

Variables Attributed to Delay in Thesis Completion by Postgraduate Students

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Abstract

Thesis writing has been found to be the most prominent factor leading to postgraduate students' attrition and untimely completion of their programme according to stipulated duration. This study was therefore carried out with a view to finding out the variables attributed to delay in thesis completion by postgraduate students. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Snowball sampling was used in selecting 212 delayed postgraduate students' in a federal university in the South Eastern Nigeria. A questionnaire named POSTDAQ was adapted and validated by the researchers. Mean were used in answering the research questions while t-test were used in testing the hypotheses. The study shows that the students related factors are more attributive to delay in completion of thesis. The study thus revealed that supervision schedule, students' interest and predisposition towards research work, student's skill in conduct of research and availability of needed research support (resources) are major attributive variables to delay in thesis completion. It was also found out that supervisor/supervisee working relationship do not delay thesis completion to a great extent. It was recommended that the students should be properly trained in research methods as well as enforced to show profound interest towards their research work.

Keywords: thesis, postgraduate students, supervisees, supervisors, delay, attributive factors efficiency.

INTRODUCTION

Vital to the postgraduate programme of undergo and complete before they can be awarded either masters or PhD degree certificate. Thesis usually described as dissertation is a purely academic paper that is expected to be the original idea of the postgraduate student. Students are therefore expected to complete their thesis within a stipulated duration of time. The duration of postgraduate programme varies depending on each university's and nation's postgraduate regulations. For instance, Table 1 represents the duration adopted by most of the Nigerian higher institutions offering postgraduate programmes.

Table 1: Duration for various modes of Postgraduate Programmes in Nigeria

Programme	Full Time Students		Part Time Students	
	Minimum	Maximum	Minimum	Maximum
Academic Degree of Masters	3 semesters	5 semesters	5 semesters	6 semesters
Professional Degree of Masters	3 semesters	6 semesters	5 semesters	9 semesters
Master of Philosophy	3 semesters	6 semesters	5 semesters	8 semesters
Doctor of Philosophy	6 semesters	8 semesters	8 semesters	12 semesters

Source: Olorunisola (2011)

The rationale for postgraduate study, its essence and importance had been adequately documented by Lategan (2008), and Shultz and Kottke (1996).

Delay in Completion of Postgraduate Research Work

Experience has shown that students spend more years than programmed at post graduate level majorly owing to slow pace of the thesis completion. This occurrence of thesis delay is termed 'thesis blocking' by Rennie and Brewer (1987). Rennie and Brewer identified lack of a clear and realistic research topic and a perfectionist tendency as major predictive factors contributing to the delay in completing thesis. The completion of thesis issues and those related to postgraduate degree completion had been widely researched (Elgar, 2003; Jinarek, 2010; Myres, 1999; Olorunnisola, 2011). Some of these researchers affirmed that many post graduate students are being faced with attrition owing to challenges in completion of thesis work.

Morton & Worthley in 1995 found that student's completion of thesis could be affected by personal concepts [job, family, insufficient training of students and problem with the supervisor(s)] and the administrative bureaucracy involved. Green & Powell (2005) also highlighted individual (gender, age, ethnicity and social background), structural (levels of

funding and disciplinary area), academic (previous experience and the type of research being undertaken) and environmental (supervision, mentoring, progress review and academic culture) factors as major reasons for thesis completion delay. In addition, student's age and nationality were reported by Barber, Kogenko, Park, Roche, and Stogner (2003) to predict delay in the thesis with emphasis that the older students do not procrastinate because of intrinsic reasons they have for attending universities and thus complete their thesis earlier. Ho, Wong & Wong (2010) also found out that distractions from thesis research like recreational activities, life events, family, children, friends, pregnancy, giving birth and caring for a baby could lead to delay in thesis completion. Other identified factors by Ho, Wong and Wong are: poor knowledge of data related processes, lack of understanding of the thesis writing process, and student-supervisor personal qualities as major hindrances to thesis completion.

Moreover, student factors that can be attributed to thesis completion delay had been reported: students' skill in research conduct and students' lack of capacity and preparedness for research and postgraduate study, the post graduate student's emotional and psychological problems (Zuber-Skerritt, 1987), social and intellectual isolation (Conrad & Phillips, 1995), students' personal difficulties (e.g. financing, family issues) (Buttery, Richter, & Filho, 2005), sexual harassment and gender issues in supervision (Lee, 1998), and organisational factors (e.g. work space, facilities). Students' personal qualities that could delay thesis completion include lack of knowledge, frustration, loss of interest negative feedback and insecurity from the supervisor, lack of dependence related to mastery of research skills.

