11, 52.38%) are two major motivational factors, followed by self-cultivation (N = 8, 38.10%), and self-transformation (N = 6, 28.57%) in this study group.

Conclusions

Discovering what motivated these working practitioners to reenter academia and pursue the highest degree in their mid-life proved extremely interesting, as shown in Table 5.1. Specifically their internal motives of "self-growth" in many ways are delineated in the four constructs recognized in Confucian philosophy as demonstrated in *The Great Learning*. Using this unique group of participants, this study has sought to

bring together similarities from Western learning motivation theories and Confucian learning philosophy in educational values and decisions. One conclusion drawn in this study is that even though in modern times, a 2000 year-old Eastern philosophy of learning has been synonymous with the motives of adults seeking further education regardless of cultural location. This suggests that motivational aspects are human nature and there is no significant difference between Confucian-influenced learning communities and learners from non-Confucian-influenced societies supporting that Confucian concepts of learning are shared by Western counterparts in a non-Confucian influenced society. This study also demonstrates that this Eastern learning philosophy provides an alternative lens in the study of motivational aspects of adult learners, offering a great instrument for investigation and unveiling new discussion on this topic.

According to the data analysis of this study, the correlation of Western motivation theory and Confucian learning philosophy predominantly lies on self-improvement; which is recognized as intrinsic motivation by Western motivation theorists, but known as inner self-cultivation and self-transformation in Confucian learning philosophy. When applying Western motivation theory to adult learning, such as self-determination, the theory is primarily promoting student interest in education, valuing of education, and a confidence in the students own capacities and attributes; which enhance personal growth and adjustment (Deci, et al., 1999, p. 325). However, it does not explain the sense of responsibility in relation to family and other life responsibility factors that nurture intrinsic motivation, leading to the desire of pursuing a terminal degree as shown in the population in this study; to set an example

and/or inspire others. Confucian learning philosophy emphasizes the outcomes of investigating things and learning – harmonizing one's family, governing and serving country, and bringing peace throughout the world. This form of Eastern learning philosophy has a more complex description of ideal self-cultivation which can lead to the desired educational outcomes as perceived from the collective concept (Eastern social culture).

Another conclusion is that this study exhibits a substantive theory into the inquiry of motivational factors of working practitioners seeking a doctoral education, which has not been exposed by researchers. This study has made a great effort to bridge the Eastern thoughts of learning with Western motivational theories. The data collected are valuable for providing an innovative approach and thought-provoking way in studying motivation aspects of adult learners, and as well applications to the field of motivational constructs related to adult education.

It is my hope that this study would inspire further research in cultural conceptions of learning, particularly the intersections of Eastern philosophies and traditions with Western philosophies and educational theories advancing our understanding of learning and teaching beyond the traditional perspectives.

It is also my hope that this study would stimulate researchers to develop motivational models from multicultural perspectives, building new directions of inquiry beyond traditional theories and norms allowing adult educators necessary knowledge and skills to better understand the multiple factors and dimensions that

have driven working professionals of varied ages, backgrounds, and genders to take on a doctorate journey.

Three goals were set for this study – to explore the motivational factors of working practitioners entering the DPS program, to bridge the "West" and "East" in the discovery of learning philosophy and motivation, and to make a contribution to the literature in the field of adult education. In conclusion, the first two goals have been satisfactorily fulfilled. The third goal can be judged and assessed by future research. Yet, I believe that the conceptual framework, methodology used and the findings of this study have made, if not a contribution but at least an innovative approach to research in the field of adult education.

Recommendations for further research

Several areas recognized for further research can be divided into four categories.

Implications for research in adult education:

With the increasing number of older adults participating in higher education, this study provides a foundation for further investigation of the motivations of working practitioners engaging in a doctoral level study.

Focused on motivational aspects, this study did not perform further investigation of the obstacles for adult learners pursuing a doctorate degree. Therefore, another possible approach would be to study the de-motivations, barriers, and

difficulties of older adults and/or working practitioners and/or a similar group of learners who have not determined to reenter higher education.

Implications for selecting study population:

This study selected a particular group of older adults who participated in a cohort-based doctoral program at one higher learning institution, which lends to a limitation for a generalization claim. However, the findings of this study suggest that there is a need to recognize that the select group; working practitioners, have unique motives (personal and professional growth) that must be studied and analyzed.

The results of this study provide administrators, faculty, and staff a better understanding of the needs and reasons for these working practitioners reentering academia. The unexpected de-motivating factors found in this study will provide faculty and staff the ability to create new strategies designed to enhance older adult students' satisfaction, which in turn can reduce the stress associated with doctoral student programs. This implies that the results of this study could generally apply to other working professionals enrolling in a similar program in other higher education institutions. Thus, a further study could be broadened to reach a larger study group in other institutions, states and regions where a similar program is offered targeting similar working professionals such as the executive doctoral program in education at the University of Wisconsin Stout or Rowan College of New Jersey. With a larger study population, further comparisons of motivational orientations of the older executive doctoral students with older resident PhD students could provide a deeper

understanding of the motives of the collective group of older adults pursuing a terminal degree.

The other possible future study could be in the use of Confucian learning philosophy as the conceptual framework to compare doctoral students who came from a Confucian-influenced community with those who are from a non-Confucian-influenced society.

The philosophy of Confucius teaching was created in a male-centered Eastern society. Performing a gender-centered study in the use of the results of the findings would provide evidence that male-centered classic teaching might also apply to female learners.

In this study, one immigrant and three female participants confessed that part of their motives of entering the DPS program were a result of under-appreciation by their counterparts. They felt that they have not been taken seriously because of their gender and/or citizen status in this country. They wanted to "prove" that they are equally capable of accomplishing something larger than themselves. Thus, a further study of the motivational aspects of the under-represented groups (e.g. female, immigrants) could provide alternative perspectives in the area of adult education.

Implications for research on motivational theory:

Looking at motivational aspects depicted in the other three classic Confucian books, *Analects* 《論語》, *Mencius* 《孟子》, and *The Doctrine of Mean* 《中庸》 could provide other insightful knowledge on this topic. Expanding from this perceptive,

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conducting comparative research of Confucian learning philosophy with other Eastern philosophy such as Taoism and Buddhism would be another interesting concept.

Performing in-depth comparative studies of the Western motivational theories (such as social-cognitive theory, Maslow's NEED theory, goal-achievement theory) with the Confucian motivational constructs within the scope of self-regulatory, self-improvement and self-actualization could be another possibility of investigation.

In this study, none of the participants expressed that financial incentive is a motive that drives them to seek a doctoral education. Research conducted in the use of the economic capital theory and/or human capital theory to investigate the motivation of adult learners might unveil different perspectives in the adult's educational journey.

Alternative research methods:

This qualitative study focuses on identifying the motives of working practitioners seeking a doctoral education. I considered two additional research methods that could be utilized for this project; Critical Incident Technique (CIT) and pure narrative life story.

The CIT method was originally developed as a tool for studying human behavior by using a set of procedures for observation of human behavior (Fisher & Oulton, 1999, p. 113). The emphasis of CIT is on "incidents" and "events" that affect the respondents' decision and behavior, which would not be a suitable tool for this study. However, if we alter this study and make an emphasis on the "triggers" for working professionals returning to academia, using CIT method would potentially offer interesting findings.

The pure narrative life story method places emphasis on the lives and biographies of participants which draws rich text data and requires a long period of time in collecting data via fieldwork and intensive interviews. This approach in general draws heavily upon participants' individual's life stories from childhood emerging to adulthood with an aim to ground the theories underpinning the analysis offered (Waller, 2005, p. 53). Considering this study was not to seek the reflections of adult learning experiences but rather their motives of returning to academia, the narrative life story approach was not chosen for data collection. Yet, if we replicate this study with a focus on the changes of adult learning motivation within the doctoral program, then the life story technique could be applied.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Profile of Syracuse iSchool DPS-IM students, 2008 to 2012

(Sources: Syracuse University iSchool, DPS May residency handbook, 2012)

Year of entering the DPS program	Cohort	Age range	Gender		Education credential	Areas of research
			Female	Male		
2008	1	55 - 65	x		BA, MA, M.Ed., Ed.S	Student learning, information literacy, online environments, school librarianship, inquiry
2008	1	35 - 45	x		BA, MLS	Business role includes analyzing faculty information needs, designing appropriate information delivery structures, providing human resources support, and collaborating on proposal management strategies to meet organizational needs
2008	1	45 - 54		x	BS, MA	Socially constructed system/process, history, military, theories of motivation related to IT use, Effectiveness of DoDAF in documenting modern military organizations and its use as a strategic planning tool
2008	1	45 - 54		x	BA, MBA, MS	Convergence of cloud-computing and service-oriented architecture (SOA), services computing paradigm, service systems design in manufacturing firms, effective use of IT in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the manufacturing sector, design science research in information systems
2008	1	45 - 54	x		BA, MLS	Socio-cultural aspects of information production and use, genres of intelligence activities
2009	2	55 - 65	x		BS, MLS, MBA	Theoretical constructs associated with motivation, socialization, and cognition, social and collaborative learning, social networking, online communities, virtual environments
2009	2	55 - 65	x		BA, MLS	Multi-sector information and technology services, potentials of ambient information and ambient technology, collaborative practices and their potentials for learning, for work, and for everyday life

Year of entering the DPS program	Cohort	Age range	Gender		Education credential	Areas of research
			Female	**Male**		
2009	2	55 - 65	x		BS, MS	Project management and IT portfolio management in higher education
2010	3	35 - 45	x		BA, MA, MLS	The user experience of the book, e-commerce & web development, digital innovation, library science, content strategy/user experience, taxonomies
2010	3	35 - 45		x	BS, MBA, MS	Cyber security, wireless grids, systems architecture, design science for information systems
2010	3	35 - 45		x	BS, MS	Information management, ICT and culture (viz. indigenous people), unobtrusive ICT practices and research methods, visual methodologies, symbolic interactionism, and postmodernism
2010	3	55 - 65		x	BA, MS, MS, MS, MS	Computer modeling and stimulation
2010	3	55 - 65		x	BS, MBA, MS	Information technology, policy development, strategic planning, resource management, enterprise architecture, capital investment planning and acquisition
2010	3	45 - 55		x	BS, EML	Social network analysis, Medical librarian/Informant model, health information economy, meta-analysis
2011	4	45 - 55		x	BA, MS	Human computer interaction, knowledge management
2011	4	35 - 45		x	BA, MS	Social media, Information management policy, knowledge management, collaboration technologies
2011	4	45 - 55	x		BS, MS	Leadership, information security awareness, development of wireless grid technology, information security: applications and business applications
2011	4	35 - 55		x	BA, MBA	Cyber security, information assurance, Meta data, social engineering
2011	4	45 - 55	x		BA, M Phil, MA, MLS	Information literacy, motivation aspects of nontraditional student in higher education, bibliometric and content analysis, international librarianship, rare books

Year of entering the DPS program	Cohort	Age range	Gender		Education credential	Areas of research
			Female	Male		
2011	4	55 -65		x	BS, MBA	Leadership, Cyber, organizational dynamics
2012	5	35 - 45	x		BA, MSIM	Information assurance management, governance and compliance
2012	5	45 - 55		x	BS, MBA, MSPM	Project management, practical application of theory in support of business strategy
2012	5	45 - 55		x	BS, MS	The use and influence information in entrepreneurial motivation, faculty motivation to engage in entrepreneurial activity
2012	5	35 - 45		x	BS, MS	Information management and project management
2012	5	45 - 55	x		BA, MA, MLIS	Leadership and management, information and digital literacy, motivational theories, information systems, virtual libraries, future of librarianship
2012	5	45 - 55	x		BA, MSIS	Leadership, library assessment, user experience

Appendix B: Findings related to older adults returning to higher education

Citation	Internal motives				External motives			
	Joy of learning	**Self-satisfaction and sense of achievement**	**Personal development**	**Extended productive life**	**Life-changing events; escape**	**Social contacts**	**Gain supports and respect from other significant others**	**Career prospects; desire for credentials**
Barnett (2010)		x	x				x	x
Brailsford (2010)		x	x			x	x	x
Cai (2004)	x	x			x	x		x
Carlson (1999)			x		x			x
Chambers (2002)	x	x					x	
Chen (2002)	x		x		x	x		x
Chen et al (2005)			x			x	x	x
Chrzanowski (1995)	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Clark (2007)	x	x	x			x		x
Clift (1998)	x	x	x		x			x
Collins (2011)	x		x	x	x	x	x	
Cooper (1999)			x		x		x	
Dutto (2008)		x						x
Feng (2007)					x			x
Flynn (2006)		x			x		x	
Ford (1998)		x					x	x
Frances (2009)		x	x			x	x	x
Green & Kelso (2006)		x	x					x

