

Doctoral experience –survey

Preliminary findings

Social Science Doctoral Students

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Background

- Research on doctoral education since 2006-
- Main areas of interest: engagement, well-being, supervision, scholarly communities as learning environments, doctoral student learning.
- Multimethod systemic designs
- Surveys, video data, interviews etc.
- Data collected from
 - Researcher communities
 - Supervisors
 - Doctoral Students
 - Post docs

Comparable measures

Finnish data

- Motivation
- Key experiences
- Academic writing
- Engagement
- Burnout
- No post doc data
- More extensive measures on supervision
- No measures on perceptions about research

Spanish/UK data

- Motivation
- Key experiences
- Academic writing
- Engagement
- Burnout
- More extensive measures on national/international collaboration
- No measures on doctoral courses

Participants

- Altogether 236 social science doctoral students from two major multidisciplinary research intensive universities from Finland
 - University of Oulu (n=127)
 - University of Helsinki (n=109)
- The participants were majoring in Social sciences
- The participants included 183 women (77.5%) and 53 men (22.5%), age mode: 30-34 years
- Data were collected with the modified version of doctoral experience-survey via online survey.

Demography of the participants

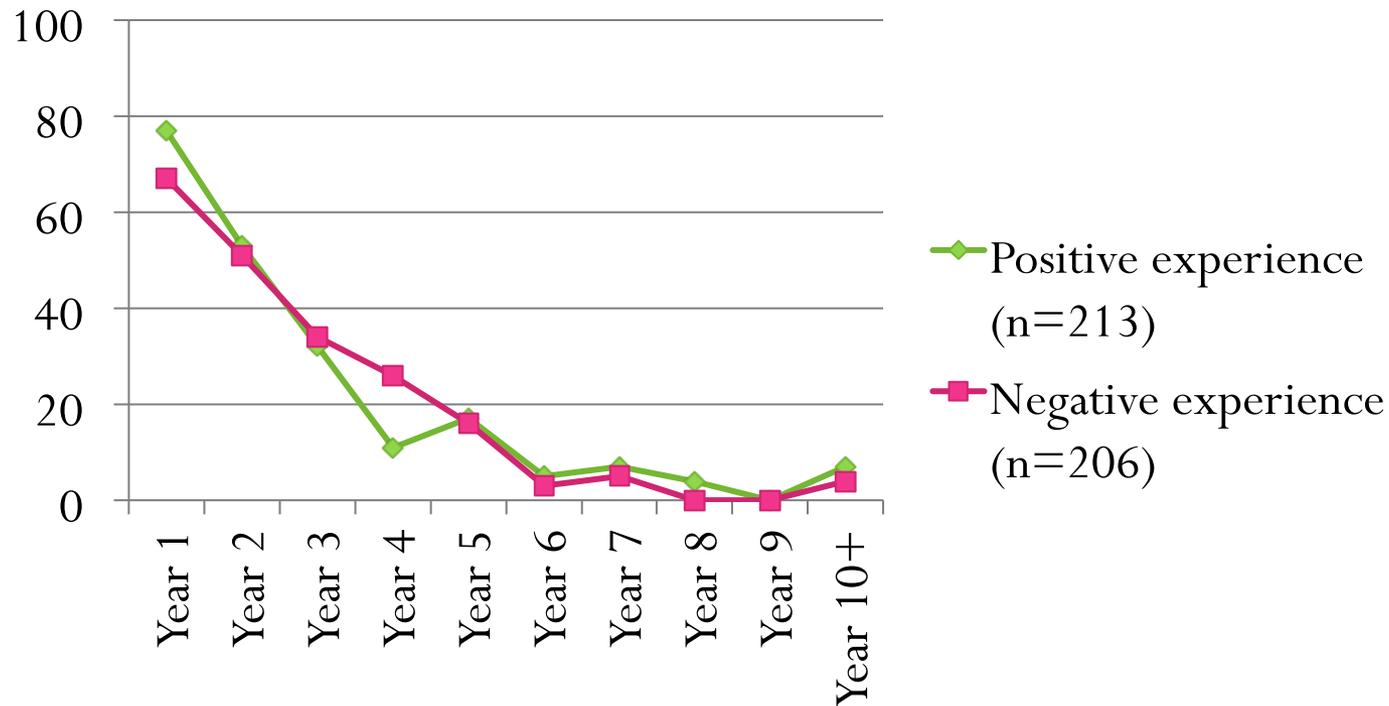
	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Thesis format	Monograph	77	33.0
("don't know" n=7; 3%)	Article(s)	149	63.9
Research group status	Alone	181	76.7
	In Group	10	4.2
	Both	45	19.1
Full-time / Part-time	Full-time	120	52.4
	Part-time	109	47.6
"Country of origin"	Domestic	220	93.2
	International	16	6.8

