Predictors of completion time of doctoral programmes in public universities in Southwestern Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is the most essential degree for a career in academia because it guarantees professional recognition and professionalism. The timely completion of a PhD programme is a crucial metric used by many institutions to assess programme completion. Numerous Ph.D. candidates in Nigerian institutions were unable to complete their programmes within the allotted five years, according to studies. Consequently, this study examined variables that affect completion times of doctoral programmes (CTDP) at public universities in southwest Nigeria (PUSWN). The Expectancy Theory served as the anchor, while explanatory survey approach was adopted. Out of 7,300 PhD students, a sample of 528 participants from four universities: University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, Olabisi Onabanjo University, and Ekiti State University, was chosen using the multi-stage sampling measures. Data were gathered using two questionnaires called the "Completion of Doctoral Programme Questionnaire" (CDPQ) and the "Predictors of Completion of Ph.D. Questionnaire" (PCPQ). Two null hypotheses were set up and tested through multiple regression at the 0.05 significance level. Results revealed that learner, supervisory, and institutional factors (IFs) combined explained 13% of the variance in CTDP among PUSWN. The model was significant ($F(3, 461)=25.973$, Adj. $R^2=0.13$). Student-related characteristics were predictive of the length of the Ph.D. programme ($\beta=0.275$, $t=2.425$, $p<0.05$). In addition, IFs outperformed supervision factors as predictors ($\beta=0.277$, $t=2.892$, $p<0.05$). The study's conclusions led to the recommendation that institutional and student aspects be given priority in order to guarantee the timely completion of Ph.D. programmes at PUSWN.

Keywords: Completion Time, Doctoral Programme, Student Factors, Supervision, School Factors

I. INTRODUCTION

The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) is the most important degree for a career in academia in most nations since it ensures competence and professional honour. According to academics, the goal of the Ph.D. programme is to better prepare students for their future careers by teaching them how to think critically, experimentally, and creatively (Lunyolo et al, 2019). Three to five years are usually needed to finish a full-time doctoral programme (DP) (League of European Research Universities, 2016). A four-year DP is seen as too long in Germany. Funding is one thing that students worry about when they are very near the completion of a Ph.D. programme. The Nigerian universities regulatory agency's mandate is that full-time doctoral applicants must complete their studies within three to five years. It is the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards (BMAS). This time duration is essentially used as the programme's completion time (CT) (Spronken-Smith, 2018).

Nigeria requires at least 76,000 Ph.D. holders to achieve the basic teaching level in its higher education institutions, according to the *Needs Assessment Report* (Lagoke et al., 2025) on universities. It may take Nigeria more than a century to reach the NUC's goal of producing 76,000 Doctor of Philosophy degree holders across disciplines. This is because Nigerian colleges produced 760 Ph.D. holders yearly as of 2010. Therefore, by the time Nigeria achieves its objective of generating 76,000 Ph.D. holders in this number of years, a new level of growth would have been established, rendering earlier goals outdated. The average CT for a DP in U.I, the first university in Nigeria, was nine years (Olubusoye & Olusoji, 2014). The delays in the Completion Time of doctoral programmes (CTDP) at several Nigerian schools seem to worry stakeholders. Conversely, full-time doctoral programmes (DP) in the arts faculties usually have a minimum and maximum duration of three to five years.

Inemesi (2025) states that students must study the sciences for three to four years and the social sciences for three to five years. The guidelines state that the management, administration, and organisation programmes may be completed in three to five years in Nigeria. Engineering and technology programmes can take three to six years at most. Recently, Quadri et al., (2026) found that only 23.3% of DS students completed their programmes in the record time of five years, while 76.7% were still on the programme in southwestern Nigeria. For this research, finishing a full-time doctoral programme is considered timely when a student's thesis is registered within three to five years. However, all

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chosen schools with the same expected completion times experience late completion after five years at the Faculty of Education (FoE). The researcher's observations on the CTDP may be connected to student factors. However, academic competence, finance, student enthusiasm, and work status—student factors (SF)—seem to be crucial to this research that is examined in connection to the CTDP (Adeyemi & Adeyemi, 2014; Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2024; Agu & Odimegwu, 2014).