Citation	Internal motives				External motives			
	Joy of learning	Self-satisfaction and sense of achievement	Personal development	Extended productive life	Life-changing events; escape	Social contacts	Gain supports and respect from other significant others	Career prospects; desire for credentials
Griffin (1995)		x	x					
Horine (2007)	x				x	x		
Howard (2006)	x	x	x			x		
Hsu (2005)	x		x		x	x		x
Huston (2011)	x	x	x	x				x
Hwang (2006)	x		x			x		x
Hydock (2004)			x		x	x	x	
Kimmel (2006)		x	x				x	
Knutsen (2011)		x	x	x				x
Kwok (2009)	x		x					x
Kwong, Mok&Kwong (1997)			x			x		
Leonard, Becker &Coate (2005)		x	x					
Lin, C (2010)			x					x
Lin, M (2005)			x	x			x	x
Lin, Y. (2011)	x		x			x		x
Liu (2008)	x							x
Mahrie (1992)					x			
Michie, Glachan& Bray (2001)		x	x					

Citation	Internal motives				External motives			
	Joy of learning	Self-satisfaction and sense of achievement	Personal development	Extended productive life	Life-changing events; escape	Social contacts	Gain supports and respect from other significant others	Career prospects; desire for credentials
Moore (2010)			x		x			x
Myrie&Mujtaba (2011)			x	x				x
Ng, Koo & Ho (2009)			x	x		x		x
Padula& Miller (1999)					x			
Pelowski (1981)					x		x	x
Peterson (2010)	x			x	x			
Richardson (2011)	x	x	x					x
Ruby (2008)			x			x	x	x
Rumberger (1990)	x				x	x		x
Santicola (2011)		x	x			x		x
Scanlon (2008)			x	x				x
Schonfeld (1989)			x					x
Shain (1993)			x	x		x	x	
Shi (2002)	x		x			x	x	x
Short (2004)	x	x	x	x				x
Smart &Pascarella (1987)			x					x
Stein &Wanstreet (2006)		x	x					x

Citation	Internal motives				External motives			
	Joy of learning	Self-satisfaction and sense of achievement	Personal development	Extended productive life	Life-changing events; escape	Social contacts	Gain supports and respect from other significant others	Career prospects; desire for credentials
Stoecker (1991)		x				x	x	x
Teowkul et al (2009)			x		x			x
Tsai (2008)						x	x	
VanNoord (2006)	x	x			x		x	
VanRhijn (2012)		x	x					x
Villar et al (2010)		x			x	x		
Wang (1997)			x					x
Warren & Mills (2009)		x						x
West (1995)			x				x	
Wilgers (1992)	x		x				x	x
Williams, J. (2009)		x	x	x			x	
Williams &LeMire (2011)	x		x			x		
Williams, V. (1996)	x		x	x		x		x
Xie (2009)	x					x		x
Zorzi (2011)			x			x		x

Appendix C: Selected literature in motivational aspects of working professionals reentering academia for an advanced degree

Citation	Type of research	Profession of Participants	Motivation theories	Important motivation factors	Research method
Adrignola (2010)	Doctoral dissertation	Working adults who enroll in a career-oriented graduate college	Social, economic and political factors	• Economic factors • Job security • Provides a competitive edge for new jobs or promotion • An opportunity to make more money • Earn new credentials	Interviews
Barnett (2010)	Master's thesis	Working adults in rural Midwestern area	N/A	• Need additional education to maintain employment • Personal satisfaction • To fulfill personal goals	Survey and focus group
Cai (2004)	Master's thesis	Elementary social studies teachers in Taipei County (Taiwan)	Maslow's need theory, expectancy theory, self-directed theory (Tough, 1979)	Five types of motivations: • Interest and achievement • Influence by other person • Vocational progress • Social intercourse relationship • Escape/stimulation	Questionnaire survey
Chen (1997)	Research paper	399 secondary teachers in Taiwan	N/A	• Escape/stimulation • Cognitive interest • Social interactions with other teachers • sense of community responsibility	Questionnaire survey
Chen (2000)	Master's thesis	218 working adults	N/A	• Personal career planning • Organizational human resources development • lifelong learning popularization	Survey
Chen & Huang (2013)	Conference paper	500 officer workers of a Taipei university	Lifelong learning	• Reentering academia is a personal choice • Attitudes of returning to higher education differ because of individual background	Questionnaire survey

Citation	Type of research	Profession of Participants	Motivation theories	Important motivation factors	Research method
				• Different learning needs	
Chrzanowski (1995)	Doctoral dissertation	Teachers, college professors, public school and college administrators at a large, private research university in the northeastern region of the US	Symbolic interactionist theoretical perspective (1969)	• Increase intrinsic satisfaction • Allow employment in various capacities in the public school system • Leave unsatisfactory jobs and seek positions which would provide more satisfaction • Intellectual challenge and growth • A sense of accomplishment • Love of learning • Freedom of choice • Self-improvement	Repeated, in-depth, unstructured interviews
Clark (2007)	Doctoral dissertation	Teachers who pursued a Doctor of Education at Victoria University in Australia	Human capital theory	Personal development: • Cognitive interest • Enjoyment and love of learning • Social stimulation at a professional level Professional development: • Gaining qualifications, skills • Credibility benefiting the profession	Life-story telling; narrative approach
Howard (2006)	Master's thesis	Adult students serving in US military, Air Force, and Navy	Locus of control; connectionism; intrinsic motivation; self-efficacy; and attribution	Using the Career Transition Inventory (CTI), the highest motivational factors were readiness and confidence. Other factors for this study population were control, support and independence	Electronic survey via emails
Hsu (2005)	Master's thesis	Working adults in Taiwan	N/A	• Obtain new knowledge and skills • Meeting their own learning purposes	Questionnaire and content analysis
Huston (2011)	Doctoral dissertation	Psychiatrists who pursed a Psychoanalytic training (PhD) in the state of	N/A	Significant motives for older adults returning to graduate school: • Seek new achievements to enhance professional skills and roles • Continued growth is an essential element to	Case study: Semi-structured interviews

Citation	Type of research	Profession of Participants	Motivation theories	Important motivation factors	Research method
		California		later-in-life professional education • Pursuit of something greatly valued • Transformational understanding of self and professional education	
Knutsen (2011)	Doctoral dissertation	U.S. workers/ students at Robert Morris University	Assessment of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors	Four most important extrinsic factors: • To increase job opportunities • To fulfill professional objectives • To make job more secure • To increase income Four most important intrinsic factors: • To advance personal growth • To develop potential • To fulfill personal objectives • To enrich life	Survey
Leonard, Becker &Coate (2005)	Research article	Teachers who completed a Doctor of Education in England	Achievement goal theory	• Professional development • Personal development • A doctorate is a requirement of their job • Interest in a particular research area • Tuitions were paid by employers	Interviews
Lin (2010)	Master's thesis	Elementary school teachers in Taiwan	N/A	• To achieve a promotion and a salary increase • To enhance their teaching skills • Personal interests	In-depth interviews
Lin (2005)	Doctoral dissertation	College professors in Taiwan	Maslow's need theory, goal theories, expectancy theories	• Deficiency and growth motivations • External environmental factor • Internal psychological factor	Questionnaire
Ng, Koo & Ho (2009)	Research article	Maritime professionals	N/A	• A change in career path • A potential career advancement in the management level • To meet people/networking • To polish personal human capital and management skills	Survey with the use of Likert Scale

Citation	Type of research	Profession of Participants	Motivation theories	Important motivation factors	Research method
Richardson (2011)	Doctoral dissertation	Nurses recruited from southeastern portion of the United States from various universities through a convenience sample	• Intrinsic motivation: to know, toward accomplishment, to experience stimulation • Extrinsic motivation: identified, introjected, external regulation • Amotivation	• Intrinsic motivation-to know • Extrinsic motivation-identified • Motivation-toward accomplishment	Online survey
Ruby (2008)	Doctoral dissertation	Pennsylvania physical therapists recruited by using a random sample via US mail	Achievement goal theory	Extrinsic motivation: • Increased salary • Career advancement • Prestige Professional image • Reimbursement status Intrinsic motivation: • Professional development • Clinical skills • Autonomous practice • Personal goals • Knowledge base • Research	Survey
Rumberger (1990)	Master's thesis	Social workers – midlife women who enrolled at the University of Texas at Arlington	Adult development theory	Motivations for returning to graduate school: • Career goals • Income expectations • Support systems • Benefits derived from educational experience	Self-administered questionnaire
Stoecker (1991)	Research article	Physical therapists who responded to a 1988 statewide (Illinois) survey on graduate education	Intrinsic and extrinsic factors	Decision to attend graduate school: • Desire to advance in clinical/technical skills • Career conditions and the possibility of receiving a higher income	Statewide survey

Citation	Type of research	Profession of Participants	Motivation theories	Important motivation factors	Research method
Warren & Mills (2009)	Research article	Nurses in the State of Maryland	Extrinsic incentive factors	Organizational rewards and incentives: • Money paid to attend class • Classes offered at the work site • Tuition reimbursement • Match work and class hours • Paid sabbatical • Forgivable loans for service • Web-based classes	Survey
Watkins (2011)	Research paper	10 German nurses and 9 British nurses	N/A	• Seek personal and professional challenges • Career enhancement • Improve their work	Interviews
Wei (2013)	Master's thesis	238 nursing staff at three public hospitals of Taitung, Taiwan	Correlation of learning motivation, strategy and behavior	• Learning strategy has a positive and significant role in learning behavior and effectiveness	Questionnaire survey
Williamson (2013)	Doctoral dissertation	Nurses pursuing a doctoral degree were recruited from a baccalaureate and graduate nursing program located in the Southeastern United States	Expectancy-value theory of achievement motivation	• Sense of job security • Increased status • Financial security • Personal individual meanings	Face-to-face interviews
Yang, Blunt & Butler (1994)	Research paper	16 veterinarians in the Province of Saskatchewan	Behavioral models	• Social participation • Cognitive interests	Survey/ questionnaire
Zhao, et al (2009)	Research paper	72 faculty at a Taiwan Teacher's College	N/A	• Expand social contacts at a professional level • Gain knowledge of instructing students • Potential wage gain • Self-actualization • Pursue new knowledge in the field	Survey

Appendix D: Demographic Questionnaire

Individual Information:

Gender:

Age at start DPS program: 35 – 40   41 – 45   46 – 50   51 – 55   56 – 60   60 and over

Residence (City/State/Zip):

Marital status:

Current employment/position held:

Types of employment: Private sector   Public sector   Owner/Self-employed

Years in the profession: 5 – 10 years   11 – 15 years   16 – 20 years   20 years and over

Previous degrees earned and major studies:

Years/months in Syracuse DPS program:

Area of research:

Expected date of graduation:

Family Background:

How many siblings do you have?

How many of your siblings attended college? What were the levels of their education?

Siblings	Attended some college	Graduated with Associate's degree(s)	Graduated with Bachelor's degree(s)	Graduated with Master's degree(s)	Graduated with doctoral degree(s)
Brother					
Sister					

Did either of your parents attend college?   Yes   No

Parents	Attended some college	Graduated with Associate's degree(s)	Graduated with Bachelor's degree(s)	Graduated with Master's degree(s)	Graduated with doctoral degree(s)
Mother					
Father					

Is there any other information you would like to share?

Appendix E: Informed Consent Letter

June 4, 2013

Dear participant:

You are invited to participate in a study of the motivational aspects of working professionals pursuing a doctoral degree in the field of information studies after years "departed" from academia. Specifically, this study examines the related decision-making process of older adults reentering graduate school by becoming a member of the Syracuse iSchool DPS program.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, but would be very much appreciated. Your name as well as utilized interview data will be held in the strictest confidence. You have the right to withdraw at any time without penalty. With your permission and signed consent form, an interview will be conducted and recorded to clarify the understanding of your responses. You will be asked to review a printed transcript of your interview for accuracy. Your comments may be used as appropriate in the final report of the study.