Morton and Worthley (1995) identified difficulties with balancing between personal and academic lives as a hindering factor in students' ability to complete their theses. This could result in students' insufficient research knowledge. For example, the student may have come from a different discipline and have not received sufficient training in research methodology. Glatthorn (1998) also stated that towards the end of students' coursework, they might have a change of career plans, values or priorities, which could distract them from completing their theses. Furthermore, in a research conducted by Myers (1999), it was found that most of the participants for the study stated that family or other personal obligations like paid jobs or professional responsibilities took time away from working on their dissertation. Lack of understanding of the thesis writing process was also found by Myers as a major hindrance in thesis completion. Glatthorn further suggested that fear arising from the "lack of knowledge and from their own insecurity" (p. 211) may hinder thesis completion while Myers found that

frustration and/or loss of interest are the biggest barriers to the doctoral degree completion. The frustration, negative feedback, difficult relationship with the supervisor, or a change of interest, could easily make the student lose the initial enthusiasm he or she had for the project.

In some comparative studies male students were found to complete their thesis faster than their female counterparts and be less likely to discontinue their studies, though some of these effects are small (Green & Powell, 2005). In another study by Seagram, Gould, and Pyke (1998), gender appeared unimportant, as found out in their study. In addition, Green and Powell found out that the workload associated with part-time work commitments are also issues. This implies that the part time students have more commitment than the full time students. Meanwhile, in their study of 3579 postgraduate students working towards a PhD between 1984 and 1993 in the UK, Wright & Cochrane as reported in Green and Powell considered gender, age, faculty cluster (e.g. sciences vs arts), part-time vs full-time study modes, student origin, source of funding, class of first degree, and whether the students were graduates from within the host university as factors in delay of thesis completion. Key findings were that students most likely to submit their thesis within the years were males and those that were studying a science-based subject, had a high grade first degree, held research funding and, interestingly, were international and studying part-time.

Supervisor's Role in Research Work Completion

Skilled supervisors are needed to guide postgraduate students to successful completion of their studies. Without effective supervision of postgraduate studies, new knowledge will hardly ever be produced. Lategan (2009) asserted that postgraduate supervision is the active engagement by the supervisor through the research process to guide the student to solve a research problem. She explained that the process of supervision starts with identifying a suitable supervisor who can assist the student to identify the research problem, apply correct methodologies to address the research problem and find appropriate solutions to the stated problem.

In some universities, a supervisor is not expected to supervise more than six full time Ph.D. students and six master's students as a regulation. Supervisor/supervisee working relationship could result in delay in thesis completion. Unclear motives and purposes of supervision (Wallace, 2003), supervisors' preference of some supervisory roles over other roles (Vilkinas, 2002), and lack of research training amongst supervisors were identified as major hindrances to thesis completion. Some supervisors are not trained on the newest research methods that could help them in guiding their students in the

postgraduate which results in their inability to apply and transfer the appropriate skills and research expertise to their supervisees. This could be attributed to either inability of some university management to organise seminars for research development of these supervisors or supervisors' lack of intrinsic motive to develop them.

Seagram, Gould, and Pyke showed that important positive characteristics of supervisors according to their doctoral students were professional, pleasant, and supportive behavior.

PG Thesis Completion: Case of Nigerian Universities

In Nigerian universities, most of the students do not graduate within the regulated time and at times the students stay two to ten years more than the normal programme duration. The supervisors were most times overloaded with students. In most cases, a student passes through the departmental defence (proposal or pre-field) stage, the faculty defense stage (post-field) and the external defense stage before he could have a successful thesis completion. Each of these stages involves a lot of commitments in terms of time, money and bureaucratic procedures. It should be noted that each defense will require the attention of all the academic staff in both the department and the faculty as well as sometimes some staff of cognate faculties.