Anyone officially involved in learning is considered a student, particularly if they are enrolled in a school, college, or university. The phrase "students' factors" denotes any element of an individual's life within a learning environment that may influence their academic performance, either favourably or adversely. The degree progress of African foreign Ph.D. students is influenced by several factors, including psychological obstacles, family involvement, financial concerns, student characteristics, and exploratory research (Soumana & Uddin, 2017). Students' factors include age, gender, marital status, employment, ethnicity, and scholarship (Olubusoye & Olusoji, 2014; Jiranek (2010). In addition, Valentina et al., (2011) noted that social support, job motivation as a personal resource, and doctoral students' (DS) personal networks had a significant, favourable impact on their academic success.

Similar opinions were held by Shariff et al., (2015), who believed that student problems might hinder academic success. Financial difficulties, health issues, emotional strain, a lack of drive, a lack of confidence, the distance of the commute, burnout, and switching institutions were some of these causes. In addition, Siegfried and Stock (2000) found that student characteristics predicting the CT of a Ph.D. in Economics include funding, a job, marital status, and parental status throughout the programme. Abiodun-Oyebanji (2024) states that family obligations, work obligations, and poor writing abilities are student-related issues that work against the quick completion of PhD degrees.

Recruiting qualified applicants, providing research training, tight supervision, age at entrance, culture, and gender are student variables that contribute to high Ph.D. completion rates (Spronken-Smith et al., 2018). In addition, Hagedorn and Ren (2012) suggest that several SFs, such as gender, study duration, and studying alone, might predict a higher GPA. Individual dedication, life experiences, and thesis problems are other student criteria that Spaulding and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2012) believed are linked to the successful completion of PhD degrees. Similarly, family burden and other psychological issues were included by Nzawi et al., (2012) as SFs impacting postgraduate students' academic success in Nigerian institutions.

Supervision of DS appears to be one of the most satisfying and interesting tasks of any university scholar. Assisting a budding scholar in transitioning into an independent researcher seems like a noteworthy accomplishment for a university instructor. Several PhD supervisees and supervisors maintain ongoing communication throughout their academic careers, with some even developing enduring friendships as a consequence. However, some supervisors regret their association with some supervisees at the doctoral level because of observable delays in thesis completion. Atanda (2012) asserts that one of the school-based quality variables that has a major impact on students' academic progress is instruction supervision. One of the main gaps this research addressed among the observed variables of CTDP at several Nigerian institutions was that it looked at doctoral supervisory factors (SvF) beyond the notion of "supervision" in relation to the job of a supervisor and expanded it to departmental and faculty levels. Therefore, DS's SvF covered in this study include the supervisor's status, supervisor's accessibility, departmental and faculty regulations.

Supervisor's rank, in terms of the cadre of a supervisor, whether he/she is a professor, reader, senior lecturer, lecturer I or II, is one of the SvFs. While the Postgraduate College (PGC) of the Ekiti and Ogun states-owned universities (EKSU and OOU) are of the view that supervisors' ranks play a vital role in doctoral supervision, and that only senior lecturers, readers, and professors can supervise DS, UI and the University of Lagos (UNILAG) do not totally agree with this. Their position is that any lecturer who possesses a Ph.D degree with three years of teaching experience is qualified to supervise DS (PGC OOU, 2017). This appears to influence the CTDP in these universities. In the view of Adeyemi & Adeyemi (2014), student-supervisor ratio, the interest and commitment of academics, overcrowded lecture halls and the university's constant industrial activities and closures were among the IFs that impede CTDP.

It is important to emphasise that one of the most important components of a successful Ph.D. supervision programme has been identified as the supervisor's accessibility (Dimitrova, 2016; Sverdlick et al, 2018). The relationship between the supervisee and supervisor cannot be satisfactory if the supervisor is available but not accessible. In the institutions in the eastern region of Nigeria, face-to-face interactive supervision is the method most often used and accepted for supervising doctoral theses (Agu & Odimegwu, 2014). While availability deals with the provision of a supervisor by the institution, supervisor accessibility refers to thesis discussion meetings between the supervisor and supervisee, always, rarely, and occasionally. Therefore, a supervisor may be available but not accessible on research issues, which is the basis of the academic relationship. Therefore, supervisors' accessibility may predict CTDP; hence, it needs to be investigated.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One of the biggest challenges facing education stakeholders in Nigerian institutions seems to be the difficulty many PhD candidates have in graduating within the anticipated time frame of five years. Researchers have discovered

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that SSIF affects students' academic PC on an individual basis. Nevertheless, no study has been done in Southwestern Nigeria on how these variables interact to affect PhD programme CT. This study fills that knowledge vacuum. Therefore, this research looked at student, supervisory and institutional factors (SSIF) as predictors of CTDP in public universities in southwestern Nigeria (PUSWN).