In addition, this research will assist the Syracuse iSchool to have a better understanding of DPS cohorts and hopefully improve conditions in the newly established doctoral program. Your valuable contributions will create a body of knowledge concerning motivational aspects that are related to midlife professionals participating in a professional doctorate program, most likely motivating individuals to follow your path while pursuing a professional doctoral degree.

If you have any questions regarding this study or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at acwong01@syr.edu, or Dr. Art Thomas at (315) 443-3840. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, please contact the Syracuse Office of Research Integrity and Protections , Internal Review Board (IRB) at (315) 443-3013.

A description of the study is outlined and enclosed for your consideration. Please complete the information below and return the signed letter to me and keep one copy for your records. If you do not agree to participate in this study, please simply sign and return to me.

Thanks for considering this request!

Anna CY Wong   Dr. Art Thomas
Doctoral student   Advisor and Professor
Email: acwong01@syr.edu   Email: apthomas@syr.edu

❏ I agree to participate in the research described above   ❏ I am at least 18 years of age

Signature	Printed Name	Date
Email	Phone number	Other contact information

❏ I do not wish to participate in the research project   ❏ I am at least 18years of age

Signature	Printed Name	Date

<u>Informed Consent</u>

Syracuse University

Syracuse, NY 13244

TITLE: Using Confucian's *The Great Learning* to reveal the motivation of Western older adults embarking upon a professional doctorate study

PROJECT INVESTIGATOR: Anna Ching-Yu Wong

SCHOOL: School of Information

AREA OF STUDY: Information management

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH
My study explores the motivational orientations of 27 graduate students who pursued or are pursuing a professional doctorate degree at Syracuse University iSchool at their mid to late career stage and/or after years in other walks of life. Data collection includes unstructured interviews (narrative inquiry) and a demographic questionnaire.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY
My proposed study is designed to examine Confucian ideas related to learning motivation with an attempt to study the motivational and de-motivational aspects of older adult's participation in higher education. The study group includes working professionals who pursued or are pursuing a professional doctorate degree at Syracuse University iSchool at their mid to late career stage and/or after years in other walks of life. While using Eastern Confusion philosophy and Western theories as a platform, a comparative focus will be on the individual's motivational situation within this unique reentry decision-making process. Data collections will be compiled from unstructured interviews (narrative inquiry).

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS
The interviews will be held at a convenient time for the interviewee and will not be longer than 1hour. The focus of questions will be related to factors/motives of the study groups commitment while pursuing their iSchool doctoral degree. Participants are free to skip any questions.

THE RISKS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY
There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study. You may or may not benefit personally from being a participant in this study. Yet, it is my hope that other individuals, in the future, might benefit from because of the contributions and knowledge created from this study. You will have neither costs nor any monetary compensation in this research study.

Appendix F: The interview protocol (guided interview questions)

Participant: _____

Date: _____

Brief notation:

The interview will last approximately 1 hour. All information/data collection in this conversation will remain confidential and be kept in a safe place. Follow-up phone calls will be scheduled if needed for clarification of answers. You will have an opportunity to review the themes identified from an analysis of your answers to verify their accuracy and completeness. The data will be destroyed when the study is complete.

Key and support questions:

The key research question of the proposed study is:

- *What factors have motivated the working practitioners pursuing a professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce?*

Support research questions:

- What have been earlier learning experiences in the lives of working practitioners influence their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life?

- Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education?

- What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees?

Guided interview questions:

- What motivated you to return to academia to seek a doctoral degree?

- How have your previous learning experiences affected your decision to enter a doctoral program?

- How would you describe the values and beliefs that influenced your decision to pursue a doctorate degree, and how did these values and beliefs motivate you?

- Can you describe how your decision affected those with whom you have significant relationships? Describe if this has led to a more fulfilling or less involved relationship with them.

- What gives you or what do you think will give you the greatest satisfaction about having a doctorate degree? In your opinion, what is the most significant benefit of earning your doctorate at this time in your life?

- What do you hope and how would you do with your degree in the future?

Appendix G: Syracuse University IRB application (submitted on June 4, 2013)

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board

APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION AS RESEARCH EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW

NOTE: The Principal Investigator (PI) must be a person who holds a faculty appointment or other administrative position of Director or higher. If you have any questions regarding this IRB requirement call the IRB office at 315.443.3013 for guidance.

Principal Investigator/Faculty Member Information

First Name: Arthur	Middle Initial: P.	Last Name: Thomas
Title: Asst. Professor of Practice		
Department: School of Information Studies	College:	
Campus Address: 338 Hinds Hall		
Campus Phone : 315-443-3840	Fax : 315-443-6886	
Email: apthomas@syr.edu	Cell Phone (optional): 315-263-6134	

Student/Research Staff Information ☐ NA

First Name: Anna Ching-Yu	Last Name: Wong
☒ Graduate Student ☐ Undergraduate Student ☐ Other:	
Department: School of Information Studies	College:
Local/Campus Address: 343 Hinds Hall	
Local/Campus Phone: 315-443-2911	Fax:
Email: wonga@ku.edu; acwong01@syr.edu	Cell Phone (optional):

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Using the Confucian's The Great Learning to reveal the motivation of Western older adults embarking upon a professional doctorate program

NOTE: Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) is *not* required for research determined to be exempt. CITI is required for researchers involved in expedited or full board studies.

1A. IS IT RESEARCH?

The definition of research as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) regulations: "Research means a *systematic investigation*, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to *generalizable knowledge*." 45 CFR 46.102 (d)

To be considered a "systematic investigation", the concept of a research project must:

- Attempt to answer research questions (in some research, this would be a hypothesis).
- Be methodologically driven, that is, it collects data or information in an organized and consistent way.
- Analyze data or information in some way, be it quantitative or qualitative data.
- Draw conclusions from the results.

A. Is your project a systematic investigation? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: My proposed study is designed to examine Confucius' ideas about learning motivation with an attempt to bridge the "West and East" motivational and de-motivational aspects of adult's participation in higher education. My study would explore the motivational orientations of 27 graduate students who pursued or are pursuing a professional doctorate degree at Syracuse University iSchool at their mid to late career stage and/or after years in other walks of life. Data collection include unstructured interviews (narrative inquiry) and a demographic questionnaire as a screening tool, a a newly-developed Confucian Five-Lijert Scale.

"Generalizable knowledge" would include one or more of the following concepts:

- The knowledge contributes to a theoretical framework of an established body of knowledge.
- The primary beneficiaries of the research are other researchers, scholars and practitioners in the field of study.
- Publication, presentation or other distribution of the results is intended to inform the field of study.
- The results are expected to be generalized to a larger population beyond the site of data collection.
- The results are intended to be replicated in other settings.
- Web based publication for professional purposes.

B. Will your project contribute to generalizable knowledge? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Please explain: My research interest concerns older adults pursuing their DPS at the Syracuse iSchool. The purpose of this study is (1) to make a contribution to the literature in the field of adult education. Precisely, knowledge of motivational aspects that are related to midlife professionals participating in a doctorate program. In this regard, the results of this study will encourage and motivate those individuals who read the participants' stories to pursue a professional doctorate degree; (2) to discover non-Western motivation components and the possible adoption of these theories across cultural borders by using Eastern philosophy as a conceptual framework of studying the motivation of Western adult learners.

*If "yes" to question A. **AND** B. above the activity is considered research. Continue completing the application.*

1B. IS IT HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH?

A. Is the data that is being obtained about living individuals? ☒ Yes ☐ No
B. Are data collected through interaction or intervention with individuals (e.g., interviews, surveys, or any direct contact)? ☒ Yes ☐ No
C. Is identifiable individual private information being obtained (e.g., chart reviews, information from data or tissue repositories)? ☒ Yes ☐ No
D. Are data or specimens received by the investigator with identifiable private information? ☒ Yes ☐ No
E. Are the data/specimens coded with a link back to the individual? ☐ Yes ☒ No

*If "yes" to question A. above **AND** "yes" to one or more questions from B-E in section 1B, the activity is considered human research. Continue completing the application.*

Protocols that do not meet the criteria for *research* **AND** *human subjects research* need not be submitted to the IRB for review or for a determination that the project falls into an exempt category.

Additional guidance for publically available data:
Some research involves the analysis of data about humans for which the regulatory definition of "human subject" is not met. One example is research that involves only the analysis of de-identified data contained within publicly available datasets (available to any one regardless of occupation, purpose, or affiliation, and those individuals who are responsible for posting the dataset had legitimate access to the data and have employed the necessary mechanisms to ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the individuals about whom the data were collected).

While the activity described above meets the regulatory definition of research, the definition of human subject is not met because data about a living person is not obtained through interaction or intervention, and no private, identifiable information about a living individual is obtained.

2. CATEGORIES FOR EXEMPTION

I/We certify that the above research project involves human subjects only in one or more of the following categories, and will be carried out using standard methods. Please check the number next to category(ies) that is/are involved in the research.[1]

☐ 1. Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as:
   (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or
   (b) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods, and
   (c) the research must not involve prisoners as participants

☒ 2. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior <u>unless</u>:
   (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
   (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.
   (c) If the research involves children, the procedures must be limited to educational tests and observation of public behavior where the investigators do not participate in the activities being observed.
   (d) The research must not involve prisoners as participants.

☐ 3. Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under paragraph (2) of this section, if:
   (a) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or
   (b) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.
   (c) The research must not involve prisoners as participants.

☐ 4. Research involving the collection or study of <u>existing</u> data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. [Note: *To qualify for this exemption <u>ALL</u> of the data, documents, records, or specimens must be in existence before the project begins.*]
   (a) The research must not involve prisoners as participants.

☐ 5. Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine:
   (a) public benefit or service programs;
   (b) procedures of obtaining benefits or services under those programs;
   (c) possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures; or
   (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.
   (e) The protocol must be conducted pursuant to specific federal statutory authority.
   (f) The protocol must have no statutory requirements for IRB review.
   (g) The protocol must not involve significant physical invasions or intrusions upon the privacy interests of the participants.
   (h) The protocol must have authorization or concurrence by the funding agency.

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[1] *The Federal Regulations also include a sixth category for exempt research, the Institutional Review Board has the discretion to determine what categories to recognize and does not recognize research under category 6 as qualifying for exemption. If you have questions, please contact the IRB at 315.443.3013 or orip@syr.edu.*

6. Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (b) if food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environment Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

(i) The research must not involve prisoners as participants.

3. SCREENING QUESTIONS

A. Does any part of the research require that subjects be deceived? ☐ Yes ☒ No
B. Will research expose human subjects to discomfort or harassment beyond levels encountered in daily life? ☐ Yes ☒ No
C. Could disclosure of the subjects' responses outside the research reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation? ☐ Yes ☒ No
D. Will individuals involuntarily confined or detained in penal institutions be subjects of the study? ☐ Yes ☒ No
E. For research proposed under category 2, will research involve surveys, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior with children where the researcher will interact with the children? ☐ Yes ☒ No
F. For research proposed under category 4, will any of the data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens be collected or come into existence after the date you apply for exemption? ☐ Yes ☒ No
G. For research proposed under category 4, will any of the information obtained from data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens that come from private sources be recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects can be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects? ☐ Yes ☒ No

*If you checked **YES** to ANY of the questions above, your research is **NOT EXEMPT**. Do not complete this application. Submit an **Application for IRB Expedited and Full Board Review**.*

*If you have checked **NO** to **ALL** of the questions above, your research may be exempt. Please complete the remainder of the exempt application.*

4. RATIONALE FOR EXEMPTION

Please briefly describe the proposed research and explain in clear language why you believe this research should be exempted from IRB review.

My research activities involves human subjects, participating in unstructured interviews on a voluntary basis and where all data is recorded anonymously. In addition, reports will be in the form of pseudonymous and disguised identities. No reputational or financial risk is inherent in disclosure of participant identity due to nature of the information collected which may already have been disclosed to others by the participants themseleves. Therefore I believe that my research should be will be exempted from IRB review.

5. RECRUITMENT

Describe plans for recruitment and how contact will be made:

Participants are the past and current and graduates of Syracuse ischool DPS students.

Note: Submit recruitment flyers, e-mails, letters and/or scripts.

Will your subjects be recruited through schools, employers, and/or community agencies or organizations, and/or are you required to obtain permission to access data that is not publicly available? If the answer is yes, provide a letter of support from the person authorized to give you access to the subjects or to the data in question. More than one letter may be required.