Cases abound in most departments in a faculty where many students dropped out of their postgraduate studies after they have completed their course works while some finish their course works promptly and take years before completing their thesis. One of the striking cases is that of a student who started her master's programme in 1993, finished her course work in the same year and is yet to graduate. This means that it is taking her almost 20 years to complete her thesis for an 18 month programme. This type of situation is very worrisome as it is not only discouraging aspiring candidates for postgraduate programme but putting a lot of burden on both the students, the faculty and significant others. Unfortunately, there are few published data or study involving the postgraduate completion rate of students in relation to their thesis completion in Nigerian universities except for the one reported by Olorunisola (2011) that it took 217 doctoral students of the University of Ibadan between 2005 and 2009 to complete their programme in 4.5 to 9 years.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over the years there seems to be increase in the number of students enlisting for postgraduate programmes in Nigeria but the major challenge to the certification of graduates at this level has been the issue of completion. Thesis writing is a prerequisite to being awarded postgraduate degree. It is

unarguably the most important aspect of postgraduate education. Thesis writing completion could be affected owing to different stages and people involved. The people here included the supervisor of the candidate as well as other researchers within the university community. If there is observed delay in the completion of thesis in postgraduate programmes, then what variables could be responsible for it. There is, therefore, the need to ascertain from the students themselves the variables they attribute to delay in their thesis completion. This constitutes the problem of this study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to find out the attributive variables to students delay in completion of thesis. Specifically, the study aims at finding out:

- the extent to which supervisor/supervisee working relationship delay thesis completion;
- the extent to which supervision schedule delay thesis completion;
- the extent to which students' interest and predisposition towards research work delay thesis completion
- the extent to which student's skill in conduct of research delay thesis completion
- the extent to which availability of needed research support delay thesis completion
- establish whether differences exist in the opinion of the students in relation to variables attributed to delay based on their gender, programme type and study mode.

RESEARCH QUESTION

The research question that guided the study is: To what extent do PG students attribute the following factors as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

- 1) Supervisor/supervisee working relationship
- 2) Supervision schedule
- 3) Students' interest and predisposition towards research work
- 4) Student's skill in conduct of research
- 5) Availability of needed research support (resources)

HYPOTHESES

Three hypotheses tested in the study are:

1. There is no significant difference between the male and female post graduate students' responses on variables attributive to their delay in thesis completion.
2. There is no significant difference between the masters and PhD post graduate students' responses on variables attributive to their delay in thesis completion.
3. There is no significant difference between the full time and part time post graduate students' responses on variables attributive to their delay in thesis completion.

METHOD

The study adopted a survey research design. The postgraduate students of a university in the South Eastern part of Nigeria who did not complete their programme within the given programme duration constituted the population of the study as they are taken as 'delayed students'. The sample size of 212 participants spread across gender, type of programme and mode of study were used for the study. The type of sampling used is snowball sampling. One delayed candidate in a department is usually contacted and then implored to supply the names of other students experiencing delay in completing their research.

The research instrument, 'Post Graduate Thesis Delay Accountability Questionnaire' (POSTDAQ) was adapted by the researchers from the PREQ instrument developed by Ainley (2001). Details of PREQ could be found on www.PREQ-instrument.pdf. POSTDAQ comprised two sections: Section A comprised the personal characteristics of the participants; Section B had five sub-sections which are: supervisor/supervisee working relationship, supervision schedule, students' interest and predisposition towards research work, students' skill in conduct of research, and availability of needed research support or resources. The items in Section B were scored based on four-point rating

scale ranging from SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, A = Agree, and SA = Strongly Agree. The weighting of the options were SD = 1, D = 2, A = 3, and SA = 4. The items were all positively worded. Therefore, no item was reversed in weighting for analysis purpose.

To estimate the reliability of the instrument, it was administered on 22 postgraduate students in another university. The responses of these students to the questionnaire items were subjected to analysis using the Cronbach alpha formula. The analysis yielded reliability coefficients of 0.87 for sub-section one, 0.67 for sub-section two, 0.81 for sub-section three, 0.75 for subsection four and 0.82 for sub-section five. Mean and standard deviation was used for answering the research questions while t-test was used in testing for the differences between the groups based on the hypothesis one, two and three. The decision rule is that any item that has a mean above 2.50 will be described as "Agree" while the mean below 2.50 will be referred to as "Disagree." In addition, in testing the stated null hypotheses, any value of t-calculated higher than 1.96 since the considered level of significance is 0.05 will be rejected while t-calculated less than or equal to 1.96 will not be rejected.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

To what extent do PG students attribute supervisor/supervisee working relationship as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