1.2 Research Objectives

i. To investigate the composite contribution of SSIF to CTDP in the Faculties of Education (FoE) in PUSWN; and
ii. To determine the relative contributions of SSIF to CTDP in the Faculties of Education (FoE) in PUSWN.

1.3 Research Hypotheses

$H0_1$: The CTDP in FoE in PUSWN does not significantly benefit from the composite contribution of SSIF.
$H0_2$: The CTDP in FoE in PUSWN is not significantly influenced by SSIF.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Vroom's Expectancy Theory served as the anchor for this study. In 1964, Victor H. Vroom postulated the expectancy theory on the impression that an employee's specific behaviour is usually premised on his expectations.

2.1.1 Expectancy Theory

This philosophy is built on the idea of Valence-Instrument Expectancy (VIE). The value a worker places on a particular outcome is valence, which, according to Osafo et al., (2021), can be either positive or negative. Instrumentality is the supposed likelihood that a motivation with a valence is assured after a given percentage of performance, and the sensitivity that a given behaviour will yield an exact result is the expectancy (Suciu et al., 2013). Generally, an individual is greatly motivated to act in a certain manner when the behaviour will lead to a reward (high instrumentality), the results have a helpful value (high valence) to achieve the envisioned level of performance (high expectation).

The relevance of expectancy theory to this study is based on its doctrine that the expectations of the major key players—student, supervisor and institution — determine their contributions to CTDP. According to Vroom's expectancy theory, DS are inspired to devote more effort and perform brilliantly if they can be certain that their efforts will be acknowledged and rewarded, and if the recompenses they imagine to receive are for the achievement of their determinations in life. There is a probability that students who enroll for DP for employment and promotion purposes will be in a rush than those who register for self-development purposes. Accordingly, the CTDP is prefaced on valence, expectancy, and instrumentality- the principle of expectancy theory. Adoption of expectancy theory by PC, for instance, will prompt doctoral superintendents and supervisees to act towards high performance. This is because they expect positive outcomes for what they do. The effort that they display in their supervision and research work, individually, is a function of how probable it is that performance will pay back in outcomes such as quick completion, job opportunities, promotion, recognition, and self-advancement.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Student Factors and Timely Completion of Doctoral Programmes

One indication of students' factors is the job status of PhD candidates. For many PhD candidates, work is both a major source of income and the sole acceptable excuse for their employment. Many students labour to supplement financial assistance, avoid borrowing, acquire skills, and support themselves as a way of life (Anne & Saul, 2009). In general, there are two types of job status: employed and unemployed. More PhD students are working while enrolled full-time at colleges than in the past, according to reports. It is often believed that even the most talented and intelligent students may experience a delay in their achievement if they work too hard. Kuh et al., (2023) noted that a better grade point average is often correlated with working while studying since a job helps students become more productive, structured, and acquire critical skills. Also, Abiodun-Oyebanji (2024) remarked that student-related features affecting the successful completion of doctoral degrees include family obligations, job tasks, and insufficient writing skills. Thus, the connection between PhD students' employment status and the DV was examined.

Various aspects have been identified as significantly influencing the progression of the degree (Owler, 2010; Soumana & Uddin, 2017). They include dependable and sufficient financing sources, a supportive adviser, participation in meaningful research initiatives, the prevalence of disease, and marital and familial challenges. Money should not be seen as the only remedy for higher education in Europe (Abiodun-Oyebanji, 2024). The scholars contend that financial resources alone cannot guarantee academic achievement. Instead, taking greater responsibility at the institution level is seen as essential for academic success. To address the contradictory financing conditions, it is necessary to examine

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students' financial position in relation to the dependent variable (DV). This is based on the reality that not every DS is supported by a family or scholarship.