☐ Does not apply
☒ Letter(s) attached
Comments:
Subjects will be recruited through the School of Information Studies, Syracuse University, but I require no additional access to data at the school that is not publicly available. I am attaching a letter of support from the Dean of the School.

Will you be contacting participants through a contact list or list server provided by a department, organization, company or school? If yes, provide a letter of support from the individual authorized to provide you with this information.

☐ Does not apply
☒ Letter(s) attached

Will this research be conducted in a school or is it funded by the US Department of Education?
☒ No. (Skip to Section 5)
☐ Yes. If yes, complete the form found at:
http://orip.syr.edu/files/Research%20Sponsored%20by%20the%20US%20Department%20of%20Education%20and-or%20Conducted%20in%20Schools.doc

6. METHODS

Provide a detailed description of what participants will be required to do.

Participate in unstructured interviews; tell their personal stories/reasons for reentering graduate school and pursuing a doctoral degree after years in the workforce.

Step One: A demographic questionnaire will be used as a screening tool and be sent to all DPS current and past students to identify participants.

Step Two: Upon receipt of consent forms and identification of participants, unstructured interviews will be arranged. Each participant will participate in two interviews and a Likert scale survey.
•   Interviews: The first recorded interview will be conducted with guided interview questions and will not be longer than an hour. The second interview will be 20 to 30 minutes with an aim to clarify the researcher's interpretation of the prior interview conversation.
•   Likert scale: Participants will be asked to complete an amended Likert scale survey (utilizing Confucian components) which is designed by the researcher.

The guided interview questions are:
Key question: What motivational factors have driven you to reenter academia and pursue a professional doctoral degree?
Other related questions:
(1)   What motivated or inspired you to pursue a doctorate at this life stage? (people or self)?

(2)   In what way do the activities and responsibilities in your life affect your decision-making process for pursuing doctoral education?
(3)   Why did you choose the DPS program instead of PhD program? Please describe.
(4)   Did this decision relate to your personal interests, education values and beliefs, previous and current career path? Please describe.
(5)   What are the impacts of this decision of returning to graduate school at this stage of your life? (personal, professional, emotional, etc.)
(6)   Have you recognized any disadvantage and/or advantages of being an older student?
(7)   What have been the greatest challenges and/or rewards (expected and unexpected) associated with pursuing your DPS? Have you thought of dropping out? What kept you "moving forward"?
(8)   What are the most meaningful aspects of your experience in the DPS program?
(9)   What does it mean for you personally and/or professionally to have a doctorate degree?
(10)   How will you use your new knowledge, perspectives, and doctoral degree? What next? – such as changing into a new career path, pursuing other advanced studies, etc.
(11)   Would you like to share any additional information about your motivation of pursuing a DPS at this life stage?

All collected data and recorded conversation will be kept in a safe place by the researcher. Data will be discarded once the research comes to the end.

Will this research be conducted by SU investigators in foreign countries?
☒ No.
☐ Yes. An additional form related to international research must be completed and submitted with this Application: International Research Appendix.
NOTE: All research measures which will be used during this study including sample questions, questionnaires, recruitment scripts, etc. must be included with the application.

7. INFORMED CONSENT REQUIREMENT
(This is _not_ required for Category 4)
Please provide a copy of the written informed consent document, or oral consent script, which you will use in your study. Please note this document must include the following minimum required elements:

1. A statement that clearly explains that the study is research. The purpose of the research should be described in lay language, avoiding the use of technical terms and using language appropriate to the targeted subject group.
2. A statement that describes what procedures will be followed, clearly explaining what participation in the study will involve.
3. It must be clear that participation is voluntary and participants can withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.
4. Contact information for the investigator.
5. For adult participants, a statement that the subject is 18 years or older must appear as part of the consent.

8. SIGNATURES

This is to acknowledge that I take full responsibility for the conduct of the research. **Investigators of studies exempt from IRB review are responsible for the ethical conduct of research and obtaining informed**

consent when appropriate. (If this study is being conducted by a student, a faculty member must sign in the space provided).

Signed: _____Date: _____
(Faculty member)

Name (printed): Arthur P. Thomas, PhD.

Signed: _____Date: _____
(Student, if applicable)

Name (printed): Anna Ching-Yu Wong

Graduate ☒   Undergraduate ☐

Preferred mailing:
☐ Hard copy campus mail. All correspondence mailed to the PI/Faculty member's address.
☒ Email notification

RETURN ONE COPY OF THE COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Office of Research Integrity and Protections
121 Bowne Hall
Syracuse, New York, 13244-1200
Phone: 443-3013
Fax: 443-9889
orip@svr.edu

Appendix H: A support letter from School of Information Studies

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES
OFFICE OF THE DEAN

June 4, 2013

Syracuse University
Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Integrity and Protections
121 Bowne Hall
Syracuse, NY 13244-1200

Dear IRB Members:

I have read over Anna Ching-Yu Wong's research plan, in which she describes her intent to contact both current and past matriculated students of the Doctor of Professional Studies (DPS) program at the School of Information Studies for potential collection of data. I understand that this student is conducting this project as partial fulfillment of her requirements for the DPS degree here at the University, and that she will also have the opportunity to present her research findings in other venues in the future.

I understand that the Institutional Review Board for the Use of Human Subjects in Research (IRB) at the University is concerned with protecting the confidentiality, privacy, and well-being of research participants. The student will additionally be advised in this project by her doctoral program advisor, Dr. Arthur P. Thomas, who will have regular contact with Ms. Wong during her research and throughout the remainder of her degree program.

The School of Information Studies therefore supports Ms. Wong's request to use our official contact list of current and past DPS students in order to facilitate potential recruitment of participants for her research.

Should you have additional questions or concerns, you may contact me at 315-443-2736.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth D. Liddy
Dean & Trustee Professor
School of Information Studies (iSchool)
Syracuse University
t 315.443.2736 f 315.443.6886 e liddy@syr.edu

343 Hinds Hall / Syracuse, New York 13244-1190
315-443-2736 / Fax: 315-443-6886 / E-mail: ischool@syr.edu / URL: http://ischool.syr.edu

Appendix I: Syracuse IRB approval letter (June 12, 2013)

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
MEMORANDUM

TO: Arthur Thomas
DATE: June 12, 2013
SUBJECT: **Determination of Exemption from Regulations**
IRB #:   13-173
TITLE: *Using the Confucian's The Great Learning to Reveal the Motivation of Western Older Adults Embarking Upon a Professional Doctorate Program*

The above referenced application, submitted for consideration as exempt from federal regulations as defined in 45 C.F.R. 46, has been evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the following:

1.   determination that it falls within the one or more of the five exempt categories allowed by the organization;
2.   determination that the research meets the organization's ethical standards.

It has been determined by the IRB this protocol qualifies for exemption and is assigned to category **2**. This authorization will remain active for a period of five years from **June 11, 2013** until **June 10, 2018.**

CHANGES TO PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB authorization has already been given, cannot be initiated without additional IRB review. If there is a change in your research, you should notify the IRB immediately to determine whether your research protocol continues to qualify for exemption or if submission of an expedited or full board IRB protocol is required. Information about the University's human participants protection program can be found at: http://orip.syr.edu/human-research/human-research-irb.html Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

STUDY COMPLETION: The completion of a study must be reported to the IRB within 14 days.

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Tracy Cromp, M.S.W.
Director

Appendix J: Syracuse IRB Amendment Application

Date Rec'd _____   Amendment # _____

	SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
	INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
	AMENDMENT REQUEST FORM

This form is to be completed when an amendment is requested to an approved protocol for IRB review. An Amendment Request form must be submitted for review and approval **PRIOR** to initiation of any changes to your originally approved protocol. These changes might include but are not limited to: the addition or removal of research staff; the addition or removal of a research site; an increase in sample size; the addition or removal of a questionnaire/survey or changes to a currently approved questionnaire/survey; revisions to the consent/assent documents; any changes to the recruitment materials/venues; etc. More than one requested change can be included on the form. The IRB will assign the amendment number for your request. Answer each question as applicable on the amendment request form and make sure to include all necessary documentation as indicated.

IRB#: 13-173
Current Protocol Title: Using the Confucian's The Great Learning to Reveal the Motivation of Western Older Adults Embarking Upon a Professional Doctorate Program
Current Principal Investigator: Dr. Art Thomas

Description of Amendment (check all that apply):

☒ **Change in Protocol Title**
  - New Protocol Title: Confucian learning philosophy and the motivation of working practitioners seeking a doctoral education

☐ **Change in Principal Investigator and/or Addition of a Co-Investigator (Co-PI)**
  For Expedited/Full Board Amendment Requests: Required CITI training must be completed *prior* to amendment submission. If CITI training has been completed at another institution, a copy of the CITI training certificate must be included with this request. (CITI training information guide: http://orip.svr.edu/files/Collaborative%20Institutional%20Training%20Initiative-Human%20Subjects%20CITI%20Guide.doc). CITI training is <u>not</u> required for Exempt amendment requests.
  - Name of new Principal Investigator and/or Co-PI: _____ (Requires signature of new PI and/or Co-PI)
  - Research qualifications: _____

Signature: _____ **Date** _____
Principal/Co-Investigator: _____   **Date:** _____

☐ **Addition of research staff**
  For Expedited/Full Board Amendment Requests: Required CITI training must be completed *prior* to amendment submission. If CITI training has been completed at another institution, a copy of the CITI training certificate must be included with this request. (CITI training information guide: http://orip.svr.edu/files/Collaborative%20Institutional%20Training%20Initiative-Human%20Subjects%20CITI%20Guide.doc). CITI training is <u>not</u> required for Exempt amendment requests.
  - Name(s) of new research staff: _____
  - Research qualifications for each person added to the study. _____

☐ **Removal of research staff.**
  - Name(s) of research staff to be removed: _____

☐ **Revised Consent/Assent Form(s)**
  - Submit one hard copy of each revised document with changes highlighted. **AND**
  - Submit one clean (unhighlighted) hard copy of each revised document for IRB date stamping upon approval.

☐ **Change in total number of subjects.**

- Currently authorized total: [ ]
- New anticipated total: [ ]

☐ **Addition of Research Site(s)**

For each site you must include a letter of cooperation and/or IRB approval for each site. The letter must be signed by the research site official on official letterhead.
- Name of site(s): [ ]

☐ **Change in Questionnaire** - Attach a hard copy of revised questionnaire.

☐ **Change in Recruitment Materials** – Attach a hard copy of revised recruitment materials.

☐ **Sponsor Change**
- Name of new sponsor: [ ]
- Contact information: [ ]

☒ **Other- Describe:** The guided interview questions have been modified.

Provide a Brief Summary of Change(s) From Approved Protocol:

Key research questions:
- •What factors have motivated the working practitioners pursuing a professional doctorate after an extended period of time in the workforce?

Support research questions:
- What have been earlier learning experiences in the lives of working practitioners influence their decision to pursue a doctoral education later in life?
- Do the individual's personal interests, education values and beliefs, or current and past career path increase the likelihood that the working practitioner will seek a doctoral education?
- What goals do these working practitioners have for their futures, and how would they use their new knowledge, perspectives, and degrees?

The eleven guided interview questions have been regrouped to six guided interview questions which depicted as follows:
- What motivated you to return to academia to seek a doctoral degree?
- How have your previous learning experiences affected your decision to enter a doctoral program?
- How would you describe the values and beliefs that influenced your decision to pursue a doctorate degree, and how did these values and beliefs motivate you?
- Can you describe how your decision affected those with whom you have significant relationships? Describe if this has led to a more fulfilling or less involved relationship with them.
- What gives you or what do you think will give you the greatest satisfaction about having a doctorate degree? In your opinion, what is the most significant benefit of earning your doctorate at this time in your life?
- What do you hope and how would you do with your degree in the future?

Provide a Justification/Rationale for Amendment:

The initial 11 guided interview questions were found duplications and/or overlapped to others.

Change(s) in Risks or Benefits to Participants:
N/A

Could the requested amendment relate to participants willingness to continue to take part in the research?

☒ No.

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☐ Yes. If *yes* provide rationale:

Should currently enrolled participants be notified of the changes described by this amendment?
☒ No.
☐ Yes. If *yes* provide rationale:

Signature: _____ **Date** _____
Principal Investigator: [ ] **Date:** [ ]

Amendment forms must be signed by the Principal Investigator and can be submitted electronically, via fax (443.9889), or via hard copy campus/US mail.