Table 2: Supervisor-supervisee working relationship in thesis work

S/N	ITEM	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Supervision is available when I needed it	2.63	.97	Agree
2	My supervisor(s) is/are making real effort to understand difficulties I face in my study	2.59	.89	Agree
3	There is good guidance in topic selection and refinement by my supervisor	2.85	.91	Agree
4	My supervisor does provide helpful feedback on my progress	2.96	.76	Agree
5	My supervisor does provide detailed commentary on all written work submitted by me	2.85	.72	Agree
6	My supervisor does ensure that I identify and read current research literature	3.15	.95	Agree
7	My supervisor does provide me with needed support and encouragement	2.96	.94	Agree
8	My supervisor does provide resources that will support my research	2.48	1.12	Disagree
9	My supervisor does provide additional information relevant to my work	2.70	.95	Agree
10	My supervisor does always cooperates with me in the research	2.81	.96	Agree
11	My supervisor is patient towards me	2.81	1.00	Agree
12	My supervisor always explains comprehensibly when I ask something	2.67	1.00	Agree
13	My supervisor gives me clear guidance	2.63	.93	Agree
14	My supervisor acts comfortably with me	2.52	.85	Agree
15	My supervisor encourages me to timely do the corrections of my work	2.78	.97	Agree
16	My supervisor acts confidently when discussing my papers	2.63	1.04	Agree
17	My supervisor does not force me to choose his own direction	2.56	1.05	Agree

The result of the study as shown in Table 2 shows the post graduate students in most of the items is above the 2.50 decision level. Items 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12, 13,14,15,16, and 17. The statements shows mean higher than the 2.50 part) Item 8 reported that the students attribute no delay on the supervisors shows a mean lower than 2.50. Thus,

the item shows that to a high extent it can delay thesis completion.

Research Question 2

To what extent do PG students attribute supervision schedule as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

Table 3: *Supervision schedule and attributive factors to thesis delay*

S/N	ITEM	Mean	SD	Decision
18	My supervisor keeps to time scheduled for our meetings on the research work	2.48	1.01	Disagree
19	My supervisor keeps to the time of our meetings	2.78	.93	Agree
20	My job commitment does allow me to keep to schedules	1.96	1.09	Disagree
21	My social engagement does allow me to always keep to schedule	2.41	1.12	Disagree
22	The meeting time is an agreement between my supervisor and I	2.67	1.14	Agree
23	Living at a long distance from the university did not disturb my meeting with my supervisor	2.44	1.19	Disagree
24	My supervisor permits me to alter the time schedule	1.93	.96	Disagree

Table 3 shows that most of the items fall below 2.50. Thus, the items do contribute to delay in thesis completion in relation to supervision schedule items 19 and 22 shows from the table that there is above 2.50, therefore little can be attributed to the items as a factor of delay in thesis completion.

Research Question 3

To what extent do PG students attribute interest and predisposition towards research work as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

Table 4: *Students' interest and predisposition towards research work*

S/N	ITEM	Mean	SD	Decision
25	I am deeply interested in the research topic	3.56	.89	Agree
26	Solving problem in this area has been my ambition or obsession	3.48	.94	Agree
27	The topic is not imposed on me by my supervisor	3.44	1.01	Agree
28	The research work is very interesting to me	3.44	.85	Agree
29	Research work is not time consuming	1.78	1.01	Disagree
30	The years designed for the programme are enough for research work to be completed from experience	2.48	1.19	Disagree
31	Results can easily be formulated in research work thus making it simple	2.00	1.04	Disagree
32	My research work would be useful to others	3.22	1.19	Agree
33	My research work would go beyond the departmental/faculty/university library	3.56	.85	Agree

Table 4 shows that items 26, 27, 28, 29, 34 and 35 are above the 2.50 mean levels. Thus, students' interest and predisposition to their thesis writing are high in these items. On the other side, the items 30, 31 and 32 are below the mean decision level of 2.50.

Research Question 4

To what extent do PG students attribute skill in conduct of research as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

Table 5: *Supervisees' attribution to skill in conduct of research*

S/N	ITEM	Mean	SD	Decision
34	Poor knowledge and understanding of research and statistics delays thesis completion	2.81	1.27	Agree
35	Thesis can be delayed if there is no relationship and application between the course works and the research work	2.70	1.23	Agree
36	Inability to generate and administer instrument result in thesis completion delay	2.81	1.14	Agree
37	Poor data analysis and interpretation skill delay completion of thesis work	2.85	1.20	Agree
38	Inefficiency in the usage of the university style (e.g. APA or MLA) of writing delays thesis completion	2.70	1.10	Agree
39	Poor knowledge of computer and browsing facilities/skills delays completion of thesis	2.52	1.19	Agree
40	Deficiency in grammar (lingua franca) delays thesis work completion	2.48	1.09	Disagree
41	Poor time management and planning skills delays thesis completion	2.59	1.22	Agree
42	Poor interpersonal relationship delays completing thesis on time	2.93	1.00	Agree
43	Illogical and non-sequential arrangement of ideas delay completion of thesis	2.70	.99	Agree
44	Poor problem solving skill delays thesis completion	2.67	.96	Agree