Katz (2018) conducted a comparative analysis of "Crises in a doctoral research project" among enrolled PhD students at five technical institutions in Israel and three in Western Europe. A survey study design was chosen. More than 10,000 PhD candidates received a standard questionnaire via email, which they were asked to complete and submit as a Google Docs file. The researcher reported a mean return rate of 16.4 per cent from the selected eight universities. The study found that over 60 per cent of the DS had experienced emotional and economic crises. It was further reported that, as a result of these crises, some of them were delayed, and 25 per cent considered withdrawing from the DP. The study is very relevant to this study since funding as a variable stands for economic crisis. However, the study failed to establish the relative and joint contributions of both emotional and economic crises to the delay and withdrawal of Ph.D students from the DP. The present work addresses this significant gap.

Kayode (2014) investigated the factors influencing the quality of university graduates in southwest Nigeria. Using intentional and stratified sampling methods, 333 participants from nine institutions were selected for the survey study. Participants were from federal, state, and private institutions. Respondents were 180 students, 45 heads of department, 90 lecturers, 9 bursars, and 9 academic planning officers. Four questionnaires were the instruments of data collection. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyse the collected data. In addition, a Pearson Product-Moment correlation was used. Physical resources and graduation quality were shown to have a weakly positive correlation (r =.110). Financial resources showed a significant positive connection (r = .741); however, this was not the case with teaching personnel or educational materials. Furthermore, it was stated that the combined contribution of landscape factors to the variation was 46%. The study's DV, which is a crucial component of university programmes, was shown to be restricted to undergraduate programmes. In short, it did not cover DP, and as a result, the forecast cannot be applied to the timely completion of DP. This work has closed a significant gap.

Spronken-Smith et al., (2018) examined what motivates people with associate's degrees to enroll in a private university to pursue bachelor's degrees. A case study research design guided the study. It was based on the qualitative research paradigm, which used focus groups and semi-structured interviews to gather data. Eight participants in all, two from each of the National Louis University's four accelerated degree completion courses, filled out demographic questionnaires and participated in interviews. The data that was gathered was analysed using descriptive statistics. Students were shown to be more driven to finish their bachelor's degrees when they received guidance and encouragement from academics and staff at both the sending and receiving universities. The sampled participants (eight) were not sufficient for a case study for generalisation. The total population of the study was technically not reported, and therefore, created a vacuum for this study to fill at the doctoral level.

2.2.2 Supervision and Timely Completion of Doctoral Programmes

West et al, (2014) assessed the perceptions of academic staff about the factors influencing the course completion of Australian indigenous nursing students. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used in a mixed-methods study. A purposeful sampling strategy was used. Fifteen (15) academic personnel from five Queensland universities were chosen. Eligibility to participate was restricted to those who had assisted final-year undergraduate students in Aboriginal nursing programmes. The children got support throughout their last year of school. The study included two male and thirteen female faculty members aged between thirty-two and early sixties. The span of academic experience in university settings was one to twenty (20) years. Academic roles included school heads, first-year coordinators, academic advisors, and roles assisting indigenous students. Five themes emerged from the content analysis. These included individual student traits, institutional factors (IFs), processes and practices, and collaborations, linkages, and interactions. Others include academic knowledge, awareness, and comprehension, as well as family and community knowledge, awareness, and comprehension.

The results also showed that important SFs influencing course completion were reasons for selecting nursing, success-oriented personality traits, life and professional experience, and suitable timing. Institutional structures, systems, and procedures included teaching and learning, system support, policy and procedure, and staff leadership. Additionally, it was shown that the least often mentioned factors that contributed to the success of indigenous nursing students were knowledge of the institution, support, duties and responsibilities, and complicated societal concerns. A few aspects of the research are relevant to our inquiry. However, the perspectives of the students whose academic programme completion (PC) and performance were the focus of the study were not examined by the researchers. Once again, the study was limited to the nursing field. Regarding the timely completion of PhD courses, these are the primary gaps in the literature that this study addressed at the doctoral level.

2.2.3 Institutional/School Features and Timely Completion of Doctoral Programmes

Ayanyemi (2015) evaluated the role of private engagement and policy determinants in southwest Nigerian public universities. A descriptive survey design was chosen. Random selection was used to choose three federal and

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three state colleges. A purposive sampling approach was used to select three principal officers, and random selection was used to select the remaining 746 academic staff, 1,160 non-teaching employees, 1,650 final-year students, and 60 members of the public. The data were examined using multiple regression, content analysis, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and descriptive statistics. It was found, among others, that policies on teaching, student affairs, staff personnel, consultancy services, quality assurance, ancillary services, research, and accountability issues had significant positive relationships with public partnership. The findings revealed the importance of school policies, which were measured against the completion of the doctoral programme.