If you have questions regarding submission of this form or amendment request requirements, please contact the IRB office at 443.3013 or orip@syr.edu.

Appendix K: Syracuse IRB Amendment Approval

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board
MEMORANDUM

TO:	Arthur Thomas
DATE:	November 12, 2013
SUBJECT:	**Amendment for Exempt Protocol**
AMENDMENT#:	1 - A) Change in Protocol Title B) Change in Interview Questions
IRB #:	13-173
TITLE:	*The Motivation of Working Practitioners Seeking a Doctoral Education: From the Perspective of Confucian Learning Philosophy*

Your current exempt protocol has been re-evaluated by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) with the inclusion of the above referenced amendment. Based on the information you have provided, this amendment is authorized and continues to be assigned to category 2. This protocol remains in effect from **June 11, 2013 to June 10, 2018.**

CHANGES TO PROTOCOL: Proposed changes to this protocol during the period for which IRB authorization has already been given, cannot be initiated without additional IRB review. If there is a change in your research, you should notify the IRB immediately to determine whether your research protocol continues to qualify for exemption or if submission of an expedited or full board IRB protocol is required. Information about the University's human participants protection program can be found at: http://orip.syr.edu/human-research/human-research-irb.html Protocol changes are requested on an amendment application available on the IRB web site; please reference your IRB number and attach any documents that are being amended.

STUDY COMPLETION: The completion of a study must be reported to the IRB within 14 days.

Thank you for your cooperation in our shared efforts to assure that the rights and welfare of people participating in research are protected.

Tracy Cromp, M.S.W.
Director

Note to Faculty Advisor: This notice is only mailed to faculty. If a student is conducting this study, please forward this information to the student researcher.
DEPT: School of Information Studies, 348 Hinds Hall   **STUDENT:** Anna Ching-Yu

Office of Research Integrity and Protections
121 Bowne Hall   Syracuse, New York 13244-1200
(Phone) 315.443.3013 ♦ (Fax) 315.443.9889
orip@syr.edu ♦ www.orip.syr.edu

Appendix L: Pilot Study #1

Participants:

Three participants fitting the proposed main study participant description were recruited; working practitioners employed in their chosen professions either currently engaging in a doctoral study or has graduated with a doctoral degree at middle-age. None of the participants are/were doctoral students at Syracuse University, School of Information Studies (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Demographics of participants in pilot study #1

Participants	Gender	Age group entered the program	Education credentials	Professional affiliation	Years in the profession	Specialty	Years in the doctoral program
PS001	Female	40 -45	BS, MS	College	10	Higher Education	3rd year, doctoral student
PS002	Male	45 to 50	BS, MBA	College	12	Information Technology	4th year, doctoral candidate
PS003	Female	50 to 55	BA, MA, PhD	University	20	Psychology	Graduated

Interviews:

The guided interviews were conducted June 2013 utilizing these eleven questions:
- What and who motivated or inspired you to pursue a doctorate at this life stage? (events, other people or self)
- In what way have activities and responsibilities in your life affected your decision-making process for pursuing a doctoral degree?
- Why did you choose the DPS-IM program instead of a PhD program?
- Did this decision relate to your personal interests, education values and beliefs, or previous and current career path?
- What are the impacts of this decision of returning to graduate school at this stage of your life? (personal, professional, emotional)
- Have you recognized any disadvantage and/or advantage of being an older student?

- What have been the greatest challenges and/or rewards (expected and unexpected) associated with pursuing your DPS-IM? – Have you thought of dropping out? What kept you "moving forward"?
- What are the most meaningful aspects of your experience in the DPS-IM program?
- What does it mean for you personally and/or professionally to have a doctorate?

All three participants have similar pathways expressing that their doctoral journeys are intentional, planned and recognized (Baxter & Burden, 2008, p. 28). While in school, they have been working full-time or teaching as regular adjuncts at their universities. All of them have been in the workforce for at least 10 years prior to going back to graduate school. They believe that the pursuit of their doctorate reflects the importance of learning and not a pursuit of financial benefits gained as a result of holding a doctorate degree (Butcher & Sieminski, 2009, p. 52). They perceive that the advanced study has a clear and explicit thread of professional impact (Ibid); providing a passport to an academic career (Baxter & Burden, 2008, p. 32). My first impression of the Pilot Study 1 participants is that they have or had a strong desire to fulfill their doctoral level educational goals.

Summary of the findings:

There are several findings from the Pilot Study #1 group.

(1) The pursuit is a long-term goal of learning which consisted of drawn out contemplation and planning (years).

(2) Personal reasons for participants seeking their doctoral degree consisted or consists of multiple motivations, mostly internal motives. Their reasons follow prior literature findings such as Houle's (1961), Maslow's need theory (1954), and Deci et al's (1991) self-determination – a need for credentials (goal oriented), the desire to learn, the love of teaching, the desire to contribute to and/or inspire others, and to be an example for their younger family members.

(3) One of participants expressed that the motivation of studying for a doctorate is driven by internal (herself) and external (her father) motives.

(4) Another finding is that two of the participants do not have positive memories of family support in their educational endeavors.

(5) The participants returned to graduate school seeking a career valued-goal such as seeking a teaching or senior management position in higher education (president of a college, or the chancellor of a university). They strongly believe that the doctoral education influences their professional preparation and entails the development of the whole self (Gardner, 2009, p. 7). The career-driven motives of the participants are consistent with many prior literature topics, such as Barnett (2010), Clark (2007), Clift (1998), Cooper (1999), Huston (2011), Hydock (2004), Short (2004), VanNoord (2006), and Zorzi (2011).

(6) While participants believe that the doctorate would be a great benefit for their career; none of the participants had a foreseeable financial improvement. This conflicts with the findings of Williams (1996, p. 17), Cai (2004, p. 71), Hsu (2005, p. 64), and Lin (2005, p. 44) that economic changes have a very positive correlation with earnings and the PhD degree.

(7) Upon obtaining their doctorate, all participants expressed that they want to improve the education possibilities for their community and the world by reaching out to inspire younger generations by setting an example to advocate the importance of education. This desire to pass on the benefits of their PhD journey matches the prior studies of Short (2004, p. 62), and Williams (2009, p. 73).

(8) The participants believe that learning through life experiences is an advantage of being an older graduate student. This response echoes previous literature expressed in Baxter & Burden, (2008, p. 28), Butcher & Sieminski, 2009, p. 52), and Zorzi (2011, p. 72).

(9) All participants experienced internal and external challenges after they entered the doctorate program and all had thoughts of dropping out. The internal frustrations were "self-doubts" (PS001) and the demanding time of studying (PS002). The external factor was the family's needs and an unexpected life event (PS003).

Lesson Learned:

The conceptual motivational framework themes extracted from Pilot Study #1 are self-learning, self-cultivation activities, the desire of giving back, motivating others, and being a model for family members. These motivational framework components are similar to motivational structural components depicted in *The Great Learning*; such as investigating things, extending one's knowledge, and cultivating one's self. This suggests a

conceptual "link" between non-Confucian and Confucian-influenced components of this study which implies that Confucian learning philosophy is found in Western adult motivational behaviors.

  From the operational perspective, Pilot Study #1 supported the relevance of the research questions and the intent of the proposed study. However, the process of this pilot suggests that the guiding interview questions were overlapping or redundant. With this in mind, a second pilot study will be performed to test the revised guiding interview questions.

Appendix M: Pilot Study #2

The second pilot study consists of a revision of the guiding interview questions.

Participants:

Two individuals were recruited. Both of them have a similar background as of the proposed main study population - working practitioners returning to academia, seeking a doctoral education. None of the participants are affiliated with Syracuse University. Neither of them is in the field of information studies. The profiles of two participants are shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Demographics of participants in pilot study #2

Participants	Gender	Age group entered the program	Education credentials	Professional affiliation	Years in the profession	Specialty	Years in the doctoral program
PS004	Female	40 -45	BS, MS	Career-oriented two-year College	9	Higher Education	3rd year, doctoral candidate
PS005	Male	50 to 55	AAS,BS, MS	Four year state university	11	Higher education	3rd year, doctoral student

Interviews:

The following guided questions were utilized to help facilitate the interviews:

- What motivated you to return to academia to seek a doctoral degree?
- How have your previous learning experiences affected your decision to enter a doctoral program?
- How would you describe the values and beliefs that influenced your decision to pursue a doctorate degree, and how did these values and beliefs motivate you?
- Can you describe how your decision affected those with whom you have significant relationships? Describe if this has led to a more fulfilling or less involved relationship with them.

- What gives you or what do you think will give you the greatest satisfaction about having a doctorate degree? In your opinion, what is the most significant benefit of earning your doctorate at this time in your life?
- What and how do you plan to utilize your degree in the future?

Summary of the findings:

In the second pilot study, both participants were interviewed virtually; one by phone and other via Microsoft Lync with a digital recorder to record the entire conversation. The findings are:

(1) The decision of reentering graduate school and seeking a doctoral education as a working practitioner is a long-term goal of their lives. Both participants expressed multiple motivations for returning to higher education; to gain credentials (career advancement), a personal interest in learning (self- cultivation and self-transformation), and to inspire others to expand their education or set an example for their younger family members (sense of purpose and responsibility). One of the participants mentioned that seeking a doctoral education is a "delayed plan" due to a detrimental financial situation and family commitments (PS004).

(2) Previous learning experiences in colleges (academic life) and past work experiences (accumulated knowledge in the field) have had positive and negative impacts on their decisions of seeking an advanced degree. One of the participants mentioned that she was a bad student; entering the doctoral program proved that she can be a responsible learner (PS005). High expectations from previous educational environments had a great impact on their decisions (PS004 & PS005). From the career perspective, the doctorate degree will gain not only elevated credentials but also respect from colleagues (PS004 & PS005).

(3) Family positive education values have great impacts on the participants' beliefs of pursuing a higher education where a primary focus is on school is the first priority issue in the family (PS005). The higher education background of the participant's parents (PS004) also has an influential impact on the participant's motivational construct regarding education value and beliefs.

(4) Both participants expressed that their decisions were motivated (and de-motivated) by the significant ones in their lives including spouse (PS004), children, and people from their social networks (PS005).

(5) The motives of selecting the field of study and/or area research are the results of their years of working experiences in the field and as well the intelligible life direction and experiences. Additionally, the conversation with the social networks also helped to shape their motives.

(6) The participants stated that the degree will have an impact on their career credentials. One of them mentioned that the degree might or might not have an influence on her profession (PS004); yet she and others would have greater confidence which could improve her job performance. Another benefit grasped from this endeavor understands the process of scientific method, which will provide different perspectives in his profession (PS005).

Lesson Learned:

The difference between the Pilot study #1 and Pilot Study #2 are: (1) the interviews were conducted virtually in #2; (2) the second pilot study used revised guided interview questions based on the first pilot study (six versus eleven). However, both findings suggest that the pretests provide the expected results for the proposed study. Therefore, the amended interview questions facilitate the needs of the interview process and will need to be submitted to the IRB prior to conducting interviews for the main study.

Appendix N

Thematic organization of raw data

1. Road to Syracuse

2. Influences on decisions

3. Effect on others

4. Personal significance/satisfaction of the degree

5. Plans of what to accomplish with the degree

6. Unintended outcomes (the DPS graduates)

7. Anticipated benefits

8. Recommendations to others entering the DPS program

Excerpts from the semi-structured interviews are presented exactly as provided by participants. Each participant was assigned a pseudonym (number) to protect their privacy. The main thematic organization of the raw data is presented in the following section header.

Road to Syracuse

MS 001: Um ... I started evaluating different programs. And I learned relatively quickly that ... um... that the residency kind program does not fit in where I am in my life. Um ... So I started expanding my search out. And, I started running into ... um ... like Capella kind of programs. Well ... I am not quite satisfied with those. So then ... um ... I identified three mentors: Dr. B with the University of Florida, a good friend of mine; Dr. H, who is kind a renowned author in the area of project management; and, Dr. G ,with the University of Louisville Adelphi Center which is professional development adult education. And so ... um ... actually [I] went into a formal mentoring ... went down ... sat down kind [of] talk through of my thought process, put my goals and objectives forth, ... and with what my timeline was. And ... um ... you know ... asked their opinions and thoughts about ... you know ... um... type of programs would be the best fit. ... Urr ... they provided that they were all great ... mentor. None of them are ... um ... not too bias and or ... guiding ... their ... their help. They really helped me down the path of my journey.