Table 5 shows that items 35,36,37,38,39,40,42,43,44 and 45 have means higher than 2.50. The table further indicated that item 40 fell below the mean of 2.50.

Research Question 5

To what extent do PG students attribute the availability of needed research support (resources) as responsible for delay in their thesis completion?

Table 6: *Supervisees' attribution to availability of needed research support (resources)*

S/N	ITEM	Mean	SD	Decision
45	Inadequacy of opportunities for social contact with other postgraduate students results in delayed thesis	2.67	1.04	Agree
46	Inability of the department to provide involvement in broader research culture affects thesis completion	2.63	.97	Agree
47	Poor research environment in the department does not encourage timely thesis completion	2.52	1.12	Agree
48	Lack of research seminar colloquium for post graduate students by the department aids delay of thesis of thesis completion	2.70	1.14	Agree
50	Inadequacy of suitable working space in the department aids delay in thesis completion	2.22	1.05	Disagree
51	Lack of access to necessary equipment/materials for research in the department delays thesis completion	2.78	1.22	Agree
52	Poor access to computing facilities and services aid thesis completion delay	2.78	1.22	Agree

Table 6 shows that items 46, 47, 49, 51, and 52 are above the mean of 2.50 while item 50 is below the decision mean of 2.50

There is no significant difference between the male and female post graduate students' responses on variables attributive to their delay in thesis completion.

Hypothesis 1

Table 7: Attributive variables to their delay in thesis completion based on gender

Variable	Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Supervisor/supervisee working relationship	Male	46	49.93	6.34	2.73	210	.01
	Female	166	45.34	10.92			
Supervision schedule	Male	46	19.26	3.62	5.06	210	.00
	Female	166	15.93	4.03			
Student interest and predisposition towards research work	Male	46	24.72	4.81	-3.42	210	.00
	Female	166	27.56	5.03			
Student's skill in conduct of research	Male	46	26.35	8.77	-3.04	210	.00
	Female	166	30.64	8.38			
Availability of needed research support services	Male	46	17.52	4.30	-1.23	210	.22
	Female	166	18.51	4.98			

Table 7 shows that there is no significant difference between the male and female postgraduate students attribution to delay in terms of the availability of needed research support services. The table further illustrates that there is significant difference between the male and female postgraduate students' attribution to delay in terms of the supervisor/supervisee relationship, supervision schedule, students' interest and predisposition

towards research work, and student's skill in conduct of research.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between the masters and PhD post graduate students' responses on variables responsible to their delay in thesis completion.

Table 8: Attributive variables to their delay in thesis completion based on program type

Variable	Program type	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Supervisor/supervisee working relationship	Phd	55	49.93	7.55	3.08	210	.00
	Masters	157	45.08	10.80			
Supervision schedule	Phd	55	17.45	4.83	1.66	210	.10
	Masters	157	16.38	3.90			
Student interest and predisposition towards research work	Phd	55	24.09	6.30	-5.08	210	.00
	Masters	157	27.94	4.21			
Student's skill in conduct of research	Phd	55	28.55	6.98	-1.16	210	.25
	Masters	157	30.11	9.12			
Availability of needed research support services	Phd	55	16.76	3.68	-2.77	210	.01
	Masters	157	18.83	5.10			

Table 8 shows that there is no significant difference between the PhD and masters students attribution to delay in terms of the supervision schedule and student's skill in conduct of research. The table further illustrates that there is significant difference between the full time and part time students' attribution to delay in terms of the supervision schedule, students' interest and predisposition towards research work, supervisor/supervisee

relationship and availability of needed research support services.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between the full time and part time post graduate students' responses on variables responsible to their delay in thesis completion.