Abiodun-Oyebanji (2024) explored the Ph.D. completion rates in the faculty of education at a few chosen public institutions in Kenya, as well as student and institutional determinants. The survey design used in the research was descriptive. Three institutions sent a total of 184 lecturers/heads of departments, out of whom 115 (62.09%) participated. 388 (67.29%) of the 579 DSs enrolled at the three participating institutions between 2009 and 2013 attended. The survey found that half of the teaching staff were tutorial fellows, who are unable to oversee doctoral supervisees. This indicates insufficient staffing, a lack of appropriate library resources, and poor ICT connectivity. Most applicants were impacted by having a family, being committed to their work, and having good writing abilities; however, academic discipline and manner of study were not.

A doctorate curriculum should take at least three years and at most five years to complete globally. The survey also discovered that, between 2001 and 2008, the average duration to complete a Ph.D. was nine years. Even if the completion period was eventually shortened to six and a half years, the completion percentage for applicants who enrolled after 2009 is still much lower than 50%. Regarding CT, there was no discernible difference between male and female pupils. The supervision procedure, learning materials, student-related variables, institutional administrative aspects, and learning outcomes explained 65.7% of the variation in PhD study completion rates. Although the study reflects the methodology and contextual scope of this current study, it lacks the geographical scope. Hence, it was repeated in Southwestern Nigerian universities as related to doctoral programme timely completion.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Explanatory survey Methodologies were used for this investigation. Ex-post facto research was conducted using the descriptive survey exploratory research technique. The design is considered appropriate as the independent variable (IdV) of interest is not directly within the researcher's control. This variable has already happened, after all. Therefore, it is used to gather information from the population sample and determine how student characteristics affect the CTDP in the FoE in PUSWN.

3.2 Study Area

This inquiry was carried out in the Southwestern zone, Nigeria. The research locale was selected because the University of Ibadan and other highly ranked world-class universities in Nigeria are within the zone. Incidentally, the University of Ibadan, the producer of the highest number of doctorate holders in West Africa, is located in the zone. Also, doctoral programmes in Nigeria started in universities located in Southwestern Nigeria.

3.3 Target Population

The study's participants include 7,300 doctorate candidates and their advisors from the education departments of all the institutions in Southwest Nigeria that provide PhD degrees. This consists of DSs who had spent three to six years on their programmes and have either registered the titles of their theses within five years or are unable to register after five years.

3.4 Sampling and sample size

The multi-stage sampling procedures, comprising simple random, purposive, and enumeration sampling methods, were utilised in the selection of 528 participants for the study. Simple random sampling technique guided the selection of Ekiti, Oyo, Ogun and Lagos states. In contrast, four universities: UI, UNILAG, OOU, and EKSU, having FoE in the selected states, were chosen through a purposive approach. All the DS who registered in 2015/2016 in FoE were enumerated. This group of DS had spent more than three years on their DP and could therefore supply valuable information relevant for this study.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Data were gathered using two surveys called the "Completion of Doctoral Programme Questionnaire" (CDPQ) and the "Predictors of Completion of Ph.D. Questionnaire" (PCPQ). Cronbach's alpha values were used to assess the

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instruments' dependability; they yielded reliability coefficients of 0.83 and 0.82, indicating sufficient trustworthiness to evaluate the characteristics that they were designed to test.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed using inferential statistical techniques, including multiple regression analysis, in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version twenty-nine.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The University of Ibadan Ethical Approval Unit approved the research. In addition, all the participants gave their informed consent after the assurance of confidentiality.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

H_{01}:The CTDP in FoE in PUSWN does not significantly benefit from the composite contribution of SSIF.

Table 1

Joint Effect of SSIF on the CT of the DP

R	R^2	Adj. R^2	Std. Error
0.380	0.144	0.126	0.353

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Comment
Regression	2.961	3	0.987	25.973	0.000	Sig.
Residual	17.550	461	0.038			
Total	20.510	464				

Table 1 shows that the IdVs of SSIF had a combined effect on PhD PC in the FoE at PUSWN ($R=0.380$, $p<0.05$). Table 1 demonstrates that the linear combination of SSIF accounted for 12.6% (Adj. $R^2 = 0.126$) of the variation in CTDP within the FoE of PUSWN. The ANOVA findings show that the examined variable substantially affected the outcome variable, $F(3, 461)=25.973$, $p< 0.05$. Results from the table demonstrate that the model was statistically significant. Thus, the null proposition is disproved.