MS 003: Um … specifically I had a colleague that helped me through the application process … and again … it was, it was an individual colleague … ah … that … ah … that gave me … moved me over to the tipping point. Ah … that got the process rolling.

MS 004: Oh well … [smile], I got a phone call from Syracuse University … um … um … It was from Dr. XXXX who contacted me … saying that this program [DPS-IM] is just existed. He just wanted to know if I am interested in it – that's the primary trigger that … um… I have. Um … it also is the fact that I work at a science laboratory at [a renowned university in East Coast]. And they [the university] encourage … actually pay for … um … the [vast] majority of education. And so, … having brought back to work [after retired] a year before … two years before I started this program, I thought it's got to be a "huge hole" and, and … um … appropriate for me to do this.

MS 005: So, … um… I graduated from the iSchool at Syracuse with my MOS [Master of Science]. So, I kept watching to see if they would ever have such a program, a distance doctoral program. And when I found it, … um … I was immediately … you know… interested in … ah … getting … um … into the program.

MS 008: Over the years I have been talking about it [pursuing a doctoral education] with my wife … and … Urr … and finally asked … several conversations, she asked then why don't you just do it. Then I thought … well … I never really thought about it. And, I couldn't find a program as I looked. And … um … I couldn't find a program and … um … it's probably six, seven years ago. I couldn't find any [programs] I like. So, … put it in that way. So, I … um … kinda stopped … stopped looking and then … um … actually when I was talking, she [my wife] went online and looked at … she told me about some of the programs that were available. And, [cough] she told me, … she told me about this program [DPS] … um … and then so, that's the only to do it. So that's how I started.

MS 009: I had intimately looked at different PhD programs but I never found one that would … um … work for me personally because I knew I could not stop … I could not stop working financially. Um … I could not take on much lower salaries even I work and … you know … get supported for a PhD program. So I … I just couldn't find something that work. So within my mind … um … what it didn't seem possible until I saw the description of the DPS program. … I read the description and noticed that it was part-time and yet accelerated … so it had a … you know … fine line and point. And … um … what the type of … um … both the type of professionals they are looking for and the … um … information will be covered. Then it was … it was virtually an immediately

decision for me. I spoke to my husband first. But I decided when ... the day I saw the description of the program.

MS 011: Well, ... Let's see... couple things before Syracuse they have the, ... the part-time program. So I think the ... having the part-time program you could do while you're going to work and not have to relocate as the residency students do. That's good. ... Um ... also having the program that is short and not ... 5 to 7 years program also help me with the decision because I think if I have different kind of program that ... you know ... that the full-time PhD that wouldn't work with my family situation. And ... um ... my need is still ... need to get income [laugh].

MS 017: Um ... I was already involved in Master's program at Syracuse. And this ... um ... the first doctorate program was announced. And, ... um ... so a lot of it was just timing ... and ... um ... and being ... um ... involved at the early stages.

MS 018: ... because I was comfortable with a ... a distance program. Um ... I have been through ... um ... a distance program at the National Defense University for a CIO certificate. Um ... of course I grew up just north of Syracuse [laugh]. So I knew a little bit about the school. And ... um ... I am a ... um ... a New York [state] resident before I joined the military.

Influences on decisions

MS 002: And finally I had the time and the money to focus on this [pursuing a doctoral education]. ... Being able to afford and financially pay for my education.

MS 003: Ah ... as I have been teaching at the graduate level for the past eight years ... ah ... I realized that ... urr ... there were more than I can bring ... um ... not only to the teaching environment ... urr... but .. um ... the authorship environment that I was embarking on. And I felt like ... um ... this degree would fill in some of those holes and provides me the credentials to ... um ... to improve my ... urr ... my performance.

MS 012: Ah ... well, I guess the specific trigger was for me when I finished my second Master's Degree. Mmm ... and then I realized that ... um ... you know ... probably wouldn't be that an advantageous for me to go and get another Master's Degree that ... um ... now probably be the opportune time for me to get my ... ah ... doctorate degree. So, ... um ... I guess the trigger for me completely was my second Master's Degree and then really wanting to satisfy that ... to say ... um ... going to get my doctorate degree.

MS 015: Sure, for me … um … I think … um … I … I moved from midlevel to maybe senior level management from the job I have and … the timing of this … you could say … is kind of mid career and … um … but … um … I needed something … um … to be energized about … um … either personally or professionally. And the thing … urr … concept of a doctorate in information degree … urr … was very appealing to me. It helped … um … address mid career … um … issues very well, and at the same time … urr … give me a chance to … urr … use my mind a little bit more.

MS 016: Um … I had been … um … passed over for promotion on two specific occasions. And in each case, the candidate who selected for the promotion instead of me … um … had a doctorate degree. So their advanced degree set them apart from me, kept me from that position. That is one of the factors. So I am going to seek my doctorate degree to help me be on level footing with … um … with my peers who actually have their doctorate degrees.

MS 017: Um … I think the specific influence was that I had already been exposed to the iSchool and was aware of the quality of education and the quality of the faculty [at Syracuse] … um … I think that was … um … the specific reason why I continued on my education at Syracuse.

MS 020: Well … a couple things. One … urr … the rating and ranking of the school [Syracuse University] for library and information science that was important because health care is moving towards electronic health records, I wanted to focus more on data and understand data science and meta-data. And … what makes to … you know … be able to … um … be a data scientist in this field. So … I looked at the curriculum, I thought that it would be a good curriculum (unintelligible) coursework, to support me completing my degree. It really becomes … urr … sort of … top notch data science. … While having healthcare [work] experience, the quality of program (compared to other programs; the regular program), could be … urr … the top notch.

MS 021: Ah … well, for me, there were a limited number of schools that are offered by the scholarships. Ah … there was a private university in Washington DC, and a state university in Maryland. I actually applied to the second one. Urr … and they told me that my degree … um … my application [studying proposal] was too military focused, which confused me because it was a military scholarship under a military sponsored program. Um … and then I applied to Syracuse also … of course I went through Syracuse application process.

MS 001: We [I and my wife] had the same conversation with the rest of the family. The kids were fully [aware] at all. We get to explain to them. And … they know that dad's back to school … we kind … you know… you know … hopefully we picture it kind as an example setting kind thing too … but that … you know … there will be time that were … you have to focus on study and research … and … you know … you will be with the family, you need to balance that time. But at the same time, we totally narrow … because of this, we make sure that we schedule … um … time as the family. So … you know … just to make sure that we are not loosing that.

MS 003: Ah … well in the short-term, it has led, led to less close relationships. The elements of getting this degree [DPS-IM] … um … also compete with the … um… you know … my professional life and, and … the relationships that you speak of [family, friends, colleagues, etc.] … with taking away from that.

MS 009: Absolutely … as far as family go, I think that my immediate family was proud of me that … that … um … part of it. Um … I actually put a lot of stress on my family relationship during the process. So it actually was sort of negative at that point. But then … you know … since I completed, that has actually gone better. But … um …with the people I work with … um … I … I wouldn't say that the degree strengthens those relationships. What it did, it made me more … um … more both proactive as far as pursuing relationship and also less intimated about speaking up, speaking my mind, asking questions, forging new relationships.

MS 010: I would say that … that it has … has improved my relationship with my family because early on I made a commitment, a very deliverable commitment that this would not … the pursuit of my doctorate would not negatively distract from my home life, my family life. … My daughter, I taught to always do her best [at school] and demonstrate that for her … you know … one of the things that motivated me through the program was that moment… you know … when I turned around in the stand and looked up at graduation and see her up there. I got to do that. And, that's something I wanted it happened. Other relationships, I think, pretty much stayed the same. Um … you know … work relationships were fine, so were my friends. So, I can't say that there was anything real negative that came out of that or anything.

MS 011: For my family, … um … I have small children. So I think … um … it is … um … a good thing to show them … um … studying behavior … urr…continuous learning. Urr…

and it is kind a role model for my children to pursue that [DPS]. But at the same time, it is really taking the whole family because it is so involved. You already… you have … you know… work, you have … um … family, … you have school. You have everything else going on in your life. So, in one hand it is a role model for them, but on the other hand, you are probably denying them other thing such as time, quality time you couldn't spend with them instead of studying.

MS 012: Urr … What is … actually it's more fulfilling. My family … that … is very supportive of obtaining my doctorate degree. Again, … um … this has been a lifelong goal. So, … you know … my family pretty much knows that I was wanting to do this. They have been very, very supportive. This has been a very accomplishment experience for me and as well for my family – pursuing my degree.

MS 013: OK. I'll start with the … the family. I mean … with the family with the new-born on the way, put a … say … it has been challenging for the most part … I could … I would say … I mean … family is like … when you tell your family you are going away just for go for reading and studying. It's hard for them to comprehend like why he goes away three hours and does not want to spend time with us. So … I think that portion is kind hard for me especially when you have new born. … Like … you say … OK … there is a paper coming out … something that have a deadline and you have to have that certain time you tell your family, "I have to do this homework before the due date passes." So, that definitely made a more difficult for me as far as I am pursuing the degree. Um … as far friends, it … um … is almost the opposite. Friends are far more intrigued in where you are at the program … um … some of the challenges you are facing, and … they're kind like … they are seeking out information … they are shooting to pursue a degree and asking you for opinion which they should focus on, and what is a good time for it, asking for … you are talking about research interests to the … um … financial portion of funding a … urr … three or four years degree. Um … so, overall I would say the friend …. relationship … and the strain on it are just more positive.

MS 014: Um … no. Well … you know … my … well … the big impact I have … my social life is … is gone, basically. Because working full-time … and studying part-time, I … I lost a lot of friends. Um … not a lost … but cannot … It's hard to connect with people in a social way because I am busy. So in that sense ... one can say that the impact is so far negative, in my social life.

MS 016: Yes, absolutely. So my … my family … um … and my … and … my relationship with my wife … um … I am … [laugh] I am busier than when I wasn't pursuing the

degree, of course. But she is very supportive in this journey with me. I think this brought us closer. And my colleagues … um … at … at work and at school, I made … um … some significant … um … new relationships with my cohort and other cohorts. … Um … I think there … um … some of my friends are a little bit … um … they don't quite understand why I am pursuing a doctorate degree. Um … and I think they are a bit unhappy that I have less time with them because I am … I am … so … you know … I am busy with the program. So I think that if there is a negative impact that I have not seen my friends that much involved with them like I used to be. Urr … but I am hopeful that will get the time back when I complete my degree. I am hopeful that time will get the time back when I complete my degree. I'm hopeful that time will … um … you know … come back to me and I will be able to … you know … strengthen that relationship. But … but I wouldn't say that is a negative impact … it's just simply I am too busy to do, to spend the same amount of time with them as I used to be before I entered the program…. I think the most significant benefit would be the personal satisfaction of earning a doctorate degree … um … and also being able to share that with my wife and my son …um … you know … setting a good example for him … um … pursuing a doctorate degree and getting my education despite obstacles that might be in the way.

MS 017: Within regard to my personal life, it was a … um … I would say… a negative, negative process … a negative interaction. Um … I … I have a wife and two children. And the doctorate program consumed … um … consumed me, period. It consumed my mind and my thinking and … um … many … many … many hours … um … many hours … twenty hours a week some cases … over forty hours … and … um … just wasn't able to spend time with my family. And … urr … for that I have some regrets.

MS 018: Um … the impact of the program … um … on my family … um … it has been hard … um … because I spent a lot of time … um … especially when I was doing coursework. Um … but they were very, very supportive. Both of my children … um … are working on their undergraduate degree right now. Um … both my daughter and my son … even they do not have their Bachelors yet, they are making plans for their Master's. Um … so I don't know that was the result of … um … of my experience [laugh]. I would like to think that I have some kind of influence on that but … um … it has been very … it was very difficult from my …um … family perspectives for a while. Um … but I think at the end it was very positive.

MS 020: Well … I think for my immediate family … um … my wife has been highly supportive of me pursuing this program achieving my education objective that is very

important. She's been fantastically supportive of what I am doing and … um … and of course my siblings and their children in the family and so for … they have been … um … very supportive as well. Although … um … I haven't spent as much time as I had done in the past. And … um … so they [my family] have been certainly supportive and help to push me through this process. And that is really important. … As far as friendship goes … I haven't been able to spend much time with those very close and dear friends and … um … and charity which I had been very active, I had to cut out. The pressure to make sure everything is on schedule and done at the end of the day, I had to stay focused. But … nonetheless, it has been really difficult for my friendships.