Interest	Mean	SD
F1: I am inspired by the work as researcher. (item 17)	5.74	1.27
F1: After graduating I want to get a post-doc at a university. (9)	4.71	1.90
F1: I want to work in a research community. (4)	4.95	1.73
F1: I want to contribute to my field of research. (15)	5.65	1.39
F1: I am inspired by my research topic. (1)	6.52	0.67
F2: I want to get a better position. (2)	5.04	1.69
F2: I want to get a better salary. (5)	4.26	1.78
F2: My job prospects are better after doctoral degree. (16)	3.79	1.84
F2: Degree is required in my future work. ^a (13)	3.72	2.08
F2: I want to have a doctoral degree. (7)	5.77	1.40
F3: Finding out new things is fascinating. (8)	6.49	0.80
F3: I want to develop my skills. (6)	6.52	0.69
F3: I want to develop myself. (10)	6.52	0.74
F3: I want to complete what I started. (11)	6.28	1.04
F3: I enjoy intellectual challenges. ^b (3)	6.40	0.82
F3: My research is useful for others. ^b (12)	5.82	1.12
I did not have other career prospects in sight. ^c (14)	2.17	1.74

Interest in doctoral studies

- Three factor structure was detected:
 - F1: Research interest
 - F2: Instrumental interest
 - F3: Development interest
- Students with....
 - instrumental interest were more likely to consider dropping out than those with research or development interest ($p < .01$)
 - research ($r = .14, p < .05$) or development interest ($r = .14, p < .05$) were more satisfied with their doctoral studies. Satisfaction with doctoral studies.
 - research interest were more satisfied with the supervision ($r = .14, p < .05$)

Temporal location of critical experiences



Satisfaction with doctoral studies and supervision, attrition and change of supervisor

		Mean	SD
Satisfaction with doctoral studies		4.57	1.30
Satisfaction with supervision		5.34	1.54
		Frequency	Percentage %
Dropout consideration	Yes	72	31.6
	No	156	68.4
Change of supervisor	Yes	46	19.5
	No	161	68.2
	Has considered	29	12.3

- Full-time doctoral students were more satisfied with their doctoral studies ($p < .05$) than part-time students.
- Part-time students were overrepresented among those who had considered dropping out of doctoral studies ($p < .05$, adj. res. 2.0).

Frequency of supervision

Daily	1.3%
Weekly	20.2%
Monthly	30.9%
Once in every other month	18.5%
Once in six month	19.3%
Seldom	9.9%

Typical source of supervision: Two or more supervisors (58.9%),
[one supervisor (39.4%)]

Less frequent supervision was related to consideration of dropping out, lower levels of satisfaction with supervision and doctoral studies

Perceptions on academic writing

Writing scales	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. Procrastination					
2. Creative activity	-.14*				
3. Perfectionism	.40**	-.04			
4. Negative thoughts	.42**	-.24**	.24**		
5. Blocks	.73**	-.09	.40**	.37**	
6. Productivity	-.58**	.27**	-.13*	-.27**	-.57**

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Experienced engagement, burnout and stress

- Engagement: vigor, dedication and absorption
- Burnout :exhaustion, cynicism and inadequacy
- Stress: one item stress.
- Those who have considered dropping out experienced less engagement ($p < .001$), more burnout ($p < .001$) and more stress ($p < .01$)
- No significant differences between full-time/part-time students
- Those students who receive supervision seldom (less frequently than once in six months) experienced less dedication ($p < .05$) and more cynicism ($p < .01$) than those who receive support more often

Satisfaction, engagement, burnout, stress, interest in doctoral studies

SCALES	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.
1. F1 I-RESSEARCH											
2. F2 I-INSTRUMENTAL	.21**										
3. F3 I-DEVELOPMENT	.46**	.06									
4. SATISFACTION DS	.14*	.00	.14*								
5. SATISFACTION SUP	.14*	0.04	.01	.57**							
6. E-VIGOR	.39**	-.03	.46**	.26**	.18**						
7. E-DEDICATION	.46**	-.02	.47**	.28**	.25**	.83**					
8. E-ABSORPTION	.37**	-.01	.44**	.18**	.13	.74**	.69**				
9. EXHAUSTION	-.01	.11	-.10	-.23**	-.15*	-.41**	-.33**	-.19**			
10. CYNICISM	-.31**	.02	-.31**	-.37**	-.33**	-.59**	-.67**	-.38**	.38**		
11. INADEQUACY	-.21**	.06	-.22**	-.30**	-.28**	-.56**	-.55**	-.39**	.69**	.58**	
12. STRESS	.05	.15*	-.07	-.21**	-.16*	-.35**	-.25**	-.14*	.74**	.32**	.55**