H_{02}:The CTDP in FoE in PUSWN is not significantly influenced by SSIF.

Table 2

Relative Effect of SSIF on the CTDP

Predictive Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	p	Comment
		B	Std. Error	β			
1	(Invariant)	3.999	0.186		21.505	0.000	
	SF	0.011	0.005	0.275	2.425	0.017	Sig.
	SvF	-0.005	0.004	-0.130	-1.045	0.298	Not Sig.
	IF	0.010	0.003	0.277	2.892	0.004	Sig.

Table 2 above illustrates the relative Impact of the three IdVs. The factors pertinent to the CT of Ph.D. in FoE at PUSWN include SSI. The variables consist of three components. A noteworthy predictor was the SF ($\beta=0.275$, $t=2.425$, $p < .05$). The model's second component was the SvF, which revealed a negative and statistically insignificant influence ($\beta=-0.130$, $t=1.045$, $p>.05$). The IF revealed statistical significance with $\beta = 0.277$, $t=2.892$ and $p<.05$. In addition, SvF had the minimum effect on the length of Ph.D. programme completion within the FoE at PUSWN. The remarkably low beta value and non-significant t-statistic ($\beta=-0.130$, $t=1.045$, $p>.05$) highlighted this point. In contrast, the IF ($\beta=0.277$, $t=2.892$, $p<.05$) had the greatest value. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 Composite Contribution of SSIF to CTDP

The composite contribution of SSIF to the CTDP in FoE in PUSWN was examined. Results showed that SSI factors significantly influenced completion of Ph.D. courses in FoE at PUSWN. Multiple $R^2 = 0.144$ and $R = 0.380$ were discovered. This shows that the three factors collectively explained 12.6% (Adj.R^2=0.126) of the variation in the Ph.D. programme completion prediction. SSI features were shown to be a significant predictor of Ph.D. course completion in FoE at PUSWN ($F (3, 141) = 7.929$, $P<0.05$). Thus, in PUSWN, SSIF raised the DP completion propensity by 12.6%.

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The findings are in line with those of Abiodun-Oyebanji (2024), Dimitrova (2016) and Sverdlick et al, (2018) that 65.7% of the variation in doctorate study completion rates was found to be explained by institutional administrative characteristics, the SvF, teaching and learning resources, different study programmes, and student-related variables. A significant portion of the observed impact was explained by these institutional and student-related variables taken together.

4.2.2 Relative Contribution of SSIF to CTDP

In PUSWN, the relative contributions of SSI variables to CT of Ph.D. courses in FoE were investigated. Findings revealed that all three SSI variables were potent predictors of DP completion in FoE in PUSWN. The CTDP was mostly influenced by IFs, as shown by the data (β=0.442, t=9.582, p<.05). The second position was attributed to student-related characteristics (β=0.358, t=7.040, p<.05). Significant variables included SvFs (β=0.260, t=5.472, p<.05). Accordingly, induction of SSIF in the FoE within PUSWN led to the increase of CTDP by 44.2%, 35.8%, and 26.0%, respectively. Soumana and Uddin (2017) suggest that SSIF could predict CTDP. The results are similarly consistent with those of Adeyemi and Adeyemi (2014) and Shariff et al., (2015), which found that student-supervisor ratio, commitment of the academics, overcrowded lecture theatres, faculty's constant industrial activities, and closures were among the IFs that impede CTDP.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The research concluded that, in PUSWN, institutional and student-related factors are stronger predictors of DP completion times than SvF. In addition, all three variables—SSI—were possibly predictive of DP completion time. This result suggests a strong positive relationship between the CTDP and SSIF. Similarly, the timely CTDP in the FoE at PUSWN will rise significantly if any of these parameters increase.

5.2 Recommendations

This study recommends actions to improve the CTDP in FoE in PUSWN; before starting DP, DS should confirm their financial source, since relying only on family members and scholarships might make it more difficult to finish the programme on time. It is recommended that Ph.D. supervisors be approachable to their supervisees on these matters in order to facilitate the early completion of doctorate studies in FoE at PUSWN. Postgraduate colleges should maintain the existing policies on supervisor rank requirements and Ph.D. coursework since these have significantly contributed to the timely CTDP in FoE in PUSWN.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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