<center>Personal significance/satisfaction of the degree</center>

MS 001: Um … Ya' know … WOW… um … because my interest is not based on the doctorate. I just tell you the truth. [OK] My greatest satisfaction is the learning and the discovery. … So, so it is more about what I am learning and how I am contributing [to my profession and field] than to have a DPS on my name.

MS 002: It [a doctorate degree] helps to validate my maturity and my development in … growth professional as a career person … and … the accreditation and validation of growth. Um … my personal validation … I am capable … um … pursuing and completing. Um … an accomplishment thing, personal accomplishment…. Yes, that is.

MS 003: Ah … the, the … satisfaction of … understanding … um … the basis which … um information is researched then put together. Um I probably won't even put "doctor" on my business card. Um … you know … that … urr … almost … urr trapping if you will be satisfied having completed it, will be satisfied having a deeper knowledge of … um … the research area which I have spent last few years working on … and … urr … and I anticipate that … um … the … gaining understanding the appreciation insight … um … continuing to [fulfill] a few things of my professional career.

MS 004: Um … I, … I guess complete what I do is completed. … Um … that gives … when you completed a job itself, which is basically the remainder of doing the thesis and finishing it. There are some satisfactions that you accomplish what you set up to do. Um … the … um … particular work that I am doing I think has value … in its own right. Um … it has to do with … um … safety … um … and particular the application we are looking now – that's at children school. So I think that has benefit as well. So I look at accomplishment … one as a personal accomplishment but also the work has been done is … urr … value to the community at a large.

MS 005: I … I think actually … I mean … the eight months I spent collecting data … um … being involved in an environment where I had to be the researcher … and … um … worked with not only the students but teachers, and remained … um … you know … independent … I think all of that was extremely satisfying. I mean … I want my work, my research actually affects practice and the case of work I did … So, I hope that all of my research actually to go into affecting practice – that's the point of the [DPS] program. I was pleased that I was able to translate the program into real life experience.

MS 006: Um … greatest satisfaction … has been I … um … "I did it!" [laugh] I don't care how old I am. I did it … and it was a lifelong dream. And I decided that I was going to do it and I did it. I just … I feel so … happy and satisfied … um … gratified that I did it and I did a good job. And I am proud of my thesis, and I am proud of the research that I did. And … um … so it was a big challenge and it was very difficult; … but I succeeded. So that is where the satisfaction comes from. … It is the fact that how I managed to finish [laugh], honest way [laugh].

MS 008: Oh well … one is achievement. Two … um … I think it is a big honor to get it [doctorate] from Syracuse. So that plays a role here. Um … say … yeah probably those are the two main ones.

MS 009: For me is to having empathies with faculty and graduate students that I work with. I feel I can do. And I have done a much better job supporting research here at my workplace [Syracuse] by understanding it better. The greatest satisfaction is the fact that how I managed to finish [laugh], honest was [laugh].

MS 010: Um … I think for me that is definitely the credibility aspect and the ability to … um … take another step up … I think the … um … the confident that it has given me has been extraordinary in that regards … I think confident and credibility are the two greatest things that have given me.

MS 011: I think … I think the benefit is probably the additional learning that I am able to accomplish by myself. That I am exposed to areas that I never had exposure to in my life. Um … the academic literature, um … the academic research … um … and friends … I really can't separate one. I guess I would say that the increase learning, increase of knowledge.

MS 012: Again, the greatest satisfaction for me would just be able to accomplished … finishing this … um … this degree; just going through the process probably is the

greatest satisfaction. And, and … um … completing and getting everything things done, and … you know … despite all the challenges and … um … just finishing the greatest satisfaction.

MS 013: Ah … I would say … um … it's just to me … when I finish this degree … kind like … "I did it!" It took me "X" amount of years, but I stayed with the course and I would obtain the degree.

MS 014: Um … learning more, making money, [laugh] of course, and a sense of accomplishment. Feeling that … maybe that is the top one.

MS 015: It's a couple of different things. Part of it is for self-actualization … I think … urr … this is something that … that is very personal for me. Um … it validates and assures me that … that I have the necessary … um … skill set to be a researcher and to … um … to … um … um … pursue a problem and … and seek a solution for it. A lot of it is very personal for self-actualization. Um … but even beyond that I think … urr … giving the fact that working on a university campus, having a terminal degree … a doctorate degree … urr … for … um … um … and having inclusion into the … urr … into the faculty that have a doctorate degree … in that environment. Having a PhD … nevertheless I think … that having inclusion … urr … and acceptance being the person on campus … urr … I believe that it can contribute to that. And … um … urr … beyond that it gives useful skills that I can be used in industry.

MS 016: Well …there is no guarantee of a promotion at work by earning a doctorate degree. But I think the most significant benefit would be the personal satisfaction of earning a doctorate degree. … So I am looking forward to personal satisfaction. I believe there would be professional benefit. I don't know what exactly what that would be but I still think that can be benefit.

MS 017: Ok. Well … you know … certainly there is a huge satisfaction of … um … a sense of self-worth and … and accomplishment by having completed the process and by completing the degree. Um … and … and also sense of relief that that it was over. Um … so … [laugh] so …so that is number 1. Number 2 … um … as I said previously, I hadn't pursued the degree because of the professional development. But surprisingly the degree opened up a number of opportunities in my current position that I hadn't anticipated. Um … I have been asked to do … um … other things and work and have been acknowledged as an expert in term of seeking out new information, new

knowledge. So … that I realized … um … several months after I graduated that … the biggest benefit of the degree did turn out be a professional benefit.

MS 018: Again, that's … that's personal. Um … it … it has intrinsic value. [laugh] Um … I won't get any … any kind of rewards, just something I always wanted to do … um … a sense of accomplishment for me. Um … it's a realization that I can do my job far better … um … with the … um … the things that I've learned in the program. Um … facts that I've learned in the program. Um … and the different perspectives that I've gained in the program. I think it made me more effective. And that … that also made me feel good, a sense of satisfaction.

MS 019: Um … I think at the end of day, it's a huge accomplishment. You know … it's a ton of work. Um … it' a lot of things that you do not want to do. Um … it's a lot of time and energy. So … you know … I think it's just … definitely an achievement that's worthy of being in proud of.

MS 020: It's a sense of accomplishment and accomplishing a body of work that can be approved by faculty in a top tier university and top notch program. Urr … um…in terms of completing the program, I'm fulfilling an educational objective for it. So I think … being recognized as a true scholar, practitioner in this field, that's going to be a highlight for me, to know how to employ research methods and various approaches to … urr … research, but also the practice experience that comes with working in the industry for … um … a number of years and combining those together, the scholarly practitioner with a great sense of accomplishment.

MS 021: Er … well other than completing the goal I started on four years ago … um … it … well … it says … you know … I've got to be honest. … I always want to challenge myself. I cannot sit idly. Ah so when I was not challenged at work, I saw an external avenue to continue to challenge myself, in this case it is academically … at the time my professional life was stagnant.

Plans of what to accomplish with the degree

MS 001: I want to practical imply in my work environment. … Um … my phase one is practically implied and influenced by profession … urr … the project management. Phase two is to go to academia. But that's ten years arisen. My real interest right now is application in a practical environment. What I … That's kind a personal observation. I tend to learn much more much more from professor of practice. … They bring more just

the theories and their research projects to the classroom. They bring how they used it and applied … they bring that kind of practical favor to … um … to the classroom. I kind… that kind of professor I want to be.

MS 002: Part of my plan is to teach professional in my field. And … I have done with the program that I can develop the skills and prepare myself to provide quality product from the learning and teaching perspectives.

MS 003: Ah, well, … um … again, as an instructor, a professor in graduate education, there will be a direct application. Um … additionally, … um … the elements of some of my clients for whom I provide training and continue education, and executive development … um … and I… I intend to again leverage … um … the degree and what kind of degree in those fashion.

MS 004: From the standpoint, I work … again where I work probably is the one where I'll work for the rest of my life. Um … the information I gained from new application of simulation that was what I have done for decades. That hopefully will leave them additional has to be done in the lab and target more toward. … Urr … safety and the use of technology having to do with buildings and attribute the safety of the occupants of those buildings. … So it [my research project/the degree] is just more enhancement … more what I am doing now. And … um … branch out as a whole as completely change of career will not be a complete career change for me.

MS 005: Well, I am still researching and writing … collaborating with other cohorts on article. We have been doing some … writing together, collaborating on article. I had an article that I am working right now. … So I am using it [knowledge and skills learned from the DPS program] all the time. I … I am sure that I am using it because … I … I had a huge investment. I want to make sure that I … um … get as much out of it as I can.

MS 007: So … I think … um … um … like I said earlier. This is a nontraditional program that we are doing. And it seems that … you know … a lot of things I do are kinds of nontraditional as a result of I have done this program.

MS 008: Well … for sure I'll use it … apply the knowledge to … um … my professional career. Um … actually for creation … um … I like … um … to get into … um … you know … some kind of information management or information technology in a larger organization. And then … um … I would say … um … get some consultant work. I would … you know … because the degree teaches you how to think differently and looks at

things differently … I think … it is … you know … teaches you critical aspects … um … kind of consultant. So … yap.

MS 010: … I didn't know if I was going to move up in leadership in my current organization. I didn't know if I was going to pursue another job. I don't know whether I was going into teaching…or… something along those lines … Um … um …or a more heavy research type career. You know … the jury is still out on all that. But … but … I … I have thought of different ways … and … I can use it [the doctorate degree] and … um … what is really planning out is it has just opened up a lot of new doors for me and allowed me to have a lot of conversation that wouldn't happen otherwise.

MS 011: Um … let's see [laugh] Ah … I think I'll try to … you know … find something I can share my knowledge … maybe write for trade publications and submit some, some documents there. You know … that would probably be something [for me] to work on. Um … You know … maybe … again branch out from … um … where I am current at … maybe into a different kind of career… I am not sure where. Probably … you know … professional publications that might be something I would look into.

MS 012: Um … before graduation, I have submitted couple of application become an adjunct faculty members at the university. So I am looking to begin my career in teaching, becoming an adjunct … being able to get on Syracuse or … um … major universities by the time I graduate. Ah … I would like to, to teach one online course before I actually graduated. I would, I would love to be able to start in the spring to teach a class, an online class … to … again, begin the next chapter of my career by the time graduation 2014 rolling around.

MS 014: Um … well … knowledge in the program may … may … I hope it gets me a new job or … um … gives me a new position in the job that I have right now.

MS 015: Urr … I think it is probably two ways. One is that … that the actual … um … data that I initially gather through this research … uh … through this research should help me perhaps … uh … provide an …urr … um … affective recommendation document … um … to … um … university administration. Perhaps that … urr … identifies some changes that can be made … urr … structurally or process wise, or perhaps even identify criteria for the next new faculty … um … this support of entrepreneurship that has been in a … urr … very … urr … concrete target or help through my current job function. Beyond that … um … the very fact that I have … um … I would have picked up … urr … research tools and skills and make that connection … um … it could help … urr … maybe

teach a class here and there. Maybe continue doing research work while still working on … um … campus.

MS 016: Well, a couple of ways. One … um … my research interest I am hopeful that that will … um … shed some lights on how to increase the certification rate for the professional certification in project management. And I plan to use that by partnering with the project management institute … um … to … um … by speaking at conferences and writing papers … um … and I believe there maybe opportunity for some employment … um … opportunity with the … um … PMI. Um … I also know that in the adjunct faculty world that having a doctorate would benefit me by … um … enabling me to teach more classes as … as having a terminal degree. So I will be at the same level of my peers, who have a doctorate degree. And then finally I believe the experience … urr … urr… learning how to research … um … will possibly influence my full-time work by getting an understanding … um … a problem … um … and … and questioning … questioning the … urr … the root of that problem and … looking for solutions as I do … um … in my research.

MS 018: Um … I would like to be a … um … a federal CIO. Um … I think that I can make a difference. I think that I have things to contribute. Um … and … um … I don't know how the degree will … I guess the degree will … I guess the degree would be a discriminator … um … in looking for that kind of job.

MS 019: Um … I use it [knowledge learned from the program] every day at my job. I'll continue to do that. … Um … I … eventually getting a new job. Um … something like I am doing now, just at a higher level.