Table 9: Attributive variables to their delay in thesis completion based on program mode

Variable	Program mode	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Supervisor/supervisee working relationship	Full time	85	51.12	8.59	5.99	210	.000
	Part time	127	43.13	10.07			
Supervision schedule	Full time	85	16.89	5.47	.680	210	.497
	Part time	127	16.50	3.02			
Student interest and predisposition towards research work	Full time	85	26.25	3.97	-1.630	210	.105
	Part time	127	27.41	5.71			
Student's skill in conduct of research	Full time	85	28.79	10.37	-1.271	210	.205
	Part time	127	30.32	7.21			
Availability of needed research support services	Full time	85	19.31	4.67	2.507	210	.013
	Part time	127	17.62	4.87			

Table 9 shows that there is significant difference between the full time and part time students' attribution to delay in terms of the supervisor/supervisee relationship and availability of needed research support services. The table also shows that there is no significance difference between the full time and part time attribution to delay in terms of the supervision schedule, students' interest and predisposition towards research work, and student's skill in conduct of research.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The result of this study indicated that there is positive relationship between the supervisees and the students to a great extent. Most of the supervisors are reported to be playing their roles in terms of moulding the supervisees. The study also revealed that supervisors and most especially the delayed supervisees do not keep to the supervision schedules. This is due to the engagements by the supervisors as well as the supervisee in job, social, family and a host of other activities. It is also revealed in this study that the supervisees have strong interest and positive predisposition to their theses. Therefore this shows that their delay is influenced by other factors and not much on their interest or disposition to the research work. The result further shows that poor skill in conducting research could delay supervisee's completion of thesis work on time. This shows that the students needed to be well developed in several skills which favours starting and completing a thesis work for instance, the ability of a supervisee to analyse and interpret results could help the students in timely completion of thesis. The study also found out that supervisees could be delayed as a result of unavailability of research support services to the students. This shows that the supervisees needed to get access to other peoples knowledge both in print and electronic and share experiences with other relevant researchers among other research support services needed for post graduate research.

Furthermore, the study showed that male and female post graduate supervisees differ in their opinion significantly in the attributive variables that could affect thesis completion like supervisor/supervisee working relationship, supervision schedule between, student interest and predisposition towards research work and student's skill in conduct of research. However, the opinions of the supervisees do not differ significantly based on gender in the extent to which availability of needed research support services delay thesis completion. Moreover, it is revealed that doctorate and masters delayed supervisees differ in their opinion significantly in the delay variables like supervisor/supervisee working relationship, student interest and predisposition towards research work and availability of needed research support services delay thesis completion. However, the opinions of the supervisees do not

differ significantly based on study mode in the extent to which supervision schedule and student's skill in conduct of research delay thesis completion. The study also shows that there is significant difference in the attribution of fulltime and part-time students in relation to supervisor/supervisee working relationship and availability of needed research support services in the department. On the other side the study shows that there is no significant difference in the full-time and part time student's responses in the areas of supervision schedule, student interest and predisposition towards research work and student's skill in conduct of research.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is faced by different challenges at different stages. The biggest limitation of the researchers is the access to the delayed candidates. This is owing to the fact that most delayed candidates do not attend postgraduate seminars coupled with different regulations which differ from one department to another. The study could not also be extended to the post graduate diploma students due to limited exposure to research work. This greatly reduces the number of the participants. The study could not be extended to other universities owing to time and data collection challenges.

Educational Implications

The findings of this study have meaningful implications for supervisees, supervisors as well as policy makers. The study has revealed that major factors point to the fact that, student' variables are more attributive to supervisees delay in thesis completion. This shows that the students with a standard pre requisite entry behavior should be allowed admission into postgraduate study. This study clearly shows that the preparedness and profound interest of students is quite essential in the timely completion of thesis. The other attributive factors are like the relationship with supervisors. Availability of support services is not as causative as the student related factors. This is highly informing in the area where there is increasing number of postgraduate student's enrolment rate in Nigeria, then there is need for educational stakeholders at postgraduate level most especially master's and doctorate to peruse, through the attributive factors identified in this study with a view to finding out a model for reducing or eliminating untimely completion of thesis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made;

- Postgraduate students should be made to sign interest for completion of studies form or agreement before being accepted as candidates.
- The candidates should be properly trained on the research methods that could help the

students in carrying out research with little guidance. This will reduce the time it will take a supervisor to communicate with the students on technical areas in his or her study.

- The school should try as much as possible to make available research support services as well as continuous training of the students and the supervisors. This will go a long way in reducing inefficiency on the part of the supervisees and the supervisors.

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