MS 020: Well, I think for me, the next step for me, professionally is … urr … to potentially start my own business. I think the credibility of the company and possessing a doctorate degree, gives me the opportunities to publish. I know it's not a teaching degree, but I think that having the ability to develop seminars and do some teaching through seminars related to my field of industry. That's got to be great. And again, starting my own business can give credibility and associated knowledge in doctoral research.

MS 021: Urr … retire from the [federal government agency] and get a job with a Fortune 500 company. … Any job opportunities that I might not otherwise be offered. … Er … I'll try influence career choices for junior officers at work. And … when I have the opportunity to influence program changes, either for budgetary items, new technology

development in my current [position], I'll provide input where I can. I'll try to steer discussions in certain directions. I'll try to make people think beyond the current technology. And most of time … make people shake their heads and say, "Yes, you are correct … bring in X million dollars and we'll make it happen."

Unintended outcomes (the DPS graduates)

MS 006: Well… when I first came to the program, I had no thought … um … changing career. I … what I wanted to accomplish was to base my leadership … of …the work we were doing in [a metropolitan area] … on … the best ideas in the field to make sure that everything I was helping to develop and … and pushing toward really align with the latest research and the best thinking in the field. Um … I didn't really thinking about coming to Syracuse [as a professor of practice at iSchool]… until … a year after … I mean it wasn't in my head that that would be the next step until I was already through with the doctorate.

MS 007: And … um … I am very interested in technology entrepreneurship. Um … so I am continuing to learn but I am using my doctoral … credential to start up an educational institution … I … I am part of the team of ten people. And we intend to start up … um … um … you know … a business.

MS 009: Well, my … my initial plan was … um … to publish immediately. Um … [laugh] instead … instead what I have done … um … I started teaching. Um … I am also doing a lot of public speaking … um … and … my professional colleague doing training session at … um … at national scale. That wasn't my original plan, but that is the route that … that I have been taking. And teaching I … I never ….ever intend to teach. Doing that within a year … getting that degree, I was asked if I want to teach a course. And that has gone so well. And I … I will consistently teach that course now. Um … and I am in the process of planning … that is another undergraduate level course. There is another process of planning another graduate level course with … um … another faculty member.

MS 010: Um … it helped me with my knowledge … um … of understanding culture and how to collect information professionally. … Um … take another step up and have conversation with people who I would not normally have a conversation with and have a conversation.

MS 012: Ah … the first thing is that … I have already published. Now I am actually writing a book with my advisor. So we have a book contract that is scheduled. The book

is actually scheduled to come up in October 2014. So, … urr … that's probably the … one of the biggest things that happened already since I … um … completed my degree.

MS 017: The CEO of the company … um … said that … um … he wasn't aware that I was getting a doctorate. Um … when I was graduated, he was very impressed with the commitment. And what he asked me to do was, [quote on quote] "I'll take a chance on you," and [quote on quote] "You have the responsibility to be irresponsible." Specifically what he meant was that … that he gave me no guidance or direction other than, "I want you to be thinking this for ten years. Tell me … tell me where we can be as a company." And so … it was a general managerial strategic … um … um … um … assignment. That now consumes half of my job. Because I am still the CIO of my company but the other half is really strategic and … and helping to define the direction of the company.

Anticipated benefits

MS 001: You know … I am … I am studying a small piece that I am passion about. I am learning the process really. I am learning how to. … You know … and so, once the doctorate is completed, then my real passion begins. Then I am going to continue on research those I am interested are. Actually I am right now. There is … there is… you know … my research interests probably life work [laugh].

MS 002: [The degree] helps to validate my maturity and my development in … growth professional as a career person … and … the accreditation and validation of growth.

MS 003: [I] will be satisfied that having completed it, will be satisfied having a deeper knowledge of … um … the research area which I have spent last few years working on … and … urr … and I anticipate that … um … the … gaining understanding the appreciation insight … um … continuing to [fulfill] a few things of my professional career.

MS 005: For my profession, doctorate degree is valued. Um … you're in the educational environment or consulting in educational field. … Ah, … it … it's really important that you have a doctorate because at the level where I am working of the people around you also … um … have their doctorates. They are … um … doing research and there's a respect comes with it, … urr… and trust. So, it's trust and respect that you can tackle the work required … um … in your field.

MS 011: I think ... I think ... the benefit is probably the additional learning that I am able to accomplish by myself. That I am exposed to areas that I never had exposure to in my life.

MS 012: Ah ... I have ... urr ... been elevated in my job. And then ... you know ... I have been elevated in professional and ... um ... ranged that well. Um ... so ... it's ... I have already seen the increase in the ... um ... the minimal amount of time I had paid for my doctorate degree. So, I am ... I am beginning to reap the benefit from a professional standpoint ... um ... again in the association that I am part of, as well from my employer.

MS 014: I want to be able to compete in the labor market. Um ... compete one on one with the new professionals get into the labor market with updated skills. ... My career will change and is changing right now. Thanks to the influence ... um ... the impact ... the impact of DPS program in my skills, my knowledge, my expertise ... um ... it's 100% impact ... um ... the DPS program on my career ... it really made a shift in my career.

MS 015: Having a PhD ... nevertheless I think ... that having inclusion ... urr ... and acceptance being the person on campus ... um ... I believe that it can contribute to that. And ... urr ... um ... beyond that it gives useful skills that I can be used in industry.

MS 018: Um ... facts that I've learned in the program ... urr ... and the different perspectives that I've gained in the program. I think it made me more effective. And that ... that also made me feel good, a sense of self-satisfaction.

MS 020: So I think ... being recognized as a true scholar, practitioner in this field, that's going to be a highlight for me, to know how to employ research methods and various approaches to ... uh ... research, but also the practical experience that comes with working in the industry for ... uh ... a number of years and combining those together, the scholarly practitioner with a great sense of accomplishment.

Recommendations to others entering the DPS program

MS 003: Well, it is ... there is a certain amount of prestige that, that is always associated with someone who can preserve ... urr ... to get the degree [DPS]. And ... um ... and so ... there is, there is that aspect which most motivation, but that is not enough. You have had other things to associate with it ... um ... to endure the process and see it through to the end. This is probably why so many people who started a doctorate ... urr ... don't end up finishing it simply because of ... um ... they did not develop good reasons behind

it. Well, you know … for instance, if, … if you don't, you don't have a reason for how you are going to use the degree afterward and just having it probably not a compelling motivation. It might be enough motivation for start, but it won't be enough for propel you through the completion. … Ah … and, and then … if you don't have the urging and support of … um … your family and some colleagues, and … um … it … becomes difficult.

MS 005: Well, for me, if someone is interested in the program, and I am going to advise on … you know … whether it is a good fit or whether they were in the position ready to tackle such program, I, … I think I would want to ask … them … um … what problem is facing in your field? What … um … you know … issues that you have to tackle and learn more about? And how would be able to research and do … um … study around those issues … helps you make a better decision? So, it is really about … it matches about whether you have time to or you have the support to do it but whether or not fit into your current environment and your current goal as far as your profession. And, … and I, I think … that's very important that people come into the program with a purpose. Even if their topics changed, if their focus changed, they still have had a very focus on why they are doing it and how would support what they are doing in their work.

MS 006: Um … I think some people do it … their motivation is to advance and … in their field. And … there are a lot of supervisory positions, administrative positions where you will definitely be bumped up in the applicant pool if you have a doctorate. What shouldn't happen if someone who goes in without the drive or the passion of learning? … Because if you're just doing it to get a degree, it's a pretty rough road. That's why a lot of people are ABD or dropped out. … If you don't have a personal drive, first of all, to actually achieve it and … and have the ability to motivate yourself to keep at it when the going gets rough, but also a drive for the value of the … the past. Everything that you are going to learn along the way … urr … then it is easy to get … urr … discouraged and to drop out. And the second … the third, I guess … thing that is very important for motivation is that to have a very clear idea of what your passion are in the field. … So that … that understanding of your own passion, your own drive of learning, and of your work ethics, your willingness to focus in and drive yourself because others aren't not going to be the same the degree where you just inquiry one course after another and you are through. This one you have set a solid past and be self-disciplined enough to pursue it.

MS 008: Mmm … well … the large part has to be personal. Because I think there is not enough factual evidence to show that … urr … the achievement of doctorate degree

didn't necessarily … um … provide additional income because of it. So, … that in itself is the challenge. It's difficult… very difficult to justify … financially justify the amount of money you spent on the degree. Therefore, the motivation has to be really chained to … urr … personal satisfaction … um … you know … additional professional credibility and stature … the thirst and quest of knowledge and information understanding … um … I would probably say those are the big ones.

MS 012: Well, … actually the first motivation … you have to have a very strong desire and ambition to pursue this working doctorate degree. In my opinion, … um … the demand of the work, and the demand of life and the demand of the degree itself is so great. Um … it is … urr … easy to quit, but you have to have ambition, passion, and determination to actually finish the degree.

MS 017: Well … I think … um … I think number 1 is … I think … I think you need to be … urr … you need to have a good understanding of the level of commitment that this requires; the level of dedication that this requires and the implications that … the implication that it might have on your personal life and your work life while … while you are taking on the degree. Um … I absolutely underestimated that before I started my journey. I … I underestimated the amount of work, and … um … um … you know … you want to be an enjoyable and … and … urr … positive experience … um … but you just have to make sure, in my opinion, your … your work life and personal life is supportive of this process.

MS 021: Um … probably who's "footing the bill" [financially] whether the person by themselves or with a scholarship or company monetary assistance. Um … whether or not, the program or thesis topic fits within their line of work. And … portion of it, depend on the individual's age. Because obviously don't bring "green" individuals into the program that you got to have some working experience you can figure out how would this apply? How would it work? And then … of course how would you measure the time to get the course completed. The motivation factors are partial the age. Individuals respect their … um … individual current work and almost touch on to reach the individual goal.

Vita

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EDUCATION

Doctoral of Professional Studies in Information Management, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY. Research interests: assessment of library service, library user and information seeking behavior, bibliometric study, older adult education, academic motivation, learning behavior and psychology, Eastern and Western philosophy of learning, motivational aspects of non-traditional students. Doctoral thesis: *The motivation of working practitioners seeing a doctoral education*. Advisor: Dr. Art Thomas. May 2014.

Master of Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI. Professional speculations: library management, public and academic librarianship, information retrieval and user expectations, information literacies in online spaces, international librarianship, children and youth adult literature, records management, information literacy pedagogy, intellectual freedom and library. December 1999.

Master of Arts in Journalism, University of Arkansas, Little Rock, AR. Professional speculations: Women journalism, international journalism, media and society, news gathering and editing, war correspondent and journalism, feature and magazine writing, book publishing. May 1997.

Master of Philosophy in Chinese Studies, The University of Hong Kong. Speculations: Chinese fiction - 220-589 - History and criticism, religion and literature, Taoism. Master's thesis: *Sou Shen Chi and its relationship to the Taoist religion* 《搜神記》與道敎之關係. December 1989.

Bachelor of Arts, Chinese and Japanese language and literature, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. June 1986.

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Poon, Ming-Sun & Wong, Ching-Yu (1986). *Qing chao shu hua jia bi lu suo yin* 《清朝書畫家筆錄索引》. Hong Kong: Zhongguo Xue Shu Zi Liao She 中國學術資料社.

Wong, Anna C. Y. (1997). Post-Vietnamese War portrayal of Vietnamese-Americans in the *New York Times* from 1976 to 1996; First Place award in the Kappa Tau Alpha Journalism Research Paper Competition.

REFERRED CONFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

Wong, Anna C. Y. (2012). Chinese picture books in the Kansas Northeastern Library Consortia Libraries (NELKS). Proceedings of the 5th WCILCO International Conference for Institutes and Libraries,May, the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.

Wong, Anna C. Y. (2013). Citation errors of graduate students in education doctoral dissertations, 2008 to 2012: A case at the University of Kansas. Proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Libraries, June, La Sapienza (University of Rome), Rome, Italy.

Wong, Anna C. Y. (2013). Using the critical incident technique to evaluate the service quality perceptions of public library users: An exploratory study. Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science, August, Royal School of Library and Information Science, Copenhagen, Denmark

Wong, Anna C. Y. (2014). Confucian learning philosophy and the motivation of adult learners: A pilot study. Accepted to the 12th Hawaii International Conference on Education, January, Hawaii.

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